

CAT · GOSSIP

VOL. 3

Edited by H. C. BROOKE

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Price 3d., post free

L.H. BLACKS IN THE SEASON 1927.

By MRS. CAMPBELL-FRASER.

Our black L.H. cats may still compare unfavourably with those fine champions of pre-war days, although we know a halo frequently and rightly surrounds the past; but this handsome variety of the Persian is decidedly on the up-grade nevertheless, and in a few years we shall see colour (the prime factor), type, and texture of coat vastly improved if present-day breeders will but persevere! Competition is more rife than a year or two ago, and in itself spells keenness and success. To obtain one colour by launching out into another requires knowledge and great determination, and faint hearts frequently give up the quest in consequence. In certain cases we know it must be done, being inevitable for the re-establishment of an impoverished variety. But in my own opinion, after looking round the blacks which have been benched this season, we have crossed the Rubicon, and passed the stage for the present, where much out-crossing is a necessity, either with blue or any other colour. At our six championship shows black classes were stronger and better filled than in 1926. Fourteen adults mustered at the National and at the Southern. Of the adult males shown during the season Mrs. B. H. Soame's Soame Desert Chief, on emerging from kittenhood, carried off two consecutive championships at the two first shows of the year. Zarane, a handsome newcomer, hailing from the Land o' Cakes, and belonging to Mrs. Pettigrew Ferguson, gained the distinctions of 1st and champion and best black cat at the National. Ivanhoe of Hadley, in fine form, running off with like honours for Miss J. M. Fisher at the S.C.C.C. Of the female adults, my Lorina of Hadley, Mrs. McClure's Ch. Jill of Ashburnham, Mrs. Yeates' Ch. Zulanda, and Mrs. Hill's Hendon Black Zorah, each won premier honours, Ch. Jill scoring with two championships and being twice best black cat in show; Lorina and Ch. Zulanda each annexing this distinction once. Amongst the kittens I saw some of great promise, Mrs. McClure's Hillington Black Jester, Mrs. Sidney Evans' Heathside Sunny (now re-registered Heathside Sun of Flanark), Mrs. Yeates Waratara, Miss J. M. Fisher's Mascot of Hadley all added to their 1st prize in their own class the pleasing award of best black kitten in show. From the above three scions from old stock another

year or so ought to bring the improvement looked for amongst our blacks. The strains in each case are more or less unrelated, therefore with this possible addition of three new sires too close breeding can easily be avoided, for added to the number of studs of the moment our outlook for breeding will be balcyon. Hillington Jester is bred in the background from that renowned cat of Mrs. Benest, Midnight Mail. Heathside Sunny draws his black from the Eastbury blacks and the Ch. Flanark line. Mascot of Hadley belongs, as his name implies, to the Hadley strain, which like "good wine needs no bush." The winning female kitten of the year, Mrs. Yeates' Waratara, by Hendon Eastbury Boglie, was the only black female kit to take 1st in her open class, being also best black kitten in show at the National—a proud record. It is to be deplored that so few black female kittens should have made their debüt—a poor promise for motherhood, or as W. S. Gilbert has it "how is posterity to be provided?"—and, indeed, despair would overwhelm us did we not know that there are in the various black catteries several first-class breeding queens well fitted to carry on the good work—young, strong, and healthy. So—forward cheerfully. The most notable occurrence in the annals of the L.H. black this season was the making of two full champions—Ch. Ivanhoe of Hadley and Ch. Lorina of Hadley. Lorina was bred by the late Miss Bowtell, and won two championships when under her ownership. En passant, at that time Miss Bowtell possessed one of the best catteries of black Persians, whose foundation, the Earlsfield Delta strain, was long ago broken up. The mother of Ivanhoe was that fine-headed female, Eastbury Dicketta, and his sire Ch. Azure of Hadley, so long our only blue champion. I will close my notes with the hope that the best of luck will never desert the lucky black cat or the owners thereof.

L.H. WHITES IN PAST SEASON.

