

# STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

## A WONDERFUL CAT.

Durham, Ark., Oct. 20.—Special Correspondence.—There is a log hut in the woods a few miles east of here that is occupied by a lone woman. She is from Ohio, and her name is Miss Annie Simpson. She has resided in the lonely hut in the woods for the past five years, and has become greatly attached to the lonely life so strange for one of her sex. It is said that Miss Simpson had an unfortunate love affair back in the Buckeye State and that she fled to the wilderness to try and forget the beau ideal of her school-girl days. Be that as it may, Miss Simpson has a strong, healthy, happy appearance now, and if she ever did have a great disappointment she has certainly lived it down and grown strong in the bargain. It is not about Miss Simpson's love affair, however, that the writer desires to tell, but about a wonderful cat that shares the humble home with the maiden, and whom she affectionately calls "Jack." It may or it may not be that Jack is the name of the fickle Ohio lover, but that cuts no figure in this story. Jack, the cat, is an unusually large Thomas cat, and money would not buy him from his present fair owner. When the woman first came to live alone in the woods she was afraid of nothing but snakes. She was dreadfully afraid of snakes, however, and they were the terror of her life. The place was fairly alive with snakes of all kinds and all sizes. It was not infrequently that they crawled into the house, frightening the lone woman almost to death. She killed two large rattlers at her very door, and had just about made up her mind to abandon her home on account of the snakes when the cat put in his appearance at the house and took up his abode there. A strong attachment sprang up between the strange woman and the strange cat that came from no one knew where. There was, perhaps, a feeling of sympathy between the two outcasts. The next day after the cat came the woman found a large black snake dead near her door. Every day she went upon excursions into the woods, and upon her return home in the evening always found a snake dead near the house. Sometimes there were two or three, and one day there were six dead snakes scattered around the house. Each snake had its head about half bitten off. The wound was always in the same place, about two inches back of the head.

The woman knew that Jack was responsible for the destruction of her tormentors, but she never saw him kill one until recently. One day not long ago she came home and was somewhat surprised to see Jack standing in front of the house with his bushy tail swelled to enormous proportions and the fur on his back standing straight up. A few steps away she saw a large spreading adder lying coiled ready for battle. His ugly head was flat as a pancake, the attitude it assumes when the snake becomes very angry. The spreading adder is a very poisonous and dangerous snake, and Jack's owner had great fears for his safety. Woman like, she began a still-hunt for the garden hoe. Before she could find that article, however, the snake was dead. Jack backed away, and the snake uncoiled and followed slowly. As soon as the snake was stretched at full length Jack sprang on to its back quick as lightning and snapped through the back of the neck, and then sprang off again. There was a terrible wriggle and hisses for a few moments and then all was quiet. Another snake had been added to the cat's long list of victims.

Jack, the cat, continues in the work of exterminating snakes, and will no doubt in time clean them out in the vicinity of the spinster's home.