

CAT GOSSIP

VOL. 1

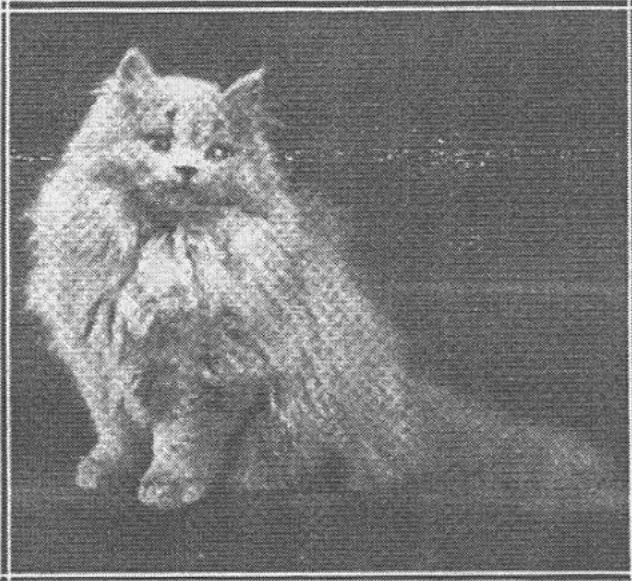
Phone : Battersea 4358

Edited by H. C. BROOKE

No. 12

FEBRUARY 23rd, 1927

Price 3d., post free



Mrs. Oglethorpe's *Cat Gossip*
 "Perdita of the Court," by "Gentleman of Henley"
 ex "Dainty Lady of the Court."
 Born 20/6/26

A RAILWAY CAT

She envies no man's hearth place—freedom's best,

And the long run of sheds, where sacks of seed,

Oil cake, guano, Spratt's Food, and the rest,
 In hempen mountains stand,—and rat-folk breed.

These are her happy hunting grounds!—How fleet

Amidst the bulging piles,—beneath the beams,
 Hung o'er with dust-thick cobwebs,—soundless feet

Fly scampering by ; anon an engine screams.

The Railway Cat ! What reck's she of the noise
 Of shunting engines—shrieking steam—and loads

Of groaning, grunting wagons, men and boys :
 Is she not queen of all the Iron Roads ?

She purrs, and swinging slow from paw to paw,
 Dreams,—where the charcoal brazier casts a glow,
 Of moonlight raids, warm blood, and sated maw ;
 Dreams that the poor tame house-cat cannot know.

Green eyes she has, like jade or chrysoprase ;
 Sharp claws, and teeth to guard each kitten-thing ;

Ahen when the night-mail hurtles down its ways,
 She croons the lullaby all mothers sing.

And little furry faces nuzzle down ;
 And tiny feeble paws claw, poke and press ;
 Whilst rapture of dark peace, in moon-shot gown,
 Folds round her wild maternal tenderness.

You fierce sweet daughter of a fiercer sire ;
 Why should we pity ? Be your comforts few,—

Yours is the crowning gift of cat's desire,—
 Freedom, above all luxury you knew.

Roaming at will amongst the silvered sacks,
 The moon-bathed silence stirred by velvet wings

Of bat-folk in the rafters,—while through cracks
 In walls and floor, a little night wind sings.

She envies no man's hearth place ! Being wise,
 And craving freedom for her wild cat-soul,
 What smouldering fires do gleam in those green eyes,

What scorn of aught that savours of control !

Here reigning silent, brooding as a Sphinx
 Carven in stone, as dusk of evening spreads
 Its blue-black mantle, and the first star winks
 Salaams ! Diana of the Railway Sheds !

