

CAT · GOSSIP

VOL. 3

Edited by H. C. BROOKE

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THE CAT'S SERENADE.

(Old English parody on "The Young May Moon.")

The lamps are faintly gleaming, love,
The thief on his walk is scheming, love,
And it's sweet to crawl
O'er the garden wall
While the tabbies are gently screaming, love!
Then put out one paw so white, my dear,
The house-tops are covered with light, my dear,
Through the day, at our ease,
We'll sleep when we please,
And we'll ramble abroad through the night, my dear.
Now all the world is sleeping, love,
But the Charley* his watch is keeping, love!
And here I wait
On the cold, cold slate,
While you're at the mouse-hole peeping, love!
Then awake, till rise of sun, my dear,
And we'll have the devil's own fun, my dear;
But if you look shy
Faith, it's all my eye,
And away with another I'll run, my dear!

[*Charley: Slang name for the old night-watchman.]

LONG-HAIR LORE.

By MRS. CAMPBELL-FRASER. (Phone: Hendon 1019).

It is always pleasant to have news of that handsome and too rare variety, the smoke Persians, so doubly welcome to Miss Bowden-Smith's cheery letter! "I thought," she writes, "that you might be interested to hear that I have bought Tattersett Tony from Miss Okey. He is a very fine smoke kitten by Ch. Dragon of the Cottage, and Danny's Dab-chick, litter sister to Ch. Goblin. He did a lot of winning in the shows last winter, and will, I hope, turn out as well as he promises now. I have also bought Wendy of the Cottage. I am glad to have her back again; she was lent me by Mrs. Singleton before she gave up cats. I wonder if any readers of 'Cat Gossip' have noticed how very rusty smokes and blacks and even Chinchillas get, living on clay soil? At least that is the only way I can account for mine being so rusty. Cats that I have bred, as soon as they leave here, and change their coats, are perfectly all right. Clay is the only reason I can put it down to. I am expecting a busy spring; my orange-eyed smoke, Dawn, has visited Ch. Ivanhoe of Hadley; Cinderella is on a visit to Ch. Tarzan; two Chinchillas are already mated, and I have four more smoke ladies who will, I hope, be ready soon to mate with Ch. Goblin."

Persians and their owners are a busy fraternity at this time of year, and the Garboldisham Cattery is no whit behind. Mrs. Kennaway's Anemone has visited Mercury of Pensfold; Caroline, the blue cream female bred from Rose Recruit and True Type by Mrs. Neate, has returned to the Broad-lane Farm to be mated to that splendid young red tabby, King of the Reds. Candida, it is hoped, will have some lovely kittens by Ch. Mick of Bredon; Moselle has visited Bubbles of Hanley, and the pretty red self, Rose Ann, ought to give something special from a mating with that handsome self-red, Eastbury Barron.

The G.C. require all the various clubs to send up the names of their new yearly delegates by the 31st of this month. Voting for the delegates of the S.C.C.C. is now in full swing. The existing members up for re-election are Mr. F. W. Western and Mrs. Campbell-Fraser—votes to be recorded to Miss J. Langton, Raymead, Hendon, N.W., before and not later than Thursday, 22nd inst.

Miss Winifred French, who is one of those keen upon the resurrection of the brown tabby, has experienced a trying winter, but I will let her tell her own story in her own words:—"I am afraid the only news I have just now is bad news, for all my cats have been in hospital for the last few weeks with severe colds. They were just getting on nicely when this wretched weather put them all back again, and the house reeks of Vapex, eucalyptus, and cresoline lamps! When this trouble is over-past I hope to do a little experimental mating with my brown tabbies. Jennie Mallard, who did so well at Croydon and the Palace, is booked to a prize-winning cream; Joanna Godden to a silver tabby, and Lorena Middleton, a new acquisition, to a blue. The results will be very much on the knees of the gods, but I think they should be at least interesting, don't you? Little Kitty de Conteur, who has a sweet round face and snub nose, but mackerel or ticked markings, is destined for Ch. Garboldisham Mascot when she is old enough; Timothy Bastow, who won first and special in the brown tabby class the only time he was shown, has had to be neutered, as I cannot keep a stud cat here. It is a pity, for he is growing into a very handsome cat, with good coat and copper-hazel eyes; however, his mother, Norah of Merioneth, the property of Mrs. Bryan, is in kitten to Ch. Florizel of Frampton, so we are hoping she may produce something even better this time.

