

CAT · GOSSIP

VOL. 3

Edited by H. C. BROOKE

No. 76

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Price 3d., post free

LONG-HAIR LORE.

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

I am very glad to hear that Mrs. Beatrice Buckle, Sexton Barns, Great Malvern, is so interested in "Cat Gossip," and I hope her queen, shortly expecting kittens, will bring her the best of luck. Two questions Mrs. Buckle, as a novice, is bringing forward, will one of the more advanced breeders kindly send her an answer through out columns. The two articles to take the form of "Kitten Rearing" and "Preparing for Shows."

A family of "five" boys needs catering for, be they human or feline! But my five, of the latter species, simply delight in an early breakfast of rough grass, just the kind to be found now, so luscious and full of that sweet scent which grass alone possesses. 'Tis well, if one has the misfortune to live entirely surrounded by bricks and mortar, to take a jaunt into the country every now and then to procure this dainty. We can grow grass in boxes and pots, and in every cattery, or wherever cats live, this is quite a duty towards our little pets, but grow it as we will, in town it never holds the sweetness of the real country grass. Grass plays a most important factor in the health of all cats, helping the Persian especially to get rid of that large amount of hair which is unavoidably swallowed during the constant care puss gives to his or her toilet. Those terrible balls or wads of hair, without the aid of this necessary emetic, collect in the internals of our pets, and frequently cost them their lives. I speak at the moment feelingly, for I am just returning a queen to her owner whom I am afraid is perhaps suffering from grass never having been given. She is a very heavily coated cat, a comb has long been foreign to her coat, so much so that I have in a few days a pile of loose hair, taken in daily combings, which would gladden the heart of the weaver! but the mirth does not reach me, as I am only wondering "how much there may be inside beyond my reach"? Lack of grass and laziness in using brush and comb, have much to answer for.

Mrs. Kidd, Carshalton, sends the following: "I have very little news at present. My queens have been backward this year, so far only two kittens; these were by Ch. Tarzan and Nanette of Downside (who, by the way, is a daughter of Dan Derby of

The Cottage, bred by Mrs. White). I am expecting a blue litter shortly by John of Downside and Moonlight, a daughter of Blue Boy of Beltey, breeder Miss Wrench. I saw a delightful family by John the other day, they belong to Mrs. Buffard, of Addiscombe; there are five fine kits, with great heads, and their coats are good and of a nice pale colour. Both John and Tarzan have been very busy this season, and I shall hope to see some of the kittens at the Kensington Kitten Show in July."

Hendon Ebonette is expecting her babes round about the 24th. As she is a very good mother 'tis something to look forward to. Ebonette is a daughter of one of my former black studs, Hendon Black Guron, and her mother was Little Dorrit, owned by Miss Longley. Ebonette is a very sedate little person, who eats "very slowly." (I wonder if it is under doctor's orders?) Always looks in "the pink," loves to live out of doors, comes in to bed always to time, is not above tackling a rat, but better loves a rabbit hunt! She is now mated to my Red Boy, as I fancy the combine—Ebonette is Barry Blue John's granddaughter, and the Boy is his great-grandson.

My notes had scarcely gone to print last week with my eulogium of that dear cat, Dewdrop of The Court, when a sad and hurried word reached me from Mrs. Oglethorpe with news of the sudden death of this perfect Mother Puss. "A few hours' illness and she was gone; we had hardly time to know she was ill; I can't realise that she has left us, dear little angel, so gentle and loving; never once has she shown me anything but the greatest love and affection."

Before quitting this sad theme, many will remember that lovely blue Persian kitten, Thistle Down, Dewdrop's daughter by Milord o' Mendip, who was "best L.H. kitten" at the Blue Persian Show of 1925. Fortunately, Mrs. Oglethorpe still owns a daughter of Dewdrop's Dainty Lady of The Court, to carry on her mother's tradition.

