

# CAT GOSSIP

VOL. 1

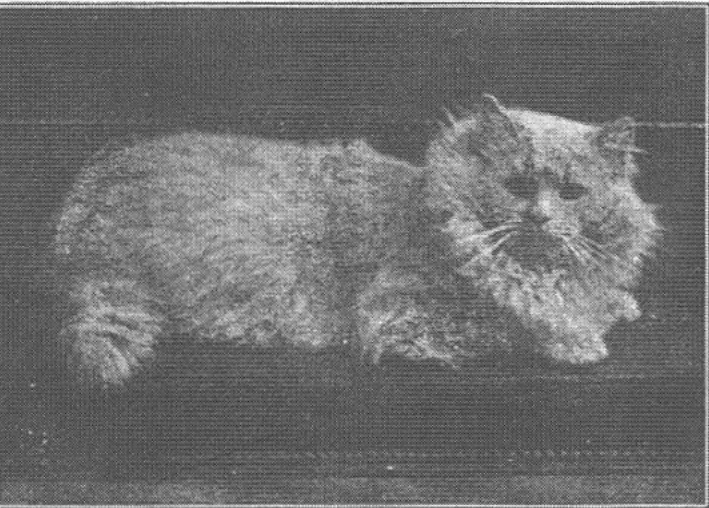
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Edited by H. C. BROOKE

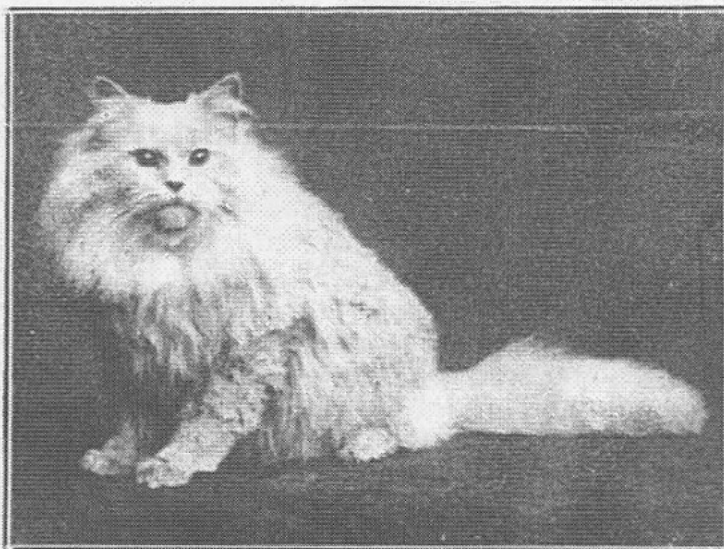
No 15

MARCH 16th. 1927

Price 3d., post free



Miss Langhorne's Ch. Shere Khan o' the Combe.



Miss Adye's Ch. Endymion of the Balcony.

"How will I, eh? The way the Cat jumps  
 Upon a simple unsuspecting mouse  
 Loose in the pantry—no one in the house—  
 Nibbling away, with confidence unshaken,  
 Eating his cheese up first, to save his bacon.  
 She's in no hurry. With dilating eyes  
 And undulating tail, she crouching lies,  
 Till his enjoyment's crisis he is at,  
 Then pounce! she makes a spring, and has  
 him—pat.  
 To a short game of pitch and toss she treats  
 him,  
 Tears him to pieces slowly—scrunch—then  
 eats him."

[From a parody on "Medea," acted at the Olympic, London, about a century ago.]

## NEXT WEEK :

"CATS I HAVE LOVED."

BY SIR CLAUD ALEXANDER, BART.

## Gossip of the Week.

Mrs. HARVEY'S old imported Siamese queen, Riku of Petaling, has just had a litter of four kits. As she is over seven, and has already had forty-five before this, her mistress thinks she must be nearly setting up a record for this breed. She gave Mrs. Harvey a bad fright not long ago, disappearing for four days in very cold weather. However, she returned looking very fit and without a sign of a cold.