M. A. NORTHCOTE.

MRS. KIDD'S celebrated young winning Blue,
 John of Downside, whose portrait we give, is
 placed at stud, with his cattery-mate, the
 Smoke, Ch : Tarzan of the Cottage.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK

A POSSIBLE origin of the Siamese Cat no one seems to think of is that suggested by Sir Russell Gordon, although if correct, it only takes us one step farther back, and leaves us still guessing at the primary cause of this remarkable coloration. Many of you will remember having read some time ago the history, published then for the first time, of the Sacred Cat of Burma, that remarkable long-haired cat of Siamese colouring, and quite unknown in this country, which has for generations been carefully fostered by the priests in the subterranean temple of Lao-Tsun, one of the greatest marvels of the East, situated in an almost desert region of immense peaks and chaotic labyrinths. Sir Russell Gordon, who was a Major in the British Army at the time of the Burmese war, was afforded by the High-Priests or Lama-Kittahs the practically unique privilege of studying these cats. From what he learnt he formed the opinion, which is shared by the explorer Auguste Pavie, one-time French Resident at Bangkok, that the Siamese derives from a cross of the Burmese Temple Cat with the Annamite Cat, a slender, small and gracefully built variety with a short tail, which has probably, like so many local animal races, disappeared through the invasion of stronger commoner varieties.

MRS. VELEY, in her recent article, refers to the Siamese being still called "Gould's Cat," after her brother, in some parts. Sir Russell Gordon mentions that the Burmese Sacred Cat was known as the Gold Cat by the few English that knew it. Now another name for the Bay Cat (*felis temmincki*) which has repeatedly, without a shadow of reason apparently, been suggested as a possible ancestor of the Siamese, is Golden Cat, and I cannot help thinking that a confusion of these names in people's minds may have given rise to this theory.

MISS SYDNEY FAIRBROTHER, so long a favourite of the London stage, and who particularly made her mark in Shavian plays and in "Chu-Chin-Chow," writes us about her white Australian Cats:—"Generations of walking long distances on kindly 'Mother Earth,' have given to Australians, biped and quadruped, a long springy stride different from the firm placing of the foot on hard pavement. There is a great difference in coat. The English Cat's coat is longer, presumably Nature's protection against mist and rain. And last, and most important, the Australian cats have a very vivid and alert expression, as unlike the white English variety they are not deaf. They love their owner, and

the sound of a beloved voice will bring them like a flash across the grass, whether they have been playing touch with a baby rabbit or teaching physical jerks to an aged and unwilling hen. The English white cat lives in a world of silence only broken by its own protest against its isolation. I must say it has cause for thankfulness in that it cannot hear the noise it makes. I did hear one expressing its dislike of all and sundry at Kentish Town Show. My word!!!" MRS. DUNCAN HINDLEY writes: "In last issue you mention that Mrs. Harvey's Siamese cat Bonzette was Simzo. This is incorrect—Bonzette's name was Simplekit (I think) sister of Simzo, whom I have just purchased from Miss Dixon, and whom I am placing at stud in CAT GOSSIP.

A WRITER in a contemporary bewails the fact that the much-puffed infectious enteritis research scheme has proved a complete fiasco. This does not surprise me at all. I am sure 99 per cent. of cat owners are pronounced humanitarians, and probably the scheme was doomed in advance from the fact that it was to be carried out at the Brown Institute, a place founded for the benefit of animals, but which has become a regular stamping ground for vivisectionists. It has been alleged, and I believe not denied, that animals left there as *patients* have been used for experiments! Anyhow I can quite understand that the majority of cat lovers, however anxious to get the dread disease stopped, would fight very shy of research carried on at a place known locally as Vivisection Hall!

A CORRESPONDENT asks: "Why in Heaven's name is the next *Midland* Cat Club's Show to be held at *Bristol*? should it not be the Southern Counties' Club who should try this venue, instead of always stopping in London?" Not knowing, I can't say; but mention of the S.C.C.C. Show with its protracted judging, rendering it impossible to get many of the awards at five o'clock, makes one think that these Gargantuan shows are rather overdone nowadays, and ask: Who really benefits from these numerous side-classes and so many specials? Not the cats: not the overworked judges: not the tired visitor: and certainly not the harassed reporter! After all, many side-class wins are but very barren honours!