Some time ago I promised our Editor to give a review of the L.H. white in "Cat Gossip." My promise I must now fulfil. My impressions (if they are to be quite candid) on this particularly fascinating breed, will, I fear, not be very pleasing to the exhibitors. So, from the outset, let me make it quite clear that it is not my intention to criticise any individual cat, or cats; my remarks on them are to be taken as a whole! As to their progress I

fear we must write nil! My advice to breeders, especially novices, is to breed true to type. What is really needed is broad skulls, short noses, and small ears. Too much attention is paid to coat and condition, especially condition, in these days, and, what is far more important, viz., type, has been painfully neglected. The first aim of every breeder ought to be to breed worthy specimens, and, having attained this, then turn their thoughts to condition. Let it not be said in the future, as is widely circulated at present, that any kind of L.H. white cat is eligible for a championship provided it is shown in good condition. There is nothing I admire more than a white cat well shown, but we must not sacrifice type to condition, and thereby breed inferior specimens. By degrees these lovely L.H. whites will so deteriorate that they will have to be relegated to some other class, and eventually become extinct. So, fanciers, awake, and save our beautiful white felines, who were once the idols of Kings and Queens, from such a fate! I have been given to understand that these blue-eyed white cats came from Kabul, in Afghanistan, smuggled by the natives (more or less as bribes) to Assam. A great many of these pure white cats had odd eyes. Now, coming to eye colour, I fully endorse what Mrs. Campbell-Fraser says in "Cat Gossip." Why not have a class for golden-eyed whites? How I wish the G.C.C.F. would give their consent to this project. Quite recently I have seen an exquisite golden-eyed white kitten, an almost perfect specimen, with broad skull, snub nose, and tiny ears, a lovely flowing coat of pure white fur. I am hoping to procure him, he is such a gem. Trusting that these few words of mind may encourage novices and stir up breeders to raise the standard of our whites.

E. L'ESTRANGE WALSH.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

We regret to notice that there is a tendency not to give "Cat Gossip" its **fair share** of the Fancy's advertisements. "Ads." are the life-blood of a paper; no paper can live on its subscriptions. It has been a hard struggle for us to start this paper, a job which no one else has had the pluck to undertake, though surely the British Cat Fancy should have what the younger American, German, and French Fancies have—a journal of its own? The running of this paper is a very great tie. We are compelled to cut short our Continental holiday every year for it; "week-ends" are out of the question, for Saturdays and Mondays we must be on the spot to get in final matter and to read proofs. As we have before stated, we do not want to make a big profit, for we never started the paper as a commercial proposition. We offer you advertisements at low rates, free veterinary advice, **post-mortems at a nominal figure**, illustrations at **cost price to us**, the quality of same being dependent **entirely on you**; send us **good** photos and we **guarantee** good illustrations—if your photos are poor we cannot make better blocks from them! We

are willing to sacrifice our time and labour in your interests, but we certainly do not intend to lose money into the bargain! So there it is, the matter lies in your hands; either you give us a **fair share** of the Fancy's advertisements, or we shall stop publishing. It is immaterial to us! but we do not consider it fair that our columns should be used for free publicity, but that our **paid-for** publicity should only go elsewhere. As we have before pointed out, "Cat Gossip" has to stand on its own legs, and is not merely a cat section carried on the back of another large and well-paying fancy; were it so we might well afford to be careless as to whether it covered expenses or not.

In view of recent arguments, it is of interest to note that the "Animals' Advocate" for August last (the organ of the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals) says: "Cat owners in the past have seemed to look on castor oil as a specific for every imaginable complaint. Now as a matter of fact it is very bad for **cats**. They have a very highly developed system, and cannot take the heavy oils or bad tasting medicines prescribed for **dogs**. Often after being dosed with some disagreeable medicine like castor oil, **cats** will sit in a corner and dribble for days, refusing to take either food or drink."