Two or three correspondents have written me in anxiety about the Bill shortly to be presented to Parliament, to exempt dogs from vivisection. They point out that, if passed, it will lead to infinitely more suffering being caused to cats and monkeys, which will then become the victims of the licensed torturers. What can we do? Obviously, one section of animal lovers cannot oppose a measure benefiting another class of animal. All we can do is to work for cats to be also

exempted, and join one or other of the Anti-Vivisection Societies, which are always warring against these hellish practices. I am ashamed to see how few cat fanciers support these bodies. A speaker recently said if you went to any dealers and ordered a few dozen cats for "research" they would not have them in stock, but by next morning they would be delivered in sacks at the University or Institute. Yes! and one of these might be *your* favourite cat snatched from where it sat enjoying the sun in *your* garden.

FROM his pleasant retreat on the Isle of Jethou, Guernsey, that well-known novelist, Compton Mackenzie, has sent specially for *Cat Gossip* a delightful chat on Siamese, which must surely interest every lover of cats, even if not fanciers of this particular variety.

MISS LOWNDES, who, by the way, is the sister of another well-known writer—Mrs. Belloc Lowndes—has acquired a Malay kitten. It arrived in company with its mother from the Straits Settlements quite recently. It has a triple-kinked tail. It is, unfortunately, not of the spotted kind, but these seem to be very rare nowadays. The Director of the Raffles Museum and Library at Singapore wrote recently:—"The tail which distinguishes these cats may be clubbed or kinked, very short or of medium length, and the animals themselves of many colours—plain, piebald, or patterned."

MR. BODEN-KLOSS further writes with regard to a query as to possible hybrids between wild and domestic cats in Malaya:—"I have never heard of hybrids between *bengalensis* (the Leopard Cat) and domestic cats. One of the wild tribes of the Malay Peninsula has domesticated cats, and I have seen the women suckling *bengalensis* kittens, but I do not know whether the latter survive and breed with the others!"

THE BILL which, as we mentioned last week, is to be brought forward by the College of Pestology to tax all kittens, must be fought at all costs! It would prove an unendurable burden to Fanciers, and add to taxation to provide fresh hordes of officials to carry out its provisions. It is very true, as its sponsors say, that there are far too many ill-kept cats. But the way to combat this evil lies in educating the public not to rear all kinds of unnecessary kittens, and then turn them out. If legislation be needed at all, it might well take the form of compulsory neutering of all save registered males, at any rate in towns.

RUSSIA, that paradise beloved of some of our politicians (?) must be a hell for cats. Not only are they chased and eaten by boys in the big towns, but they have now been declared vermin by the Leningrad Soviet, and the Leningrad Clothing Trust pays 2 - a skin for them. It is to be hoped that Leningrad may soon be deservedly rewarded by a plague of rats and mice. Personally we should like to see the whole gang declared to be vermin by the civilised world!

MISS WAKEFORD returns from China about the middle of this month. We wonder whether she will have any interesting remarks to make about Cats there?

IS THE Cat Fancy progressing, standing still, or going down? We have just been looking at *Our Cats* for this week twenty-five years ago. A well got-up illustrated *sixteen-page* weekly, full of all kinds of information, and any amount of advertisements, including *Eighty-one* stud cats announced in display advertisements, a column of "Appliances" advertisements, and three columns of cats for sale! It "gives one furiously to think."

JUST OVER twenty-five years ago was held the N.C.C. Charity Cat Show, which was a great success. The prizes were given away by the Princess Alexis Dolgorouki. Lady Decies had conceived the idea of a ring-class for the charity, with a five-shilling fee and the honour as prize. This nearly caused a fiasco, as a savage fight took place between Mrs. McLaren Morrison's Black Cherry and Mrs. Stead's Champion Smoker Ranji. Ladies screamed, cats swore, Ranji escaped and hid under a piano, and Dr. Roper received a nasty bite. Those ring-classes! How well we remember our Red Indian S.H. clearing the ring on one occasion.

THAT WEEK, too, we note that Mrs. Neate sold Scarlet Lancer, one of the winning orange kittens at Westminster. Not many of to-day's Fanciers mentioned.