Richard King is a true animal lover; in reading a charming article of his, "Amongst Silent Friends," in "The Tatler" the other day he gave us the name of a book we should all read, "Wild Creatures of Garden and Hedgerow" (by Miss Frances Pitt). The new edition of this work is just published, and will endear itself to everyone who reads it, for Miss Pitt herself loves the little folk, those soft shadows of wood and grove about whom she writes.

DEBUTANTE'S DIARY.

It is always well to give each, individually, of your catty pets, a separate saucer, or plate, when feeding, and watch them eat, so that fair play is observed, otherwise when a greedy boy or girl is amongst the number, someone will go short, and someone else will suffer from over-eating, which, with kittens, quickly sets up gastric troubles. I once knew a girl, not an English girl, but one who loved her animals, but was unwise enough to think if she gave sufficient food, all, dogs, cats, and kittens, could feed together. Well, it became a case of let the best man win—and the results were disastrous.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

WE suppose it is not necessary to repeat our request for Siamese items to be sent to Mrs. Wade, and all other news items, advertisements, birth notices, etc., to Mrs. Campbell-Fraser during our absence from home. We fear it is too much to expect that the Post Office will properly deliver all copies of "Cat Gossip" for two or three weeks running—that would savour too much of the millennium! If any copies do not come to hand please send a postcard to the printers, "Cat Gossip," "Somerset County Gazette," Taunton, stating missing issue, and another one will be sent.

It was with great interest we read Mrs. Cran's article on blue-eyed blacks. It is, of course, less astonishing if such cats appear from a Siamese cross, because there we have the blue eye very firmly fixed in one parent, whereas this is not the case with Mrs. Carew-Cox's kitten. Even then, it is rather remarkable that such an albinistic property should appear with its exact opposite—a melanistic property, the black coat. In the old days a red or pink eye was held to be the only true sign of albinism—but now we know that there are many degrees of albinism—that red eyes may appear with a fawn, or cinnamon, or yellow coat—for instance, in red-eyed fawn mice and rats; and that an albino animal may have blue eyes instead of red; for instance, some albino humans, white jackdaws. On the one hand some species, when albinos, never seem to have blue eyes, but only red—for instance, mice, rats, mustelins; in others, the albino forms show both blue and red eyes; in yet others, again, the cat for instance, albinos only seem to show blue eyes, never really red, though, as we showed a few years back (see "Animals," "Siamese, The Sphinx") a very few individuals exhibit a very strong pink tinge in the blue. Nothing, unfortunately, being known of how the Siamese was produced (in fact, of all domestic animals least is known about the cat!) it is not possible to say how far its peculiar coloration is due to albinism. We certainly think a strain of cats, as described by Mrs. Cran, would be very curious and beautiful, and well worth fixing. Also, we ourselves are prevented by A.D. from embarking on any such tempting task, and the record of S.H. do not lead

one to hope for one being found to undertake such a work. In fact, it looks as if the good old British cat will shortly disappear—a thousand pities!

Mrs. OGLETHORPE consulted the R.S.P.C.A. about the diabolical way in which poor Dewdrop was done to death, but in the absence of proof they are helpless. As things are now, in ninety-nine places out of a hundred, you may reckon on being able to inflict almost any diabolical torture on a cat for from 10s. to 30s., though it may cost you a lot more to walk a horse with a corn down the street. A sense of proportion seems absolutely lacking, as far as the cat is concerned, in the minds of the majority, both of "Beakes," and the public. What happened to Dewdrop may happen to any other owner's cats: public opinion needs educating to regard such matters with detestation; yet when a body—the C.P.L.—is founded with the direct aim of bettering the status of the cat in the public mind, and having it at least placed on the level of the dog, the very ones who should be most interested hold coldly aloof! It is incomprehensible.

WE note that Sir Robert Gower introduced a Bill in Parliament which we hope will be made law, as it would serve to facilitate the recovery of lost dogs and cats. It would provide that all dealers in domestic animals (bona-fide breeders would not be affected) should keep a register of fullest particulars of every such animal passing through their hands. Licensed vivisectors would be compelled to keep such register, which would be open to inspection by the police.