We are quite in accord with this writer, and in days gone by, when we owned forty or fifty dogs at a time, and a score of cats, rarely used this very over-rated drug even for dogs; never for cats, which leathe it. They are not like the young bear at the Zoo, which resisted for a long time, *vi et armis*, the efforts of a Fellow and a keeper to dose it with the filthy stuff. Exhausted at last, their clothes torn and greasy, the pair left the cage with bleeding hands and bitter hearts, forgetting the oil, whereupon Bruin waddled across to the dish of oil and "golloped" the lot!

Is it a sign of improvement at last? Ten brown tabbies at Kentish Town. We hope so.

We are glad to hear that Mrs. Batt's S.H. blue queens, which did very well under us at the Palace, but were not at all well at Kentish Town, they having apparently taken a chill on top of a 'bus, are now quite all right again. Mrs. Batt pins her faith in such cases to Bovril and Virol, and no solid food; and kindly writes: "I think it is just your 'Something different' which makes Thursday's post so looked forward to."

Mrs. BROUGHTON-HAWLEY, who is now beginning to recover from the terrible strain and anxiety of the ordeal she had to steel herself to undergo last month, writes, about the size of cats, that when a child she used to visit a place near Streatham where there was an enormous cat, which won the prize at the Palace for heaviest cat. He weighed over 20lbs., and when he died was stuffed. The stuffer used to relate that he sold 9lbs. of fat from this cat to make "Butterine"!

Mrs. YEEND has bought Blue Boy of Dunesk (five firsts and best kitten in show at Newcastle, etc.)



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from Mrs. Brunton, and re-registered him as Marvel of Bredon.

Mrs. WADE, we learn, has consented to carry on with the Secretaryship of the Siamese Cat Club, and we hope now it will be all plain sailing for this important body, whose advertisement appear elsewhere. A report of their meeting on Wednesday last is also given.

THE "Dog's Bulletin" (organ of the National Canine Defence League, says, referring to the work done at their clinics: "Taking needles out of the mouths of cats is quite a common task at our clinics. . . . Many people are under the impression that a cat can fall from a considerable height without injuring itself greatly. A cat usually falls on its feet, and when it walks away people think that it is unhurt. We frequently have cats brought in to our clinics who have undergone this experience, and nearly always find that the cat has split the roof of its mouth, and there is no possible way of putting this right. The best thing is to have the cat put to sleep, as it will probably have blood poisoning and die in agony." Referring to pending legislation this Session, it adds: "Another Bill which our Chairman has in hand is the Dogs and Cats Bill, which would be a great blow at dog-stealing, especially for vivisection use (or misuse)."

Through pressure on space, the continuation of the article on "Some Cat Tales" is held over.

GENERAL MEETING OF THE SIAMESE CAT CLUB.

Feb. 1st, 1928, at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet-street, at 2.30 p.m.

In the chair, Mr. Lloyd Lewis. Present: Mrs. Veley, Mrs. Maturin, Mrs. Cran, Miss Hill Shaw, Mrs. Wade, Mrs. Merz, Mrs. Yeates, Miss Stent, Mr. Percival, Miss Sidney Fairbrother, Miss Wilson, Mr. Boccock, Mrs. Meuzens, Miss Busted, Mrs. Murray, Mrs. Hindley, Mr. Murray, Mrs. O'Grady, Mrs. Hallam, Mrs. Calvert, Mrs. Cates, Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Coles, Mr. Wicking, Mr. Elliot Gorst, Mrs. Ryder, Mrs. Paish, Mrs. Basnett, Miss Tussard, Mrs. French, Miss Norris, Mrs. Croucher, Sister Stockley, Major Woodiwiss, Mr. Basnett, Miss Dixon, Lady Holt, Mrs. Fall, Miss Elizabeth and Miss Susan Lowndes, Mrs. Scott Russell. Minutes of the last general meeting were read and passed. It was unanimously agreed to place first on the agenda Mrs. Hindley's motion, "That the general meeting of the S.C.C. thinks it desirable that an explanation be given on the accepted resignation of Miss Busted as Secretary by the Committee." Mrs. Hindley spoke on her motion. Mr. Lewis replied that this motion had most unfortunately compelled him, much against his will, to read correspondence between himself and Miss Busted. Miss Busted gave an explanation. Major Woodiwiss replied. Mrs. Hindley withdrew her motion, as Mr.