NOVICES IN the L.H. section will about now be having trouble with cats' coats, and should be careful not to brush too violently or use hard brushes, or they will injure the young fur. Ungroomed cats are likely to suffer from hairballs in their works; and remember, two short toilets will be more beneficial than one long and arduous one.

JUST OVER a quarter of a century ago was held the Cat's-Meat Men's Dinner at the City of New York Restaurant, Holborn. Mr. Louis Wain was in the chair, and read a letter from the then Princess of Wales, hop-

ing the dinner would be a success. The guests, in merry mood, greeted the roast beef and boiled mutton with the familiar calls of "Meat! Cat's Me-e-e-at!" The Duchess of Bedford helped to pass the "sprouts," and gave the men 250 tins of tobacco. Mdle. Janotha, the celebrated musician, brought the mascot cat, and several well-known theatrical people played and sang. The function was organised by *Our Cats*.

DOES ANY reader know of a book on cats by Lady Cust, written some threequarters of a century ago?

PLEASE NOTE that as I hope to publish on Wednesday in future, all matter, whether news or advertisements, should reach me here as early as possible—certainly by Monday morning—unless in the case of urgent late news. I would like to continue publishing this as an eight-page paper, but to do so costs more money. Will you all help by getting new subscribers and pushing the paper in every way possible?

MRS. SYDNEY EVANS is placing at stud the beautiful L.H. Sable which she has just acquired from Mrs. Jourdain, who knows of several of this variety which she would like to see well established. They have all been bred from Chinchilla stock. This cat is excellent in shape and type, and carries a good coat, a real sable, with black tips or ticking along spine, tail, head, and paws; his eyes are emerald green; a truly lovely cat.

MRS. EVANS will shortly be coming to Taunton to reside, and should stir up things feline in the West Country. She has just purchased that lovely Cream, Shah Jehan o' the Combe, from Miss Langhorne, of Chard. With this lady in the West Country the prospects of a Cat Show for Taunton next season look more hopeful.

I AM very sorry to hear from Sir William Cooke that he has lost his last male Abyssinian, and thus his very remarkable strain of albinistic Abyssinians looks like coming to an end as suddenly as it came into existence. I know a lady in Yorkshire who had a pair of these exquisite cats which have never been seen in the show-pen, but when last I heard of them she was contemplating having the male neutered. It has been suggested that they derive from a Siamese cross, but Sir William is confident this is not the case, and neither the circumstances nor the coloration seem to bear out this theory. These beautiful cats were creamy white, with rabbit-coloured fur on the ears and "eelstripe" or dorsal line—not the Siamese type of coloration you note!—and their eyes were blue. I

take them to present an instance of an albinistic mutation, akin, for instance, to that of the albinistic variety of the Black (or Old English) Rat which I discovered six years ago, and which was named after me—*rattus rattus brookei*. These were creamy white, with a deeper tinge on head and back.

THIS VERY morning another instance of a mutation in Abyssinians reaches me. Herr Lesti writes me from Vienna that in his second litter by Ras Tafari one kitten is pale fawn with a pinkish tint. The previous litter by the same parents greatly resemble their sire. It will be very interesting to see how this kitten turns out.

MRS. YEEND has sent in her name as a twenty-fourth guarantor to help this paper if required. Please all remember that by supporting this paper you are also ensuring that these your fellow fanciers shall not be let down as a result of their endeavours to secure for you an *all cat paper*!

MISS LANGHORNE writes:—"I was interested in the quotation from Fennell about the white cat with odd eyes, because I always understood that genuine White Persians direct from Persia always do have one green eye and one blue, at least if normal, and that if both eyes are blue they are always deaf. I have been told this by several people who come from India, and have owned or known White Persians brought down into India from Persia."

MRS. RICHARDSON is looking forward to a good season, having several blue, white, and chinchilla queens in kitten. She has also purchased "Norma of Bredon."

WE ARE glad to hear that Mrs. Florence Fall is now recovering from her accident. She was run into some weeks ago, and has been in St. George's for weeks. No doubt the celebrated "Chepping" Bullterriers—not to mention the goat, the Siamese, and the bulldog—are only too glad to have "Mistress" back again!