SOME very interesting wild cats have arrived at the Zoo—the most interesting being a South American Eyra. The Eyra is an aberrant species—with long body—very flattened sides, and short legs. It is a very small cat of a rich self chestnut colour. No more fascinating pet than a tame Eyra can possibly be conceived. It will—we are not writing of the present specimen—wind itself like a boa round one's neck, and love one in the sweetest fashion.

ATTENTION is drawn to Mrs. McClure's sale advertisement, though we regret having to insert it, as it means the retirement of one who can ill afford to be spared.

MISS MORANT has sold the black Manx, Sweet William, and the black Manx queen, Iris, to America. Sweet William took the Ch. Certificate last Croydon Show. The loss of the blue stud, Periwinkle, is a hard blow, but happily there is a promising baby kit by him. Miss Morant has also a promising young pure white Manx male.

BIRTHS.

April 17th.—Mrs. Duncome's Judy, 4 splendid blues by Mrs. Campbell-Fraser's Hendon Alexis.

DEATH.

May 3rd.—Miss Morant's Periwinkle of Dunesk, aged 18 months.



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LIGHT AND DARKNESS. (AN ARTICLE FOR NOVICES.)

BY THE EDITOR.

Now that we are well into the breeding season, we would again most strongly impress upon all novices the great importance of not exposing their kittens' eyes to the light, and this is as important **before the eyes open as afterwards**. The nest-box is best kept very nearly dark, and when it is necessary to handle or move the kittens, care should be taken that no strong rays of light are allowed to fall, even for a moment, upon their eyes. Do not think, because the eyes are not yet open, that they will not be injured by light. The little eyelids are very thin and sensitive, and do not adequately protect the yet imperfect eye against rays. All animals whose young are born with the eyes closed seek out dark places in which to rear their young. In cases where a cat does not do so—and such cases are not frequent—the explanation is simply that domestication has dulled her natural instincts. Animals which bring their young into the world with open eyes—horses, cattle, deer, hares, etc.—bear and keep their young in the open, the eye being already strong enough to bear the light. But those animals which produce their young in a **more or less imperfect state**—canines, felines, rabbits, mustelines, mice, and rats, etc.—all bear and keep them in dark places. That is

the way to regard the matter—the young animals of these species are as yet **imperfect**, and, therefore, if you expect their eyes to stand the light as would those of a young calf or hare, you are equally demanding too much, as if you expect the baby puppy, kitten, or rabbit to make use of its limbs as can the young calf or hare. Put undue strain on a puppy's limbs, they will be deformed; strain on the eye—result, blindness, or at least weak and running eyes.

The degree of sensitiveness varies, of course, very much with the individual. Personally, we have not the slightest hesitation in attributing a proportion of the weak or defective eyesight amongst humans today (part of it is doubtless due to too brilliant artificial lighting, and part to other things involving eye-strain) to the craze for light bedrooms. Our forefathers were wiser, and usually kept their bedrooms dark. But what do we often find nowadays? Light bedrooms, the occupant lying facing the window, frequently only screened by a semi-transparent and flimsy curtain, and in addition, very likely, mirrors and other shining objects directing from an early hour rays of light upon the eyes of the sleeper. Rest assured, even though no inconvenience may at the moment be felt, harm is being done all the time! The **eye is being over-strained**, just as much as the limbs would be over-strained by constantly walking too far, and later on the punishment will come. Our own eyes are so sensitive that the first morning ray of light filtering through thick curtains affects them unpleasantly, although we do not face the window.

Other people's eyes may be less sensitive, but all the same the slow injury and strain to the eye proceeds, perhaps all the more dangerous from its very insidiousness. Eyes insufficiently rested are bound to suffer sooner or later.