Lewis's explanation was accepted. Mr. Elliot Gorst moved a vote of confidence in the committee. Carried. Mrs. Cran proposed, Mrs. Veley seconded, that Mr. Compton Mackenzie be elected President. Carried. Proposed by Mrs. Cran, seconded by Miss Hill Shaw, that Mrs. de Vere Brooke, Mr. Louis Wain, and Miss Busted be made Vice-Presidents. Carried. Major Woodiwiss and Mrs. Fall retired from the Committee, and Miss Wilson and Mr. Boccock were elected in their place. Proposed by Mrs. Veley, seconded by Mrs. Maturin, that Mrs. Wade be elected Hon. Secretary. Carried unanimously. Proposed by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mrs. Maturin, that Mrs. Veley be elected Vice-Chairman. Carried unanimously. Proposed by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Miss Busted, that Miss Dixon be elected Hon. Treasurer. Carried unanimously. Mrs. Veley refused owing to pressure of work, to stand again as Delegate to the G.C.C.F. Mrs. Cran and Mrs. Maturin were appointed as Delegates. Mr. Basnett moved a very hearty vote of thanks to Major Woodiwiss for all the time, labour, and money he has expended on compiling the two volumes of the Club Register of Siamese Cats. It is a most valuable and useful work, which no breeder should be without, and it is entirely due to Major Woodiwiss that the Club possesses such a Register. This was seconded by Mrs. Veley, and carried unanimously. A small sub-committee was appointed to examine the new rules, consisting of Mr. Basnett, Mr. Gorst, Miss Sydney Fairbrother. Mr. Gorst proposed a very hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was carried unanimously. Proposed by Mrs. Cran, and seconded by Mr. Gorst, that the balance sheet be adopted as correct. The annual report and balance sheet will be sent to all members as soon as possible.

PHYLLIS WADE (Hon. Sec.).

89, Alexandra Road, London, N.W. 8.

CAT CALLS.

SOUTHERN COUNTIES' CAT CLUB SHOW.

TO THE EDITOR.

Would it be possible to know the reason why the judge of Siamese at the above Show awarded more than one prize in either the stud or brood queen classes? According to the definition of classes on page 7 of the Catalogue it distinctly states that these two classes are to be judged "on own merits and that of progeny in the Show. **Both must be present,**" and yet the only cats entered in these two classes for Siamese were the 1st prize winners in each that had any progeny in the Show, the 2nd, 3rd, and reserve winners in the stud cat class, and the 2nd prize winner in the brood queen class had none. May I quote the judge's own words and say "judges should take the trouble to read the rules carefully before" awarding prizes in the two classes I have mentioned.

E. SYDNEY WOODIWISS.

SIZE IN SIAMESE.

TO THE EDITOR.

Replying to a letter from Mr. Frank Harvey in your issue of the 25th ult. respecting size in Siamese cats: I feel I should like to point out that the standard of points for a Siamese Cat is laid down in the Club's Book of Rules, and in the issue I have before me I find no mention of size at all. Although, of course, it is acknowledged that a certain recognised size is looked for on the show bench, I see no reason why, on occasion, a small or large cat should not fulfil the standard of points in force at that time. As regards the aims of Siamese breeders, personally I should not have any objection to a "little gem" in my cattery, as I think it will be agreed that in the breeding of all live stock, some of the very best can trace their origin to "little gems." I gather from Mr. Harvey's letter that his point is that size should be a part of the standard of points as laid down by the Club for the guidance of all, including the judges. That point I will bring before the committee at the earliest possible moment. The question as to whether a judge should award or withhold a championship has been, and I presume always will be, a subject much discussed by breeders and exhibitors. To my mind it is the judge's business, and as they are only human I should like to take this opportunity of thanking Mr. Harvey for raising the point and to congratulate the Siamese Club on the number of men folk among its members who take an active interest in the true breeding of the Siamese cat, and to add that discussion should be for the betterment of all, including the cat.

