

# Full Report of S. C. C. SHOW Next Wednesday

CAT GOSSIP, January 26th, 1927

## CAT GOSSIP

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Edited by H. C. BROOKE

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Young Malay Cat.

Specially sent to CAT GOSSIP by Mr. Boden Kloss,  
Director of Singapore Museum.

### The Kilkenny Cats.

O'Flynn, she was an Irishman, as very well was know,  
And she lived down in Kilkenny, and she lived there  
all alone

With only six great large tom-cats, that knowed their  
ways about,

And everybody else besides she scrupulously shut out.  
Oh, very fond of cats was she, and whiskey too, 'tis said,  
She didn't feed 'em very much, but combed 'em well  
instead;

As may be guessed, these big tom-cats did not get very  
sleek

Upon a combing once a day and a "ha'porth" every  
week.

Now, on one dreary winter's night O'Flynn she went to  
bed,

A whiskey bottle in her arm, the whiskey in her head;  
Those six great large tom-cats they stood all in a dismal  
row,

And horrid glared their hazy eyes, their tails wagged  
to and fro.

At last one grey grimalkin spoke in accents dire to tell,  
And dreadful were the words which in his horrid whisper  
fell:

And all the six large tom-cats in answer loud did squall  
"Let's kill her and lets eat her, body, bones and all."

Oh, horrible! Oh, horrible! Oh, deadly tale to tell,  
When the sun shone through the window-hole all  
seemed still and well;

The cats they sat and licked their paws, all in a merry  
ring:

But nothing else in all the house, looked like a living  
thing.

Anon they quarrelled savagely: they spit, the swore,  
they hollered;

At last these six great big tom-cats they one another  
swallowed,

And naught but one long tail was left in that once  
peaceful dwelling,

And a very tough one, too, it was—it's the same that  
I've been telling.

## GOSSIP OF THE WEEK

Mrs. Allen-Maturin tells me of a very alarming  
experience she went through last week. When she  
went to the stables to give the cats their afternoon  
meal, she heard "Shipmate" yelling at the top of  
his voice, and opening the door found him gasping in  
a volume of black smoke. Quickly getting him and  
the two queens out and into safety, she found that a  
lamp had blown up and burnt the box it stood in and  
also set the floor on fire, so that it was fortunate the  
whole stable was not burnt to the ground. The worry  
did not end here, for three of the other cats broke into  
the larder and gorged themselves on raw sprats. They  
became very ill, and the veterinary surgeon said they  
had had ptomaine poisoning. Happily they are  
recovering though very thin and miserable.

MORAL.—No raw sprats or mackerel for Siamese!  
How true it is one misfortune follows another!  
One day last week my neighbour had a fowl run over  
by a motor, and before he had finished cursing his luck  
he went to the back and found a valuable cow prostrate  
and only fit to send to kennel!

\* \* \* \* \*

What is a "Catnip" Mouse? Though for years  
a member of the "Longtail" Fancy, I give it up!  
These interesting little rodents (?) are offered in the  
columns of our American contemporary, *The Cat  
Courier* at the price of fifteen cents.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our French contemporary, *Les Tablettes*, organ of  
the Cat Club de France, gives some very interesting  
details as to the occurrence of the Cat in ancient Greek  
and Roman art. It has frequently been asserted by  
certain writers that the Cat was unknown to the  
ancient Greeks. This would appear, from the evidence  
produced by Dr. Vincent Niclot, to be a somewhat  
rash assertion. It certainly was not unknown in  
Crete. An illustration is given of a curious old bas-  
relief in the Museum of the Capitol, which seems to  
represent a woman teaching a cat to dance on its  
hind-legs to the sound of the lyre.