Thus it becomes certain that by exposing kittens' eyes too early to the light, i.e., **by demanding work from them too soon**, you can only do harm. The degree of sensibility to the light varies with them as with us. The farm or street-bred kitten may probably stand light better than the more delicately constituted exhibition subject. For the first few days of existence after the eyes open, the kittens should still be kept in a very shaded place, and one on which **no direct** illumination falls. We prefer, for a nest-box, a tea-chest, or box of similar size or larger, laid on its side in a corner of the room, **not** facing the light. The orifice can be draped, and the draping removed little by little to **very gradually** accustom the eyes of the kits to increased light. You do not expect a baby kit to rush and climb, it begins by tottering about. Do not, then, expect its eyes to do their full work from the beginning!

Neglect of some precautions of this kind will very frequently result in the eyes of the kittens being weak and mattery; the eyelids will be as if glued together, and permanently injured sight, blindness or even total loss of an eye may result.

If you find the eyelids stuck together, and, perhaps, oozing matter, **on no account attempt to pull them apart**. To start with, you can do no harm by very gently **dabbing**, **NOT rubbing**, the eyelids with a bit of medicated cotton-wool dipped in pure lukewarm milk, as you are sure to have this handy. Do not attempt to wash the eye, but **keep it moist**, while you obtain one or other of the remedies mentioned from time to time in "Cat Gossip," or apply to one of the firms advertising the results of long experience in the manufacture of feline medicines in our columns. Let whatever you use be bland and soothing, and lukewarm; apply it with the gentlest touch, and remember to rub or force open the eyelids is fatal! as also are **draughts**.

AIDING PET CATS.

The National Canine Defence League has recently extended its activities, and now offers its Clinical services to **cats** and dogs alike.

The Animal Specialists at the various clinics have at their disposal the very finest drugs and instruments that money can buy, and these, coupled with many years practical experience enable them to do a great deal for our feline friends.

Many people are inclined to suppose that Puss is quite able to look after herself—indeed, she gives that impression by her air of independence; but this is very far from the truth.

The cat needs regular veterinary examination and treatment, just as the horse and the dog do; but,



unfortunately, the fees charged by most private practitioners are not within everyone's reach. At the Canine Clinics, however, no charge is made—there is a box in which grateful cat-owners may place a voluntary contribution, but they are only too pleased to treat poor people's pets free.

The other day a woman entered a League's Camberwell Clinic, and said that a stray cat had made its home in a disused dog-kennel at the back of her house. It seemed to be in pain, but she had not been able to move it. Could they help her?

A member of the staff went home with her, and gently coaxed the cat to the front of the kennel. Imagine his horror to find that the poor creature was so terribly affected with disease that its skin had become toughened and hardened like the hide of an elephant! In fact, so acute had been the irritation that the wretched animal had scratched itself blind. He picked up the cat, and took it to the Clinic, where it was given a quick and painless passing.

The fate of this unfortunate creature should be sufficient to deter anyone from turning an unwanted pet adrift to fend for itself. The League will always put an unwanted pet to sleep with chloroform—an easy and kindly end.

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If your pussy is in need of veterinary assistance, call at one of the following establishments:—

"Canine Clinic," 115, Camberwell Road, S.E. 5.
Phone: Rodney 2777.

"Canine Clinic," 364, Hackney Road, Bethnal Green, E. Phone: Bishopsgate 8674.

"Canine Clinic," 442, Garratt Lane, Earlsfield, S.W. 18. Phone: Wimbledon 3537.

National Canine Defence League, The Bungalow, Chestnut Avenue, Hampton - on - Thames.
Phone: Molesey 860.

At the three last-named Clinics there are up-to-date wards for in-patients, conducted upon the most sanitary lines. Any further information may be obtained from the head office:—

National Canine Defence League,
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All correspondence re "CAT GOSSIP" to the Editor.

H. C. BROOKE,

Bishop's Hull, Taunton.

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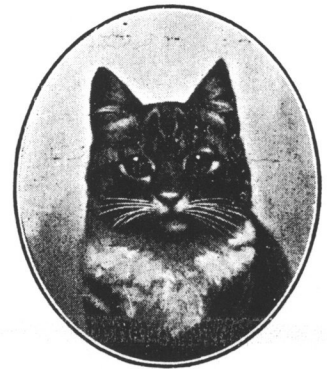
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