HAROLD W. BASNETT.

THE TWO POWDER PUFFS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Miss George is very anxious to make it clear that it was not her blue female kitten, Powder Puff, that was guilty of savaging two ladies at Worcester. The offending cat was the white adult male, Powder Puff of Runnymede. Miss George has been boarding Powder Puff for Mrs. Vaughan, her new owner, and when she wrote asking if she might send back the kitten, Mrs. Vaughan wired, "Very sorry, cannot possibly have Powder Puff; read report Worcester"! Miss George is naturally anxious that others should not make the same mistake, and wishes to point out that all Flick-a-Maroo's kittens are exceptionally good-tempered.

POLYDACTYLE CATS.

A REPLY TO A RECENT CRITICISM.

I was greatly interested in our Editor's and Major Hamilton Kirk's criticisms of my theory of polydactylism in cats. I would love to reply to it point by point were space not precious. As it is, I can only attempt the defence of some aspects. I was talking to my gardener one day, when puss arrived on the

scene carrying a bird. "How you can like them cruel cats beats me, Mum," he indignantly exclaimed. "Once on a time," I replied, "men and cats alike lived on a bloodless diet, but famine taught them to slay if they would eat, and the taste for such food once acquired has been handed on. Not only cats, but men eat flesh to-day." "Then why be the cats made with *clees?" he sagely enquired. I began to explain how such elaborate weapons had developed from freaks and variations of an originally simple form in response to a growing need. A double necessity had been laid upon puss. Not only must she kill to provide herself and her offspring with food in times of scarcity, but a means of defence against the no longer harmless creatures who shared this need must be found. Those among her descendants blessed with a new weapon by some helpful variation, had the best chance of surviving and handing on their gain. Life was short for the unadaptable, and their descendants were few. Natural evolution had not ceased to function even to-day, as he might see by examining the claws of my polydactyle cats. As I spoke a strange dog rushed along the path, and another use of pussy's claws was demonstrated. In a moment she was clinging among the swaying branches of a nearby tree, her thumb-like extra toes providing so firm a hold that not even a gale could have shaken her loose against her will. "See!" I exclaimed, "even to-day there are other uses than bloodshed for pussy's claws. They need not be 'cast as rubbish to the void' when the Golden Age returns! For so used, they not only provide a refuge, but bring to her a wider vision," Nature has specialised in her care of pussy's feet. Not even to man has been granted the feline's power of retracting the nails. Nature is still experimenting, and useless types, such as the extra toes set too high above the normal foot to be serviceable, are introduced, but quickly discarded, unless fostered by artificial selection. The type of polydactylism exhibited by the Cradley strain is of practical value, for each claw retains the normal powers, whilst the angle at which the extras are placed, gives an extraordinary grip. Unlike the useless dew-claws of a St. Bernard, the broadened pad is an obvious advantage on snow or yielding ground. It seems to me that the judge of polydactyles should always place first the consideration of practical utility. Are the extra claws at the best angle for increasing grip? Can the cat fully control them? Are they sufficiently strong for her purposes? Will they spread out fanwise and assist her progress on swamp or snow? Such are the points of real importance. Symmetry and number of extras are of quite secondary standing. Otherwise, as Major Hamilton Kirk warns us, there is the danger of popularising a freak or monstrosity. But so long as we intelligently follow Nature's evolutionary ideals, we have nothing to fear.

M. OLDFIELD HOWEY.

* Claws.

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"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 Advertisements, 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 Advertisements of Cat Clubs, 35 words, 2/6. Sales, Wants, &c., 1d. per word, minimum 1/6.

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All correspondence re "CAT GOSSIP" to the Editor,

H. C. BROOKE,

Bishop's Hull, Taunton.

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