*For Novices only!* Some of you will shortly be presented, I hope, with litters by your queens. Let me most earnestly beg of you not to be tempted by curiosity to expose your kittens' eyes to the light, *even before the eyes open.* To do this is to ask for eyelids stuck together, ulcerated eyes, and other troubles, already of too common occurrence. The cat's bed should be in a quite dark place, secure from draughts and light, and for weeks after opening the eyes of the kits should not be subjected to any strong light. If the eyelids stick, on no account attempt to pull them apart. A tiny drop of purest olive oil placed on the eyelid may be beneficial. That eminent authority, Sir Claud Alexander, gives the following valuable advice:—Prevention is better than cure, and can be obtained by dabbing the eyes the day after birth, and once or twice again before they open, with peroxide of hydrogen, 10 vols, as sold by chemists, on a bit of cotton wool. If there be any soreness after the eyes open the same treatment will cure it, the peroxide being squeezed into and over the eye out of the cotton wool.

\* \* \* \* \*

In our next number a highly interesting theory as to the origin of the Siamese is propounded by Mrs. Veley, D.Sc., one of our oldest breeders, and no one interested in cats should fail to read this.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mrs. Martin Timms has acquired from Miss Richardson a Blue Russian by Prince Petrie of Cademuir ex Tatiana; and another Blue Russian, by Cossack ex Sasha (a Ch. Prince Mordkin daughter) has gone to Mrs. Lawrence, of Tatsfield.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Siamese kitten, Mustardseed of Colston, has been sold by Mrs. Laws to a purchaser in Nigeria.

## Concerning Lay Veterinary Advice.

BY THE EDITOR.

I have so often been asked why I give no advice as to treatment of sick cats in these columns, that I will make my viewpoint clear. Even the ordinary veterinary practitioner is none too well versed in the lore of cat ailments; the novice then must be far less so. The giver of advice may be perfectly correct—but if the recipient thereof has made a mistake as to the ailment, what then? Herein, I conceive, lies the chief danger. And when it comes to broadcasting "tips" given by Tom, Dick and Harry or their feminine equivalents—as to some wonderful cure achieved by some means—whereas, in reality, the patient may have recovered in spite of, not because of, the alleged remedy—I think this is best left alone! Only just lately an extremely well-known and experienced practitioner wrote me:—

"One would think on reading some of the stuff written.....that cats were kept to contract disease so that amateurs could fascinate themselves by tinkering with it. What should be the aim of the cat fancier is the avoidance of disease by proper feeding."

I have always held that the systems of many cats are weakened by too frequent feeding, their stomachs constantly have to work overtime. *Twice a day is quite often enough to feed any healthy adult cat.* The insides of many people must resemble a chemist's shop after an earthquake, judging from the amount of drugs and pills and powders they take, and I fancy some pedigree cats' "tummies" must be in a similar

condition. The best course for the unexperienced to pursue in case of illness is to consult a *good* veterinary practitioner.

A few hints, however, may not be amiss. Never, if at all avoidable, nauseate or terrify a cat or kitten by *forcing* nasty drugs or powders down its throat. Medicines are best given in capsule or pill form. These are not hard to give, especially if the cats have been accustomed from youth to have their mouths handled, objects placed on the tongue, and so on, as a wise breeder does. Then when the time comes to administer medicine, they will not be terrified, and their temperature sent up by leaps and bounds by having their mouths opened. Powders, such as quinine—an excellent appetizer and tonic in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -grain doses, three times daily—if not given in tablet form, may be placed in a tiny screw of tissue paper, greased, and put right at back of throat. Do not, because a cat misses a meal, begin to worry, and force it to eat. It *may* be sickening: or it may be only temporarily bilious. If urged to eat, more harm than good is done. Cats kept in catteries should always have a box of fresh growing grass at hand. It is remarkable how often they have recourse to this. A bone—not a splintery one—to gnaw, is excellent for cats and kittens. Pyorrhæa is rapidly increasing amongst humans, fancy dogs, and fancy cats. 'Cos why? There is too much pap-feeding, gums and teeth do not work hard enough, there is not a sufficient flow of saliva: all this acts on the stomach. Some cats *literally do not know how to chew!* Minced foods are quite right at Show times, when we want to exert the already upset stomach as little as possible, but at ordinary times every cat should *have* properly to use its teeth at least once a day. A certain well-known winner, when I first had him, seemed absolutely ignorant of how to deal with a bone or a half-pound chunk of meat, his sole idea was to bolt everything. Later, like my other cats, if he got a quarter of a skinned raw rabbit, he knows what to do, and only leaves a few of the bigger bones, picked and licked clean, in the manner for which the feline tribe have their powerful scissor-like teeth and file-like tongue.

