

CAT · GOSSIP

VOL. 3

Edited by H. C. BROOKE

No. 87

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Price 3d., post free

LONG-HAIR LORE.

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

It is a most healthy sign for the Cat Fancy that so very many Shows all over the country are putting in a Cat Section. Skipton, Yorks, is no whit behind, thanks to the Yorks County Cat Society, who are guaranteeing three of the classes. This young enterprising Society, it will be remembered, started in the latter part of last year under the combined effort of Mr. J. Budd, Mr. Lawson-Atkinson, and a few determined Yorkshire folk. The date of the Skipton Show is September 1st, Mrs. A. M. Royd judging.

From Tollgate Cottage, Lady Eardley Wilmot writes: "The Ch. Gentleman ex Nona litter have started their career well, making their debut at the Kensington Show. One of the females was first in her class, and the male came second. As both classes were tolerably large, we were very pleased. Their colour still remains beautifully pale. The second girl was not quite up to the mark the day before the Show, so remained at home. Tiddleywinks of Bedale is having a busy life with her Ch. Dion of Allington litter. Though on the dark side at present, they are very promising, and one little lady is already booked to go to Germany. I have read of many ointments and drops for eye trouble in kittens, but I have never come across anything that gave such quick relief or put matters right so entirely as a weak solution of zinc sulphate and boric acid. The eye is first cleaned with warm water, and two or three drops of the solution dropped into the eye. It works like magic. Two applications heal it up, and I use a third to make things certain. I should be glad to hear from others if their experience after trying it does not coincide with mine. My kitten families are all growing very interesting, and so it is with regret that I am going away on a short holiday of three weeks. Two very promising babes come from an union of Barry Blue Prince and Brookside Angelo—a lovely pair, the boy in particular showing much promise."

My postbag to-day brought me a card from Mr. F. W. Western, full of fun and wit, as usual. He tells me he is more than delighted with Unity Malone, the B.T. Persian female kitten he bought at the late Kitten Show, Kensington. He says: "She is a lovely kit, improving daily, and that Holmegrove is to be her permanent home." Unity is a daughter of the late

Ch. Garb. Mascot, and that well known queen, Molly Malone, who, being by Ch. Holme Surprise Packet, naturally would hold great interest to Mrs. Western. The kitten hails Miss L. Hotson as her breeder. Writing on this subject reminds me to ask what has become of Mrs. E. Evans' winners?—Billy Brown Deer and Brown Deer, who some two years ago tried to keep the flag flying for the Brownies. Miss L. Hotson bred both, and Brown Deer was sired by Ch. Garb. Mascot, and won two championships. I am sure brown tabby breeders would welcome Mrs. E. Evans back to their ranks, and the disappointment which she latterly felt owing to rather severe criticism, is now a thing of the past. So I for one shall hope to see her name among the B.T. exhibitors in the near future.

From St. Elmo, Dorset, Mrs. Herbert gives us some chatty items: "We were delighted with the special you set us, it was won (Bournemouth Young stock Show) by our little Boy-Boy, a lovely son of Grace Goldeneyes and Jasper of Hadley, from Gracie's last litter. He is a most divine shade of palest blue, a tremendous coat of finest texture, and absolutely level to the roots; a sweet face and eyes that promise to be deep copper. The judge, Mr. Beresford, was charmed with him, and gave him all the L.H. specials and best kitten in Show, and said he should win anywhere, but I do not think we shall show him much, as he is such a darling. I am going to keep him as a pet in place of our dear Dannie, who has just died. We are feeling dreadfully sad about losing him, we loved him so, and he loved us. We have buried him under the apple tree he loved to climb like the cat in the poem, 'Peter Sahib.' How true those words, 'The pet we love—it dies, it always dies!' What a lovely sight Kensington Kitten Show must have been, so many beautiful kittens together. Our little Show at Bournemouth went off very well. But it was a great disappointment that Mrs. Allen Maturin was unable to judge; fortunately Mr. Beresford happened to be staying in the town, and kindly offered to take her place. Unfortunately our November Show clashes with the Midland, which will prevent Mrs. Yeates judging for us, as we had hoped. Will you tell Miss J. Langton when you see her that Lady Luck has two of the most perfect kits (females) we have ever bred; the boy, unfortunately, died at two days old. They are sired by Jasper, and look like pale blue balls, with broad heads and angel

faces. We have another fine litter of five by Lizette and Flick-a-Maroo (three males and two females). Cherry Bumpet had only one kit, sired by Milord o' Mendip, a lovely female, who will have deep copper eyes. Cherry is one of those amiable mothers, ready and willing to undertake maternal duties for others. She brought up Ch. Mick of Bredon's little son with her own babes."

