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IN SIMPKINSVILLE

Character Tales

BY
RUTH McENERY STUART

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
SMEDLEY, CARLETON, AND McNAIR



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BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

" 'I'M MIGHTY GLAD YOU'VE SPOKE ' " . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
" HE HAD BEEN BURYING HIS DAILY BUD FOR THREE WEEKS "	<i>Facing p. 48</i>
" 'PRESENT COMPANY EXCEPTED ' "	" 80
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AN ARKANSAS PROPHET

A NEW-YEAR'S STORY

AN ARKANSAS PROPHET

IF you would find the warmest spot in a little village on a cold day, watch the old codgers and see where they congregate. That's what the stray cats do, or perhaps the codgers follow the cats. However that may be, both can be depended upon to find the open door where comfort is. They will probably lead you to the rear end of the village store, the tobacco-stained drawing-room, where an old stove dispenses hospitality in an atmosphere like unto which, for genial disposition, there is none so unfailing.

From November to May the old stove in the back of Chris Rowton's store was, to its devotees at least, the most popular hostess in Simpkinsville. And, be it understood, her circle was composed of people of good repute. Even the cats sleeping at her feet, if personally tramps, were well connected, being lineal descendants of known cats belonging to families in regular standing.