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# THE MALAY CAT

By THE EDITOR.

THIS peculiar variety of domestic cat is very little known in this country, and appears to be becoming scarcer in its native habitats, probably owing to crossing with long-tailed cats. It possesses an additional interest for us, inasmuch as there is at least the possibility that our Manx cats are descended from them, especially if the legend of Spanish Rock be true. The prevalence of spotted tabbies in the Manx—formerly perhaps even more than to-day—and their rather “doggy” ways, add to the probability of this descent, Oriental cats being noticeably extremely companionable in character. Quite recently I was told by one who had long been resident in Sumatra, that it is quite common to see natives going about closely followed by their cats. About a quarter of a century ago I saw in Holland three beautiful Malay cats, of a sort of drab colour, spotted all over with very clear cut dark brown spots, much resembling those found in some of the Palm Civets. At about the same period, too, some very similar specimens were at the Jardin d’Acclimatation in Paris. The tails of these cats, about three or four inches long, were tightly screwed, or at least the tail formed three complete revolutions. The “screw” tail, as also the spotted type of coloration, appear to be becoming very rare. Mr. Boden Kloss, Director of the Raffles Museum at Singapore, has kindly sent for CAT GOSSIP a portrait of what he considers a typical young Malay Cat, having five kinks in its tail. It appears to exactly resemble the young Australian cat I once owned (see CAT GOSSIP, No. 4), except in that mine carried its triple kinked tail downwards, whilst this specimen must carry its caudal appendage always cocked up. Mr. Boden Kloss’ information applies to the cats of Singapore of which he writes:—A fair proportion of the cats of Singapore seen in native villages are short-tailed animals with a kinked tail. There would, I should say, three or four kinks. In colour they may be tabby or boldly black and white. As a point of interest it may be noticed that *felis planiceps*<sup>1</sup>, one of the wild species of the Peninsula, tends to resemble the domestic Malay cat in the matter of tail. In *A Naturalist in Borneo*, by R. Shelford, formerly Curator of the Sarawak Museum, there are these notes on Malayan Cats:—(a) It may be mentioned here that the domestic cat of the Malays is quite a distinct variety, . . . it is a very small tabby with large ears and a body and hindlegs so long that it lacks all grace. . . . The tail is either an absurd twisted knot or else very short and terminating in a knob; this knotting of the tail is caused by a natural dislocation of the vertebræ so that they join on to each other at all sorts of angles. . . . Mr. H. O. Forbes exhibited a kink-tailed Malay cat (*tom. cit.* p. 312) showing the cause of the phenomenon to be the development of wedge-shaped cartilages between the vertebræ of the tail. . . .

(b) Mr. H. O. Forbes kindly writes:—It is many a year since I made some remarks at the Liverpool Biological Society on that kink-tailed cat. . . . My remarks referred to the interest I had in exhibiting the creature’s skin from the occurrence in the East of what I had noted as extremely common in the cats of Portugal when I lived there about 1876. The kink, I was told was then believed to have become hereditary, from a custom long practised by the Portuguese (b) of pinching or breaking the tails of the new-born kittens, and it would be of special interest if the fact could be established that the kink in Malayan cat’s tails

had been communicated to them through those imported by the early Portuguese into the East. . . . If I can trust my memory the tail of this cat though short and kinked had the full number of vertebræ, some of them reduced and wedge-shaped. . . .

Mr. Holman Hunt, for many years Government Inspector in the F.M.S., writes me describing these cats as being brown with black spots, as well as ordinary tame cat colours.

*Notes.*—(a) That the flat-headed cat, *f. planiceps*, has a short tail of about six inches, is I think but a coincidence. It is unlikely to have anything to do with the domestic race. *Planiceps* is a very aberrant species, differing in dentition (it is partly frugivorous) from most cats: it has in fact, been removed by later naturalists, with the Serval of Africa, to a different genus, (*Ictailurus*), not likely to be fertile with *felis*.