What a horrible winter this has been for cats! Two of mine very nearly died, but they are all eating like cormorants now, so I hope I shall have no tragedies—other than a state of bankruptcy!"

Hendon Sir Despard, son of Hendon Pooh-Bah, whose maternal grandfather was Ronnie of Hawkhurst, has been spending a very enjoyable vacation in the most lovely part of Cornwall. His homecoming address to his expectant relatives was not couched in the most flowery language—we fear it resembled more the "Hymn of Hate."

Miss I. Anderson, of Bath, is very busy owing to the forthcoming Animal Welfare Week in that town; later she promises to send us news of her pets. It will be remembered that Miss Anderson and her sister were the breeders of Ch. Northern Light, a white Persian male, who has been very successful on the show bench. He—Ch. Northern Light—bears out Mr. House's theory as to the mating of a white to a blue.

From Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, Mrs. Newton writes of that fascinating Persian, the tortoiseshell: "Some time ago, having lost our beautiful tabby Persian—a neuter—my young son was so sad that I promised to buy another kitten. However, we could not bear the idea of a tabby again, and when a very tiny, very fierce tortie baby was shown us we fell in love with her on the spot, although I had no thought of breeding then; I soon became keen when I found that on her mother's side she came of a noted strain, and I sent her to a blue sire, and when a year old she presented me with two nice kittens, a blue and a black, both males, proving herself a splendid mother, but very jealous if too much attention was given to her babes. Since then I have acquired a little blue Persian female, who is now six months old. She is very sweet and loving, but the tortoiseshell has far more character, and will not make friends with everybody.

DEBUTANTE'S DIARY.

The Ideal Home: Our little family will shortly appear, and Mrs. Puss must have her home ready. It is well that it should be to her own liking, and that she should sleep in the "nest" some nights before the arrival of her babes; in this way the nest will be converted by her into the right and most comfortable shape. Circumstances have much to do in governing the "locality" for our expectant mothers' ideal home, but two things must be borne in mind, the nesting-box must be large enough for puss to stretch herself out, and also to curl comfortably round, for she will take the first position when the kits are arriving, the second when the little family are intact. Secondly, for 24 hours the less Mother Puss is disturbed the better; and be sure the nest is not exposed to bright light, natural or artificial.

VISITS.

March 5th.—Mrs. Okey's **Una**:
March 8th.—Mrs. Okey's **Shirley**: both to Miss Bowden-Smith's **Ch. Goblin**.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

WE think it due to those of our supporters who in the past have had small portraits of their cats published at the same charge as now made for larger ones, to explain that our block-makers recently agreed to make larger blocks for us for the price stated. Our block-makers are amongst the best in London, and **given good photos** to work from good blocks are assured.

THE Croydon Cat Club elections are now on. The Annual General Meeting of this Club will take place on Thursday, 29th inst., at 2.30 p.m., at Anderton's Hotel. We are sorry to see that there was a deficit of £14 on the 1927 Show. We wish the Club—which, we note, has a membership of 130—a greater success next time.

THE quaint and delightful Manx, we are pleased to hear, have found a new admirer in the person of Mrs. Aubertin, of Twyford. This lady already keeps Scottish terriers, pigeons, rabbits, etc., and has now purchased Ginger Pop from Miss Richardson.

ARTICLES shortly to appear in "Cat Gossip":—"Silver and Gold have I none," by Miss Northcote (whose poem, "The Railway Cat," and prose, "The Witching Hour," were so enthusiastically commented upon when they appeared in "Cat Gossip" last year); "The Legend of the Cat's Head Apple," an Old English yarn in verse; "The Signboard and the Cat," by the Editor; "Catty Anecdotes," by Mrs. Garden; a very remarkable and arresting study by Miss Norrie, which will certainly appeal to real lovers, as apart from "fanciers," of the Siamese.