MRS. LEANING (of Tadworth) is contemplating bringing out a new book which will, I think, interest real cat-lovers. It will be in the nature of an anthology, and will contain a collection of selected verse, and prose: A Roll of Honour (cats that have saved lives): "Roll of Tribulation," and "Where Black Cats are."

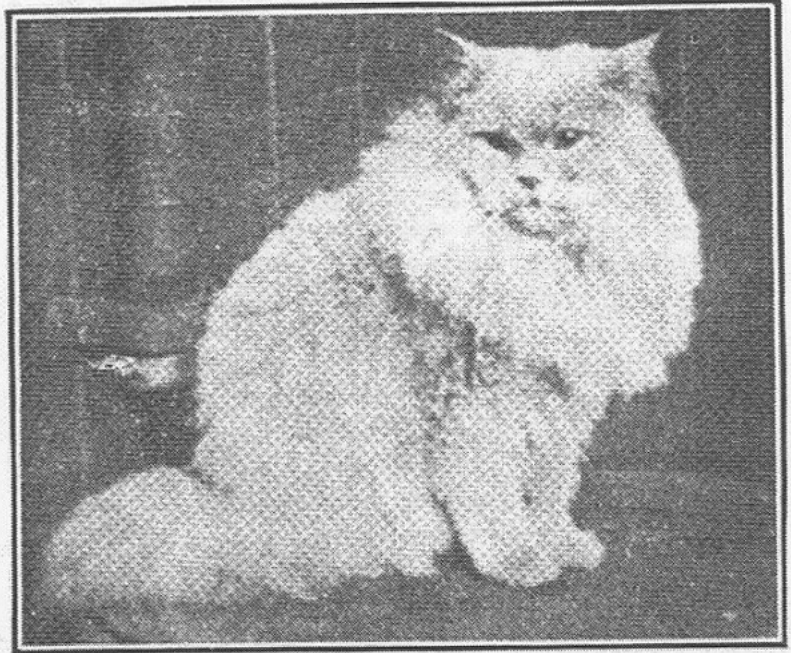
HUMANITARIANS will be interested in the letter from the Secretary of *Our Dumb Friends' League*, anent the unjustly heavy fine inflicted on the caretaker of a Cats Shelter, who took a cat from the lethal box before it was dead, though to all appearance life was extinct. I do not think the Society which instituted this vindictive prosecution will have made any friends for themselves by their action.

HER KITTEN DIES, CAT ROBS RABBIT NEST FOR A BABY.

CLARKSVILLE, Pa., June 26th.—A Maltese cat, belonging to William Miles, of Clarksville, gave birth to a number of kittens. Soon after birth one of the kittens died. The cat went to a nearby field where she robbed a rabbit's nest of a young rabbit and returned with it to the Miles home, where she is raising it with great care. The young rabbit seems to be in good health.

MRS. ALLEN-MATURIN writes that a mistake was made when sending in the photo of her stud, which was that of Bashi-Bazouk, and not of Shipmate, who is withdrawn from stud, and Ni-Perm takes his place. This grandson of Siam of Bangkok greatly resembles his ancestor. He was bred by Mrs. Burke, and boasts the best imported blood. Her Southampton Martini had bad luck with her litter, which were all born with necks awry, and unable to take nourishment. MRS. HARVEY'S Siamese kittens, grandchildren of Siam of Bangkok, advertised this week, should be well worthy the attention of anyone taking up this beautiful breed.

MRS. VELEY will have more very interesting talk on Siamese origin next week.



Mrs. Kidd's "John of Downside" *Cat Gossip*

EAR DISEASE IN THE CAT

BY THE EDITOR.