MRS. LAWRENCE writes: "When I was living in Brittany I one day brought home a young kitten. My maid said, 'Madame will of course cut off the end of its tail?' I enquired why? 'Because there is a worm at the end of a cat's tail which poisons it if not cut off!' was the reply. I then began to understand the curious appearance of all the local cat-tails. As the Bretons are akin to the Cornish, Welsh, and Irish, it would be interesting to know if a similar superstition obtains in those countries. Ireland is rich in 'cat lore,' but I never heard that story there."

## A SIAMESE CHAT.

BY COMPTON MACKENZIE.

I HAD always understood that albinism, due to in-breeding over a long period of time, was one of the accepted explanations of the Siamese Cat. I know I am rushing in like a fool, and I am quite prepared to be crushed by my friend, Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, but may I suggest as a parallel case the Jersey cow? The marking of a Jersey cow is almost precisely like that of a Siamese cat, and so far as a cow's temperament can approximate to a cat's, the temperaments of the two animals are very similar. The devotion of the Siamese cat to the individual rather than to the place, is what we should expect to find in a highly selected and exclusive breed, but there are in the Siamese certain definitely "non-catty" traits, of which I for one should be glad to receive satisfactory explanation from people who know more about these things than I do. It is a commonplace to say that the Siamese has many of the qualities of the dog, though why this should be considered a compliment to a superior animal like the cat I do not know. The Siamese prefers patting to stroking. It wags its tail in answer to its name and as a sign of pleasure. It does not slink; it moves with the same kind of trot that you see in lions. It converses with you in an extraordinarily wide vocabulary for an animal. It is able, like a dog, to smile by raising its upper lip. It retrieves if encouraged to do so. It has a more passionate curiosity about everything than even the most proverbially curious cat. It can be nearly as destructive as a puppy when feeling mischievous. It has a profound contempt for what it considers an inferior race, like the Persian cat, which it will use as a cushion. It is the most jealous animal that I know, and this jealousy is the jealousy of a very emotional nature. It has a persistency that is dauntless. To take an example of this: The other day one of my cats decided to chew up a small solanum in a pot. This was taken away from him and given to the gardener. The cat felt thwarted, and, after crying like a spoilt child for an hour or two under a bed, remembered that he had seen hidden away on top of a cupboard a small artificial Christmas tree, and as soon as the opportunity presented itself he climbed up on the cupboard, fetched down the Christmas tree, and proceeded to chew that up!

The only cat I have ever known, and I have known many cats of many varieties intimately, that could compare in intelligence, in sense of humour, and in personal charm to the Siamese, was a Manx cat I once had. I have always heard as a tradition that the Manx cat was due to a wreck many years ago, from which two Malay cats were rescued. Is the Manx cat a cousin of the Siamese?

The taillessness of the Manx cat is very prepotent. The introduction of a Manx male to any English village will start a line of tailless, or half tailless cats for many generations.

Let me wind up these few disjointed remarks by protesting, as strongly as I know how to protest, against the perfectly fatuous attempt, fatuous in a double sense because both impossible and undesirable, to breed out the kink. Why try to get rid of one of the characteristics of the best animal in the world? I cannot see any analogy between the kink of the bulldog and the Siamese. The bulldog can only wag all its tail, but the Siamese can talk with the kinked end while the rest of the tail remains perfectly motionless. I have seen a litter of kittens from the mating of a straight-tailed imported Siamese queen with a common Italian cat, all of which had very short kinked tails.

## WHAT OUR READERS SAY.

From Mrs. BELLOC-LOWNDES

(the distinguished novelist):—

"I am so glad you are enlarging CAT GOSSIP; we all look forward to it so much every week."

"I am delighted to know we fanciers are to have a paper once more devoted entirely to our own interests, and congratulate you."

(Mrs.) B. ROBERTS.

"YOUR charming little paper."

(Mrs.) KATE E. STACEY (Chicago).

"EVERYONE catty I meet, says we need a catty paper. CAT GOSSIP may become the paper of the day!"