QUITE a number of Ocelot cats have reached England of late—unfortunately such young specimens that the cognoscenti fear to risk their purchase. No domestic feline has ever come within miles of their wonderful beauty. Dr. Cornish wrote of them:—"The Argus pheasant alone seems to afford a parallel to the beauties of the Ocelot's fur."

THE eminent novelist, Mr. Compton Mackenzie, writes anent his recent election to the Presidency of the Siamese Club, that his cats will be getting swollen heads now their master holds this distinction! We hope not, for the Siamese is the last variety which should have a swollen head—which would destroy the desired "wedge"!

MRS. BATT writes mentioning that Ch. Imperial Blue Prince, referred to inexplicably as a "new face" recently, is far from being that, as he won his first ch. at Reading 1927 (Western), second C.P. (Brooke), third Kentish Town (House), besides a lot of other prizes. Our reporter had already drawn attention to the error, and there was also an inaccuracy in attributing so many of the blue S.H. exhibits at Kentish Town to Miss Wakeford, as two belonged to Mrs. Batt, one to Mrs. Stern, and one to Miss Sparrow. Our reporter puts the errors down to her bad writing—a matter in which we ourselves cannot afford to throw bricks!

SIAMESE IN THE PAST SEASON.

BY MRS. BASNETT.

(Continued from Page 255.)

After these Southern Shows we went North, and met some faces we knew from the South also, but quite a lot of new exhibits appeared, bred and born in the North. Mrs. Harvey's Pedro of Petaling won his second challenge certificate at this show, followed by Mrs. Maturin's Southampton Darboy second, and Miss Busteed's Robinsboi third, in adult males. Mrs. Harvey's Bonzette of Petaling could only be allowed her first prize, as there were not two challenge certificates offered; second, Mrs. Cates' Pekois; and third to a newcomer, Mrs. Spencer's Birk's Botany, in adult females. The sensation of the Siamese section was the winning female kitten, Mrs. Spencer's Ishi, another newcomer, followed by the same owner's male Wow with second place, and Mr. Woodgate's Fifi of Strover third, also a new little lady. I found it impossible to get to Worcester, and have had to go a-borrowing for the awards made at that show! Mrs. Calvert's Tai-Long became a full champion at Worcester; second place going to Mrs. Harvey's Pedro of Petaling, and third to Mrs. Maturin's Southampton Darboy in adult males. Mrs. Cates' Fairo made her debut as an adult at this show, being just eligible, and won her first challenge certificate; second, Mrs. Harvey's Bonzette of Petaling; third, Mrs. Cates' Pekois, in the adult female class. Kittens were very few, and the first prize male was Miss Chichester's Jackson, with no competition; and the first prize female, Mrs. Harvey's Marigold of Petaling, with no competition also. Now for the last show of the season, Kentish Town, or, rather, the Southern Counties 'Cat Club Show, to be quite correct. We welcomed again, after a long absence, Ch. Bonzo, but, of course, such a cat as he can comfortably afford to rest on his laurels, but it was very nice to see the dear fellow again, and looking so particularly fine. He went home with his fifth challenge certificate; the second place to his son, Mrs. Calvert's Tai-Long; third, another son, Mrs. Harvey's Pedro of Petaling. A newcomer, and would-be club member, appeared at this show, and exhibited her only cat, a male Siamese, but, unfortunately failed to read the rules, and paid the penalty by having her cat disqualified. The treatment meted out to her, all for the want of a little timely help and friendly advice, is a very sore point with me, and I can see some of our other judges trying to give such an obvious, mistaken novice a change by going to the next class, whilst somebody was sent post haste to put the pen in judging order. But as things are this novice will only retain a very poor impression, and I cannot see her risking another snubbing by supporting any future shows. Mrs. Harvey's Bonzette of Petaling won her full honours, with Mrs. Coles' S'mour second, and Mrs. Cates' Fairo third, and the

