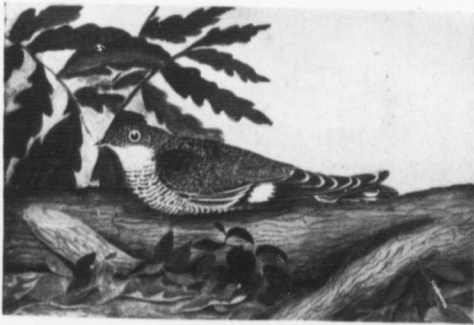


seemed satisfied that no danger was near. A shake or two settled its loose plumage in place, and then leaning forward, the owl sent its hooting call vibrating along the river valley. In a moment this was answered from above, and then at intervals from all around me, there must have been half a dozen of them within hearing at one time, and they continued to answer each other, until the last glimmer of light faded out, when no doubt they settled down to the night's hunt.

The Great Horned Owl is a bird of the woods, and its hoot is not now

on through the summer night, there sometimes comes from above a curious hollow booming sound, difficult to locate and rather startling. It does not last long, nor is it repeated with any regularity. This is produced by the male Nighthawk, though how it is done is not yet explained. The evolutions of the bird when "booming" may sometimes be seen, for they are not confined altogether to the hours of darkness, and the swift-descent and sudden swerve upward which accompany the outburst, are as remarkable as the sound itself.



WHIP-POOR-WILL.

often heard in the older settlements, but its little cousin, the Screech Owl, visits the orchard and the roadside shade trees, from which it utters its peculiar and sometimes gruesome notes. Its usual call somewhat resembles the whinny of a young colt, but it has besides that a medley of screams, trills, moans and gurgles, simply indescribable. They probably mean something; if they do, the something must be very uncomfortable to the bird, one would think.

In the dim light of late evening and

Very different from the harsh note of the Nighthawk is the clear-cut, musical song of the Whip-Poor-Will, which comes full and distinct from the edge of the wooded ravine, all through the calm summer nights, but is never heard in the "garish light of day." So very retiring is this bird that to most people it is a voice and nothing more. If by any accident it

should be disturbed from its seclusion in the woods where it hides during the day and should be seen as it flits silently into the deeper shadows, it would go unrecognized or be mistaken for its relative, the Nighthawk, to which it bears a family resemblance in appearance, but not in habit. So far as I have been able to observe this bird never soars high in air, nor is its flight prolonged, but rather it skims rapidly and noiselessly along the edges of the woods at no great height from the ground, taking only short flights, and