(Miss) RUBY COOKE.

"I do enjoy CAT GOSSIP; it is needed, and one one knows that in it full justice will be done to the Short-hair Cat!"

(Miss) A. KENT (E. Bechuanaland).

## THE CREAM PERSIAN OF TO-DAY.

BY MISS ADYE.

SURELY breeders of Cream Persians, perhaps more than of any other variety, have every cause to congratulate themselves on the enormous increase in popularity of these most charming cats. Three or four years ago, of what did the cream classes at our Championship Shows consist? Two or three entries at the outside: males (with an occasional female, dear little lass, shoved in amongst them for luck) and usually headed by that grand old man, Ch. John Barleycorn, who, Mr. Norris tells me, is as full of beans as a two year old. Nowadays, our cream classes, the males at any rate, bid fair to challenge even the blues in number; and, I think, in quality.

Although this season, for the first time, the cream female entries have about equalled the males, they will probably remain in the minority as long as it is necessary to use the blue cross; the cream female from this breeding being still a forlorn quest—the blue cream persisting in taking her place. Much though I admire these sweet cats, I hope

soon to see them, like Tortoiseshells, a separate breed, with Championship classes for themselves; and, who knows? males as well. They are far too lovely for the A.O.V. class. Let us not forget the great help blue creams are in breeding pure creams, and to them, without doubt, we owe the wonderful pale, unmarked creams of to-day. Certainly the blue cream queen shows no reluctance to breed a cream female kitten; in fact, she often has more cream females than males if mated to a cream stud. Frequently, the males from these litters, when not pure cream, are a sound, pale blue, a very saleable article.

Again, from a business point of view, which, alas, so few of us are able to ignore, what a contrast there is in the demand for cream kittens as pets. Instead of selling them at the end of the season to "someone who couldn't get the wished-for colour," in these days many well-known breeders are booked already for any creams they are likely to breed, though, of course, most people reserve a few for showing.

On two counts we are very lucky. The first that creams are such a strong, healthy breed; the second (upon which, possibly, the

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Custom has decreed that cats be fed from the leavings on the table. But why? The inadvisability of such promiscuous feeding is as obvious as the fact that the constitution of the cat is widely different from our own.

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first depends), is that all through the years devastated by war, cream breeders were enthusiastic and sporting enough to keep no less than five distinct strains going. The Ch. Carboldisham Junker, Ch. John Barley-corn, Kentish Daffodil, the Plaicy cats, and last, but by no means least, those gorgeous pale creatures of perfect type descended from Blair Athol, of which Ch. High Jinks, of Wimbledon, was the first to win distinction. I trust the owners realise the kudos due to them when they see scions of these noble families winning at all the championship shows of the present day.

About creams bred from tortoiseshells, I can only give personal experience. From this I must say they have given me "the goods" every time. My very first venture in catdom, a tortoiseshell queen, Wynnstay Popinjay, mated to a cream, Sunny Jim, had two female kittens; one red, bought by Mrs. Neate, and a perfect cream, who died at six months. When years had softened this blow, I mated my tortoiseshell, Baby Bunting, to Ch. High Jinks, the result was my Ch. Endymion of the Balcony. Mated to Prince Boscoe, Baby Bunting had the lovely cream I sold to Mrs. Quarry; Diana of Winchfield, who last year had a record litter of four creams, winning 1st and 3rd cream male kits, and 1st and 2nd cream female kits at Reading in big classes. Mrs. Tomlinson's tortoiseshell, Lady Maythorpe, mated to Ch. Endymion, had three creams, a female, Nervina, has won a lot this season, being 1st in cream kits (6 to 9 months) at the Crystal Palace, under Mrs. Slingsby. Mrs. Soames' tortoiseshell, Soame Hamette, mated to Ch. Endymion, had the cup winning cream kit, Soame Thistledown, at the same show.

Mrs. Hackett is one of the latest victims of the fascination of cream kits. She has a male and female, from which she is going to breed.

Mrs. Miller, of Guernsey, has also added creams to her cattery, a lovely male by Ch. Shazada, and a queen by Ch. High Jinks. She should do well with them. Both have exceptionally good eyes.

