

## The Rockwood Review.

blue black berries resembled those of the wild grape vine, and were slightly larger than the clusters of the Virginia Creeper, but equally insipid to the taste as the latter, yet are eaten by the omniverous Jays and the Picadæ tribe. The peculiar shaped seeds in the centre of the berry are of some interest, and the fact of this woody climber being our only representative of a poisonous exotic family of trees, such as the *cocculus indicus*, which has sometimes been used as an intoxicant ingredient in distilleries it is said. When of mature age, the Moonseed Shrub, in its main stem, attains the thickness of an ordinary broom handle, and is covered with scaly wartlike asperities, very dark colored, and the spiral coils of the shrub have a most sinister snake-like aspect. In the course of our ramble the woods were enlivened by the rustle and activity among the dry and gay colored fallen leaves, of several red Squirrels, and upon our quietly seating ourselves for the space of about a quarter of an hour on a prostrate log, two of these rodents, with enquiring looks and gestures, approached to within five or six feet of the spot where we were seated, and their antics and behavior for a brief spell were quite of a pantomimic character, as if an idea possessed them of probing the secret as to what weighty motive had caused our invasion of those charmed sylvan presincts. The plaintive warbling of the belated Bluebird was of frequent occurrence near the forest edge, also the call of Chewink was several times heard. The latter bird seems as addicted to scratching among the dry forest fallen leaves, as is a chicken among chaff near a barn door. The Chewink comes early, and stays late, but is rarely seen except in the vicinage of the bush. Robins have been about the orchards and sugar bushes all through the month of October, and although beech nuts have been a failure this year, some others of the *cupulifera*

have fruited abundantly, and chestnuts and acorns, and hickory nuts, have furnished the bluejays and squirrel tribes a store of winter food, which they have been seen near here assiduously to gather, and carry away to their winter rendezvous amid the coniferous thickets.

Although the area in forest around us is in rapid diminution, those smaller plantigrades—the Raccoon tribe—are nearly as much in evidence as in pioneer times, and their footprints have been plentiful about the soft soil of cornfields, and on the muddy margin of springs and nearly dried up rivulets. One of my acquaintances related to me that he was returned home from town, two weeks ago, about ten p. m., with his wagon, team and dog, the night being dark and rainy. When nearing a small stream spanned by a plank bridge, the dog suddenly seemed inclined to give battle to some wild animal exploiting at the edge of the shallow stream. My friend got down to the work of reinforcing the dog's murderous instincts, and the fracas closed with the death of a fair sized racoon, and this on a much frequented high road, with dwelling houses and homesteads numerous in the vicinity.

Another friend who quite recently found leisure to take an afternoon ramble in a grassy swamp, noticed a family group of young half-grown Raccoons, "loping" along in a seeming mood for diversion, and only taking life half seriously. Though gun in-hand, the tableau vivant seemed to have a picturesque appearance, and the animals were allowed to vanish without molestation, into the depths of the swampy jungle, which appeared to be their contented habitat.

And during the week just now ended, a resident who has lately rented land near here, relates that one evening since the heavy showers of the 2nd inst., when he was reconnoitring the "metes and bounds" of his new domain, he