CANKER of the ear is a most troublesome disease to which our cats are becoming more and more subject. It may be internal or external, parasitic or otherwise, but in neither case should it be neglected. A bad internal case may in time absolutely ruin the cat, even affecting the brain. Parasitic canker may result in a cyst forming in the cat's ear, which will cause the ear to shrivel and twist over, completely spoiling it for exhibition purposes. Cats should have their ears examined from time to time, and any filth wiped out with a little cotton wool dipped in a lukewarm solution of Condy's or some other mild disinfecting fluid. Novices should exercise the greatest care not to injure the tender and complicated mechanism of the ear: rough handling may set up, instead of relieving, inflammation. If a cat's ear smells unpleasantly, if it discharges, or if a cheesy-looking substance, apparently sprinkled with blackish powder (parasites) is to be seen, the cat has canker, and should be kept away from other cats, which should not be permitted to touch its bedding. If a cat holds one ear flat, or its head sideways, or scratches its ear and cries, suspect canker; it may, however, only be the result of some temporary irritation, of a flea or grass-seed in the ear, or of a scratch.

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Investigate at once, however, or the cat will probably set up irritation and soreness by scratching. If a bland ointment, such as zinc or boric ointment, fails to cure, I have found nothing better than Friar's Balsam. A couple or three drops poured into the ear, the base of which should be gently massaged whilst the cat is held during the momentary smarting, will often work wonders. Naturally, you will not do this to a light-haired cat on the eye of a show, nor should so much be poured in that it runs down the cat's neck! But if you neglect the case, you may come down one morning and find the cat looking very sad, with one ear sticking out sideways and considerably swollen. The swelling will rapidly increase, and the skin will shine with an ugly purple hue through the fur. Heat and pain are easily diagnosed. Now, if you are a novice, or feel very nervous, you had better take the cat to a good veterinary practitioner, for only a person of some experience should undertake the necessary procedure, which is (the swelling—which may extend from the eartip nearly half-way across the skull—being "ripe") to open it up freely with a lancet, squeeze out the pus and clotted blood, and thoroughly disinfect the inside of the wound. If this disinfecting process be only partially carried out, the whole job must be gone through again ere long. It is likely that in any case you will have trouble with the junction of the severed parts, which is why I recommend professional aid. If no operation is performed, probably the wound will burst, the cat will suffer greatly, and have a very bad ear. On the other hand, it may dry up of its own accord, but in this case the ear is almost certain to become shrivelled, twisted and wrinkled, and to be drawn downwards, so that the appearance of the cat will be entirely ruined. (I have, myself, always had the idea that the story, apparently never to be proved, of the Chinese Drop-Eared Cat, was founded upon some specimen with both ears badly deformed in this manner, and accepted by some one as a genuine variety!)

I believe this loathsome disease to be far, far, more common amongst Longhaired Cats than amongst our good old despised British Shorthairs. Some strains are undoubtedly more predisposed to it than others: dirty catteries, of course, would encourage it. Any stud-owner receiving a visitor suffering from ear-canker would be well advised to return her immediately unmated, and I cannot think that any veterinary practitioner of note would allow a cat he knew to be thus afflicted to enter a Show at which he was officiating!

In response to my appeal to the Cat Fancy to help me to keep England's ALL-CAT paper going, or rather to give it a fair start, I have now SEVENTEEN guarantors of £5 each, if called upon, which need not be the case if I obtain due support. Mrs. Neale has kindly promised to write a fortnightly LONG-HAIR article, and I am arranging for other help in this section. **WHO WILL YET COME FORWARD AND ASSIST?**

THE RECENT LETHAL CHAMBER CASE.

"Justice's justice" has been proverbial for its futility for many a long day! Animal lovers usually have to complain of the callousness of magistrates who often think throwing a cat on the fire, or similar jokes, adequately recompensed by a fine of a sovereign. When we get really well-meaning magistrates on the Bench, it is a pity to find them going to the other extreme and inflicting a heavy fine for a pure error of judgment, entailing no real cruelty. Why have magistrates so rarely any sense of proportion? This sentence may do great harm by frightening persons who would have been willing to minimise animal suffering by taking charge of lethal boxes. We are requested by Colonel M. W. Douglas, C.S.I., C.I.E., Secretary of *Our Dumb Friends' League*, to give prominence to the following letter and enclosure:—

The Editor, CAT GOSSIP.