extra prize was given to Miss Stent's Herself as fourth in adult females. Mrs. Burke's trio of male kittens, Kitya-Nama, Mickee-Ming, and The Big Bozo, won first, second, and third places for male kittens' class, respectively; and the female kittens, first to Miss Smyth's Princess Zaidee; second, Mrs. Harvey's Marigold of Petaling; and third, Mrs. Mortimer-Livingston's Princess Zu-la, which brings one to the end of the show season 1927-1928, and in conclusion I would like to tell those interested that I recently obtained a young stud from abroad, who has wholly fresh blood in him direct from Siam. He has a good body colour of an even shade, dense points, and particularly good eyes, and he will be very useful to those owning Ch. Bonzo queens who do not wish to run the risks of in-breeding, which seems to be a very possible thing in the near future with so many of his excellent sons and daughters coming to the fore! What are we going to do with our blue pointed Siamese, for they seem to be getting fewer and fewer? I have made a few inquiries as to whether we have a living blue pointed stud, and so far failed to find one. I have a granddaughter of Donato, Mr. Percival's late blue pointed stud, and if I thought it worth my while to mate her with a son of his I should like to try the experiment. Is there anyone who can tell me if this is likely to be successful? Should a blue pointed male kitten be found amongst the usual coloured ones in a litter I hope he will be allowed to remain unneutered, and so provide a stud for the future. It seems a pity so little interest is taken in these fascinating Siamese lately, and although I was shown a lovely Siamese in Paris free of any seal brown marks of any kind, I could not find anything known of the blue pointed cats.

CLARE BASNETT.

Note by Ed.—The matter of the novice exhibitor who had forbidden articles on her pen at the time of judging, is a very delicate one. **The judge was strictly within her rights in passing the cat. The judge is not supposed to know whether a certain exhibit belongs to a novice exhibitor or not!** We can conceive (if not in this instance, in other if such occurred) complaints of "favouritism," etc., if the action Mrs. Basnett suggests were taken by the judge; had the steward done so prior to judging of the class that would have been better. The whole incident is most regrettable, and the exhibitor has our sympathy.

We are sorry to hear that Mrs. Taylor, Editor of "The Cat Courier," and known to many in this country, was taken ill with pneumonia after Detroit Show, and is only now in good health again.

BIRTHS.

March 4th.—Miss Elsie Fitzwilliams' Siamese, **Slingsby Beryl**, 4 kittens by **Tory Lad**.

March 14th.—Mrs. Waber's **Babette**, 7 kittens by Mrs. Kidd's **Ch. Tarzan**.

SOME CAT TALES.

BY FRANCIS DICKIE,

The Famous Canadian Story Writer.

(Author of "The Master Brewer," etc.)

Cats as a rule do not like water. But I know of two in Seattle which like to get into a full bath tub, and spend some time disporting themselves there. Mr. Van Vechten corroborates this as he relates in his book, "The Tiger In the House" that: "My Ariel had no aversion to water, and was accustomed to leap voluntarily into my warm morning tub, and she particularly liked to sit in the hand-wash-bowl under the open faucet. There are on record many instances of cats swimming rivers to return to their home. Recently a friend of mine gave away a young tom cat, as the animal was killing the young chickens. My friend lives on a small island in the mouth of the Fraser River, some ten miles from the city of Vancouver. The cat was taken away in a bag lying in the bottom of an automobile. Yet on the following night it returned home. Now the only way it could get home was either to cross two very long bridges, over which much traffic passed, including two lines of electric cars, or to swim. I do not, of course, know which the animal chose, but, knowing a cat's timidity of unknown things, and particularly of dogs also, of which there are usually a few on or near the bridges' ends, I am inclined to believe she swam." Quite aside from this, for an animal to find its way back over a distance of ten miles, most of which city streets, after having been taken away in the matter it was proves once more the uncanny sense of orientation possessed by these animals. St. George Mivart cites the case of a mother cat plunging into a stream to rescue her three drowning kittens, and this she succeeded in doing in spite of the swiftness of the water. Cats which go wild on the islands of British Columbia no doubt turn to fishing. Instances of cats fishing, however, are sufficiently common as to make unnecessary a fuller dwelling on this here.