(b) It would be interesting if some reader could tell us something about Portuguese Cats. That the Malay cat’s abnormalities derive from a Portuguese tail-pinching trick appears doubtful, because:—Firstly, no amount of tail-pinching would cause the length of hindleg, referred to by Mr. Shelford, and shared by good Manx. Secondly, as far back as 1783 a learned writer\* observed, referring to the cats of Sumatra, “All their tails imperfect and knobbed at the end.” So that we should have to assume that long prior to 1783 this Portuguese trick had caused this malformation to become an hereditary property of most cats in various parts of Malaya. It has been noted by various writers—“Billie Barlow,” being one of them—that Malay cats—doubtless such as have little or no admixture of ordinary cat strain—have a “wild animal” odour, quite unlike that of the ordinary cat.

I will conclude this paper with the following quaint native story accounting for the peculiarity of the tail, according to which a certain princess, when bathing in a lake in the Palace grounds, took off her rings and strung them on the tail—at that period straight—of her pet cat. Alas, when she wished to resume them, they had disappeared. Puss had dropped her tail, and the rings had slipped into the lake. On the occasion of her next bathe, the Princess again strung the rings on the cat’s tail, this time, however, knotting the tail so that the rings could not slip. And since then Malay Cats have kinked or knotted tails! And this breed, now probably, like many other local animal races, gradually disappearing through admixture with ordinary breeds, remains another of the riddles set us by the mysterious East!

\*William Marsden, F.R.S., late Secretary to the President and Council of Fort Marlborough, in *The History of Sumatra*, 1783.

Miss Nancy Richardson writes me she has had a most trying time with her kittens which have been down with a form of throat distemper. She has not been to bed for a week, but thanks to Mr. Gray is now hoping all will pull through. Her only loss, as yet, has been a beautiful young tortoiseshell, which she had hoped would take the place of her late Vanessa. Her adult cats have been isolated in a separate cottage, and so far are all in good health.

**To appear shortly:**

**Humorous Cat Article by  
WYNDHAM LEWIS  
(the English Humorist).**

## PARIS CAT SHOW

By MRS. BASNETT (Judge).

A VERY interesting Show was held in Paris on the 14th and 15th of January by the "Cat Club de France" and it was easy to see that France has its many cat lovers, as well as England. All the cats were shown in excellent condition and nothing was too much trouble for the owners to make their pets as comfortable as possible. The Siamese are very popular on the Continent, and I was not surprised to find so many of them exhibited there, as compared to the Persians. The adult male classes contained about 26 and there were some 36 adult females, as well as numerous kittens of all ages, from a few days old. The quality was indeed splendid, one young female of 7 months being a really perfect specimen. I also very much admired several old cats, the two best, I considered, were a mother and daughter, born in 1915 and 1917 respectively, who had wonderful coats and points, with beautiful eyes—and were the best adult females there. The sacred Burmese Temple cats interested me very much, with their long fur on the tail and coat resembling that of a poorly bred Persian; their colouring is exactly like that of the Siamese, but their feet sometimes have white toes. I was given to understand that they are very difficult to rear, only about one in ten survive. I do not think they possess the same quick movements as the Siamese, life to them seems much more dreamy and slow, but they are very loving and intelligent.

One lady brought for my inspection a Siamese Albino of about 4 months; I could not see a trace of any shading anywhere on the white coat, tail, legs ears or mask; the eyes were a very beautiful blue, and their fiery centre seemed to be accentuated by the absence of all shading. In appearance it was a very typical Siamese, with the long sleek body and whip tail, and a very beautiful wedge-shaped head and face.

Looking through my catalogue I saw a class marked "Chats de Chartreux," which did not appear to be a breed known in England, so I went round to find out what they were, and saw at once they were the British type of S.H. Blues. I asked one owner what they were and was told "the American cat"—and concluded that nobody was quite sure as another owner said they were Maltese.