"I have much pleasure in sending you a copy of a letter which I have received unsolicited this morning from a devoted cat-lover and an honorary secretary in charge of a well-known cats' shelter. I hope you will take up this case. O.D.F.L. in the course of the year puts painlessly to sleep about 100,000 animals, and it is absurd that an isolated case such as this one should be given such prominence. In my opinion the caretaker was guilty of an error of judgment in that she failed to realise that the cat seemingly dead was not so. Mistakes are made in administering anæsthetics to human beings in our large hospitals. I do not think that I can improve on the facts given by the Hon. Secretary, whose letter I enclose."

M. DOUGLAS,
Secretary.

LETTER FROM AN EXPERIENCED HONORARY SECRETARY IN CHARGE OF AN ANIMALS' SHELTER.

"I consider the sentence on Miss Maydwell excessive. For *beating a dog to death* in Lauderdale Mansions a man was fined *ten shillings!*

"No one who is not constantly lethalling can realise how difficult to kill are tom-cats and newly-born kittens. Both have immense vitality. There is *no cruelty* attached to the fact of the cat *reviving*. How else are operations to be performed? I constantly put cats right under chloroform to extract a needle in the tongue, or even to cut off clumps of matted hair, or any minor operations brought to me late at night or when a veterinary surgeon would be too late to help, say if the animal is in dreadful pain. The cat recovers without the least difficulty and appears to have suffered no inconvenience. It was the fact of the animal dying of cold and want of food that constituted the cruelty, but this was purely an accident. I have always considered the rule of keeping an animal so many hours in the box a futile one. If it is not dead in half an hour it never will be unless more chloroform is added. My rule with which Mr. — agrees is at the end of a certain time, when the animal has ceased breathing is to remove the chloroform rag and open the box. If it is still alive it will quickly begin to breathe again, when more chloroform can be added. Stiffness is the only real test.

CAT CALLS

To the Siamese Lovers of CAT GOSSIP.

It has been suggested that there is an opening for a Cats' Hotel or Holiday Home exclusively for Siamese Cats, where valuable and much-loved pets may be safely placed for a time, and where they will have loving attention, country air, best of food, and weekly veterinary inspection. I am thinking seriously of starting such a venture, but as the cost of erecting suitable houses, etc., will be considerable, before definitely building, I should be glad to hear from any Siamese owners who might avail themselves of my accommodation, and support me by sending their cat or cats. Also, perhaps, they would mention for what season of the year the guest would come. The charge for one cat would be 10s. weekly, less per head for two or three from one place or for litters under four months. Mrs. Veley, the vice-president of the Siamese Cat Club, is sending some of her cats to me for the month of August, and reference is permitted to her or to Miss Crosse, Yew House, Caterham Valley. I am a member of the Siamese Cat Club, and should be glad of any letters from my fellow-members *re* future help in the matter.—(Mrs.) L. French, Plummer's Place, Horsham. (Advt.)

VISITS

January 26th Miss Perkin's Silva to Miss Webster's Langherne Woof.
February 15th. Mrs. Oglethorpe's "Day Dream of Henley" to Lady Eardley Wilmot's "Bazzler of Henley."

ADVERTISING RATES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

CAT GOSSIP is only obtainable, as yet, through the post. Price 3d per copy, post free. Three months, 3/6 Six months, 6/6 Cash with order.

ADVERTISEMENTS. Displayed Adverts., Stud or others, 3/6 per inch, cash, up to 4 insertions; 4 to 13 insertions 3/4 inch; 13 and upward- 2/9 inch. Standing Advs. of Cat Clubs, 35 words, 2/6 Sales, Wants, &c., 1d. per word, minimum 1/6

PORTRAITS. Cats standing at Stud (not less than 5 insertions) can have their portraits published for the price of block and postage. Block becomes property of owner. Portrait may be repeated within the year for inclusive fee of **One Guinea**. For Cats not advertised at Stud the Portrait Fee with Block will be 2/1-

All Correspondence to be sent to the Editor, H. C. BROOKE, BISHOPS HULL, TAUNTON
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