Cats also in certain instances place themselves in anomalous positions not common to the other domestic animals. I refer to cases when the mothering instinct has been frustrated. It is usual to drown all but one of a cat's litter upon most farms and in city homes. Sometimes the entire family is put out of the way immediately after birth, a very cruel action in that the mother suffers greatly by not being relieved of her milk. Recently on a small poultry farm in British Columbia a mother cat had all her kittens taken away from her. Some hours later the owner was astonished to see the cat driving away from her brood of chickens a flustered and very reluctant hen. The chickens, eight in number, the cat carried to her own basket, and she kept them until they grew nearly to full size, the man, however, seeing to it the chicks, when very young, were fed. It was an amusing sight to see the black mother cat walking sedately in the yard with the brood at her heels.

Gilbert White, in his famous History of Selborne, 1788, relates in letter number 34: "My friend had a helpless little leveret brought to him, which the servants fed with milk from a spoon, and about the same time his cat kitteded, and the young were despatched and buried. The hare was soon lost, and supposed to have gone the way of most wondlings, to be killed by some dog or cat. However, in about a fortnight, as the master was sitting in his garden in the dusk of the evening, he observed his cat with tail erect trotting towards him, and calling with little short inward notes of complacency, such as they use toward their kittens, and something gambling after, which proved to be the leveret, that the cat had supported with her milk, and continued to support with great affection. . . . For it is not one whit more marvellous that Romulus and Remus, in their infant state, should be nursed by a she-wolf than that poor little sucking leveret should be fostered and cherished by a bloody grimalkin."

In a splendid introduction to his " Fireside Edition " of " The American History," Dr. W. T. Hornaday, the eminent zoologist, and Director of New York Zoological Park, touches upon the over-estimation of animal intelligence which has been done by a certain school of writers in recent years, and delivers a justly made and well-worded rebuke to this class of writers, who, unfortunately, still are legion, because the public seems to like to pay good money to read of the impossible doings of animal heroes. In part Dr. Hornaday writes: " In matters involving intelligence, such as in the treatment of wounds, or disease, below the higher primates there is not more than one out of every hundred which has sense enough to comprehend a relief measure, or which will not fight the surgeon to the utmost."

This I know from experience. I have owned dogs, exceedingly intelligent, yet which would run away rather than be doctored. One dog came nearly biting me when I was endeavouring to put a little powder on a torn and festering ear. In this respect the cat again shows its higher intelligence. I doctored one case for a painful skin disease, the treatment of which necessitated dipping the animal's tail in a tar and carbolic solution, which caused not only a sharp smarting at first, but was sticky and clung a long time before drying, conditions particularly objectionable to all felines. Yet the cat allowed me to dip it a number of times, never offered to scratch, nor made any attempt to get away from me when I came to take it for its treatment. All it ever did was to utter a low reproachful " myrr " at the moment of immersion.

As to the cat's intelligence along this line, I find again corroboration of my own discoveries in Mr. Van Vechten's book already mentioned. He tells me on page 51 that during the Crimean War Colonel Stuart Wortley's cat visited the doctor to get a bayonet wound in the foot examined. The Colonel found her wounded after the battle of Malakoff, and took her daily to be treated. He became ill, but

she continued the visits to the doctor of her own accord.

Recently I read an interesting Press despatch emanating from California. An artist and his wife had separated. They agreed on the terms of parting on everything but the disposal of the family cat. The matter was finally settled by the woman keeping the animal on the understanding that the husband could come and visit it at stated intervals. Under such circumstances, it might not be improbable that through the cat a reconciliation might be made.

Such things were provided for by law a great many years ago. In Wales in the 10th century the Dime-tian Code read as follows: "In case of the separation of man and wife, the goods and chattels were to be divided, but the husband took the cat if there was but one."

From the time of the Persian Sufi Sadi until to-day, poets, philosophers, and novelists have loved and written of the cat. Baudelaire, Swinburne, Gautier, France, Matthew Arnold, Dickens, Barrow, Pater, Moore, Butler, Byron, Carlyle, Bentham, and a score of others are among the famous literary lights to whom puss has been dear, and still is dear, for Moore and France are still with us, and both still keep cats.

Perhaps the most touching story of man's consideration for the cat is that told by Mohammed, who, in response to the chant of the muezzin summoning him to prayers, cut off with a pair of scissors the hem of his cloak before arising to his feet, for fear of disturbing his cat, which had settled down thereon to sleep.

(To be continued.)

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