Mrs. MacWatt's Bubbles of Hanley, bred by Mrs. Stevenson, who was so successful at Kentish Town, is a great pet, spending a lot of his time in the house. I hope that next season we shall see some good kittens from his owner's two bluecream queens, because, like so many, Mrs. MacWatt has had rather a sad time with kittens. Mrs. Kennaway's two nice cream queens have also been mated

to Bubbles. The results should throw more light on the blue-cross question.

Other fanciers who are starting breeding creams from bluecreams are Mrs. Lloyd, Miss Bedford, and Mrs. Longhurst, whose beautiful Fawnhurst is, I hope, expecting a litter by Ch. Endymion. So are two sweet-faced cream queens belonging to the Honble. Mrs. Mundy, and Miss Jessie Steward's grand blue queen, Delphie. The latter, Mrs. Nathan, and Mrs. Sydney Evans are, I believe, only returning to their old love in taking up creams.

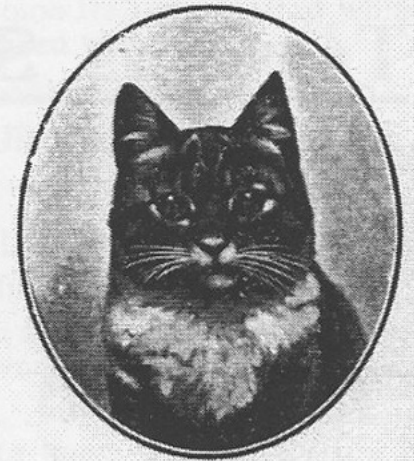
Mrs. Yeend tells me she has parted with her beautiful Norma of Bredon to make room for young stock.

We shall all look forward to seeing the progeny of Ch. Mignonette o' the Combe, and wish Miss Langhorne the same success in breeding from this marvellous queen that she has had in the show pen.

WINIFRED ADVE.

It was once upon a time a countryman's trick to bring a cat to market in a bag, and substitute it for a sucking pig in another bag if he got the chance in dealing with the unwary. If the trick was discovered, it was called letting the cat out of the bag; if not, he that made the bad bargain was said to have bought a pig in a poke.

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**VISITS.**

Feb. 4th. Mrs. Burke's **Ninka-me** to Mrs. Harvey's **Datoh of Petaling**

March 1st.—Miss H. Hill Shaw's **Paulmenski** to Miss Kent's **Eubonius**.

March 1st.—Miss Nancy Richardson's **Tatiana** to Miss H. Hill Shaw's **Prince Petrie of Cademuir**.

March 2nd.—Miss Longley's **Elonette** to Mrs. Campbell-Fraser's **Hendon Eastbury Boglie**.

March 4th.—Miss Stacey's **Moonflower** to Mrs. Campbell-Fraser's **Hendon Pish-Tush**.

March 5th.—Miss H. Hill Shaw's **Topsy** to Miss Kent's **Ferish**.

March 7th.—Mrs. Lawenki's **Shadow**; March 9th.—Mrs. Cooke's **Blue Delf** both to Mrs. Campbell-Fraser's **Hendon Alexis**.

March 9th.—Miss Raper's Siamese **Kitchee** to Mrs. Hindley's **Simzo**.

**BIRTHS.**

March 10th. Miss Busteed's **Highfield Litamoot**, 4 kittens by owner's **Robinsbci**.

IT HAS been suggested that the fact that the priestesses of Bast were vowed to celibacy, and passed their time attending to the sacred cats of the Temple, may have given rise to the idea that a fondness for cats is a sign of old-maidism.

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**ADVERTISEMENTS.** Displayed Adverts., Stud or others, **3/6** per inch, cash, up to 4 insertions; 4 to 13 insertions **3/4** inch; 13 and upwards **2/9** inch. Standing Advs. of Cat Clubs, 55 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**, BISHOP'S HULL, TAUNTON. Ass-ist. Editor, London Agency and Book Reviews: **M. Sheridan-Jones**, 11, Tunley Road, London, S.W. 17.

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