One short-haired neuter, resembling the ordinary common tabby, weighed 22½ lbs.; he was not a big-limbed cat, simply very fat and would not have looked out of place amongst the fat cattle at a Christmas fat stock exhibition.

There were some very nice Persians exhibited, amongst the 1st prize winners, was the late Mrs. Esdaile's Barry Blue Jack. Until recently, the Persian has not been too popular on the Continent, but it is growing in favour rapidly now. I think the thing to surprise me most was the tremendous number of visitors present on both days, Saturday afternoon there were so many it was impossible to move at times, and I am quite sure many people did not see the cats at all as the crowd was so great. Many of the pens were a picture, the decorations in some cases being very expensive and luxurious, artificial flowers inside the pen having an electric bulb in the centre of each flower, the current being supplied from the owner's accumulators, giving a very attractive effect. I noticed many idols amongst the Siamese pens—one owner having a small Temple erected on the top of the pen, the interior of which was a pale green illuminated with small green lights.

## Our Weekly Competition

The 2/6 goes this week to Miss Oldfield Howey for this little anecdote.

The following true story well illustrates the extraordinary devotion, reasoning power, and memory of which cats are capable.

"A certain keeper of a 'feed store' in Bloomfield, New Jersey, owned a ruddy-coloured cat known as 'Red.' In the August of 1918 he bought a farm in Rosemont sixty-seven miles away, sold his feed-store, and took 'Red' with him to reside on the farm. Apparently his venture was a disappointment, for twelve months later, hearing that the food-store was again in the market, he sold his new homestead and bought it back. But when he returned to Bloomfield he left poor 'Red' behind, having included him in the sale as one of the assets of the farm. His master gone, 'Red' soon vanished also, and no more was heard of him for twelve months. Then, a ruddy-coloured cat, exhausted and emaciated, its claws worn down to the pads by long walking, crawled into the feed-store and sank down in its old place on a bag of midlings in a corner."

Let us hope Red's master was capable of as great a love as his cat, and that only lack of imagination made him think of it as a mere chattel that could be bought and sold like a farm utensil; whilst all the time it was in reality, his faithful, courageous, intelligent and worthy friend.

### CAT. CALLS.

To the Editor "Cat Gossip."

Sir,

In a recent issue reference is made to a case of improper packing observed at Leicester Show, and you rightly observe that this was a matter for the Governing Council to deal with. I was at Leicester and the matter being reported to me I gave the assurance that the G.C. would deal with it. I then arranged with the show manager to procure large baskets in which to return the cats. Unfortunately the matter has been taken out of the hands of the G.C. through the action of some well meaning but ill advised person who called in the R.S.P.C.A. inspector. The cats referred to, by the way, were short hair, and not long hair, as stated. The box was certainly too shallow and unsuitable. In justice to the owner in question I must say her cats were in perfect condition and obviously well cared for. The Cat Fancy may rest assured that the G.C. will always investigate any such cases when brought to its notice. See G.C. Rule 21 on this matter. And again end of Rules, "the Council suggests to Show Committees that every care should be taken to see that cats are sent to shows properly packed in boxes or baskets of ample size."

With reference to the last part of the notes on the subject in Gossip of the Week, the writer must surely know that the G.C. has no jurisdiction over shows not held under its Rules.

CYRIL YEATES,  
Chairman, G.C.C.F.

Note by Editor.—We did not maintain that the G.C. were to blame but distinctly put the onus of reporting such cases on Show Committees. As regards the second point we are well aware that the G.C. has no jurisdiction but have in another place outlined the manner in which the activities of the "black sheep" might be checked.

## SIAMESE CATS

We had kept Siamese Cats for years, but, till the recent big Show at which they captured the popular fancy, and the consequent booming of the Press, no one outside a small circle of keen fanciers had taken interest in them.

Now, however, we began to get famous.

Georgina, a devotee of the Sealyham cult, ran down from town in her new two-seater.

"I want to see your Siamese," she said.

"Certainly," I said blandly. "I am just going into the cattery. I offered to show you the cats the last time you were here, but—"

"Oh, yes," she returned barefacedly, "but people were not talking about them then."

