

ROBIN ON THE MOUNTAIN. By
Charlie May Simon. Illustrated
by Howard Simon. New York: E.
P. Dutton & Co.

Children between the ages of 8 and 11 will be entertained by this story of a little Ozark Mountain boy and will learn many things about ways of living probably different from their own. Possum Kingdom is a small town in the Ozarks in Arkansas, away up the winding dirt road, beyond the sign which says: "Road Impassable Beyond." Robin Lamb's father was a share cropper and every year after the cotton was picked and sold he moved his family in a covered wagon to another homeplace, always hoping to better himself. As this story opens, the family and all their few possessions had just been packed into the covered wagon ready to start for Possum Kingdom. The country through which they passed, their over-night stop with another mountain family, their crossing of a ford where the high water "was nigh up to the bed of the wagon," and their final arrival at the tiny honeysuckle-covered house which was to be their newest home are all described in such a way that any child may imagine he himself is making the journey.

At Possum Kingdom, every one became immediately very busy fixing up the place inside and out. Soon Winter came, with Christmas, and a dish of venison and biscuit bread* and a cake and pie and the Shelbys came for dinner, and firecrackers and songs and stories around the pine-knot fire. In the Spring the family made a trip to town to buy supplies before the cotton ground was ploughed; they all went, Papa and Mama and Robin and America and Thankful and baby Virgil. Then Robin made a new friend and settled an old feud of his father's. His days were busy, though he was only a boy; he took corn to the grinding mill, helped with the cotton planting, weeded the garden, went to school during the five months when there was a teacher, and finally became a squatter himself. The account of his building his own house and planting grape vines, in the hope of his father being talked into taking a claim on the place, will interest any enterprising boy. The style of the tale of Robin is an approximation to the speech of the mountain folk, which is one element in the vivid atmosphere which the story possesses.