I lead the way through the garden.

"My sister is there now, looking at some new arrivals," I told her.

"Puppies! I mean Kittens" said Georgina ecstatically. "How lovely!"

She clutched my arm excitedly when I ushered her into the long, low studio under the south wall.

"What on earth are they—not cats?" she said.

showing a strong inclination to back through the door.

"Of course they are," said I again, in the best manner of 'Sandford and Merton,' essentially foreign, that is their charm. If you want something exclusively British the old tabby cat from next door—"

"Oh, be quiet," she said, adding in her next breath, "Vera, don't let that big savage one near me."

Vera, who had come up to us with Mahoraja, our oldest and most sedate cat, at her heels, laughed as she picked him up by the nape of the neck and kissed his black face. She sat down, and the little group of cats following her stopped to inspect the newcomer.

"The dears!" Aren't they quaint," said Georgina.

I smiled secretly. The Siamese had begun their deadly work of fascinating their victim.

"Tell me about them—where do they come from?"

"They originally came from the royal palaces of Siam, where they used to be kept solely by kings and priests. I have been told that the souls of the dead potentates are supposed to look through the inscrutable eyes and mask of the cats."

Georgina shivered deficiuously.

"Go on," she commanded.

"Do you see Li Hung Chang?" I said, pointing out a beautiful pale-coated cat of typical shade and points, who kept closely to my side, and shooed away with his head any interloper who made to come between him and his master. "His ancestor came directly from the King of Siam who gave him as a kitten to the French president."

Our visitor looked with deep respect on "Chang."

The cats were now all round us, nosing us inquisitively; patting me with their velvet paws, and two of them on my shoulders."

"Chang," now pushed aside in his turn, had started his daily constitutional. Round and round the big room he solemnly trotted, threading his way between the baskets, round the big pen and over the desk, in the same way to an inch each time, never stopping, and only showing his recognition of us by a flicker of his blue eyes as he passed.

"What a strange walk he has!" said Georgina, watching him fascinated.

"Yes! The Siamese are noted for their peculiar gait. They amble along like monkeys. They have also a strange cry, not very musical I am afraid, but

we don't often hear it. Our cats are happy, and have few complaints to voice. I'll let them out to the Pokes, and you'll see them play."

I opened the door into the little wired-in lawn, and out they all tumbled to embrace Fido and Fifi, to roll on the grass, and to chase each other up the tree. The grace of their movements was indescribable. Light as thistledown, they jazzed and set to partners, and, stealthy as midnight burglars, they stalked each other. The cream, fawn and chocolate of their bodies, with the dark points and mask, and the jewel-like blue eyes, made a colour scheme wonderful to behold.

"They are too lovely," sighed Georgina, "and the colouring is heavenly. Look at that kitten with the pale cream wrap-coat and the seal-brown furs. I shall have one made like it."

"It would look quite commonplace," I assured her. "Your ears are not carved out of polished ebony, and you could not wear a black mask this weather. Also, your eyes are not blue enough, and I do not believe they are obliquely set."

"I should hope not," interpolated Georgina. "Look! One of the cats has a loop in his tail!"

"A pronounced kink—not a loop," I corrected. "That I consider a fault—the result of a crossing with a Malay cat, but some people are very keen on it, and always order a kitten with a kinked tail."

"Well, I'll order one without," said Georgina decidedly, "Let's go and look at the new babies."

Inside the roomy pens were the two mothers, jealously washing and polishing the tiny units of their respective litters. Georgina looked in the first one, and drew back disgusted.

"Why, these are all *white*—little mongrels," she said, "and so are these," she called out from the other. "What are you laughing at?"

"Ah, Georgie! You don't know as much about Siamese as you do about Sealyhams," Vera told her. "The kittens are always born white. The points can be seen darkening by the end of the first week."

"Is that so?" said Georgina unbelievably, "Well, I'll come and get one when it's finished."

"I shall know all the points next time," she called over her shoulder as she drove off, "and I shall choose a winner."

And knowing Georgina rather well, I have no doubt she will.

HELEN NOBLE.

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