Sandy Show takes place on the 30th August, and the exhibitors' train leaves King's Cross 8.45 a.m.

Hillingdon Black Prince, has become Hendon Black Sorcerer; he won for Mrs. McClure best black kitten in show, Midland Ch. Show, last January.

Query.—What is the colour of the eye of the British wild cat?

What may be called the normal feline eye colour—yellowish.—Ed.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

MRS. HARVEY writes that the Siamese, Datoh of Petaling, has been withdrawn from stud, and is now living a life of ease in the country. It is hoped that one of his sons will shortly take his place. Mrs. Harvey was delighted at the success of Pedro's litter at the Kitten Show.

WE very greatly regret to hear that Mrs. Buffard has lost her Abyssinian, Ch. Symy. This cat caused quite a sensation about three years ago when she made her appearance in a "Household Pets" class—we think at the Palace? Since then she has done a good bit of winning, and we think we awarded her her last Challenge Certificate at the Palace last December. Her death is a very great blow to her mistress, who was devoted to her, as well as to the Fancy, which is none too well supplied with these beautiful and interesting cats; fortunately she has left some good progeny behind.

THE Natural History Museum people were very pleased with, and interested in, the skin of old Champion Ras Dashan, which we recently sent them. But looking at that skin, whilst admiring the excellent lack of markings, we could but wonder what had become of the bright ruddy under-colour and ruddy or orange and black ticking of some of the Abyssinians of thirty-five years ago? As far as our inquiries have taught us—and we have made many, with but poor results—the breed was first introduced into this country at the time of the war with Abyssinia about the middle of last century. We do not know, and probably never shall learn, who then fostered the breed, but, as Mr. House recently remarked, in the last quarter of the century the principal breeder was the late Mr. Heslop, of Darlington. How well we remember his loudly expressed annoyance because we snapped up a queen and litter exhibited at the Palace, about 1898, under his nose—we were judging Maux and, we fancy, Siamese at the time. In those days these cats were more rufous in tinge; then someone brought out a so-called "sil-

ver" variety. How produced we do not know—and to our thinking they greatly injured the breed by introducing a greyish tinge and spoiling one of the loveliest properties, the beautiful ruddy under-colour. Towards the end of last century we sent Abyssinians to various Dutch, Danish, and German Zoological Gardens, where, as recently in Austria, they greatly interested naturalists; in fact, it is likely that all Abyssinian or Nubian cats derive from our exportations; and we regret we are now too old to carry on this charming variety.

"THOMAS-CATS" are not usually credited with much paternal instinct or affection. The instance recorded by Mrs. Naatz in "Cat Courier" is, we should think, unique. It appears that Mrs. Naatz's imported champion Siamese, who was devoted to a certain queen, when this latter was nearly due to kitten, started to make a bed by deliberately plucking himself, "pulling large tufts of hair from his tail and haunches. These tufts he placed on a large round cushion with great care, beginning with a circular outer rim, and gradually working towards the centre, until a luxurious nest had been completed. . . . He would then grab Ch. Miskin by the neck and place her on the bed and talk to her for hours. When the kittens arrived he was most pleased, and placed them on his cushion, and sat waiting for more to arrive."

As a rule neither canine nor feline males shine in the rôle of papa. Although we've known both dogs and male cats apparently fond of their infant progeny, the only instance we can remember of such an one taking a really active part in rearing was that of a Dingo, sire of a litter of hybrid cubs out of a wolf; he would bring up half-digested food for them when they were about three weeks old, in the manner customary with many bitches.

We observe in "Unserer Katze" that the meeting held last month in Berlin to protest against the misuse of the cat for "experiments" drew an attendance of **several hundreds**, although just now many Berliners are away from home. Could such an attendance of cat-lovers be got together in England, we wonder. The immediate cause of the demonstration was the sacrifice of the cat in the Opel "Rocket-car"—which car, we observe, has blown itself up. "Of course," many will say, "such a thing would not be allowed to be done in England!" Very likely not—but which suffer most, the German cat blown to smithereens after a second's terror—or the crucified cats with their spleen fastened outside, kept so for a fortnight, and occasionally forced to take treadmill exercise, at an English University? We think the lot of the "Rocket-car" cat quite enviable in comparison. It should be said that the Opel Co. deny that the cat was destroyed; they affirm that it was enclosed in a specially constructed cage, which would release it in case of any accident to the car, and that this is what really happened instead of its being blown to pieces as stated in the Press. They also say



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that Herr von Opel himself went on one of these rocket-propelled trial trips; lucky for him it was not the last one, which might have resulted in a great calamity had the public been admitted to witness the trial.

THE current number of "Unsere Katze" (Berlin) is up to its usual A1 form. We observe that this paper has inaugurated a scheme by which for an absolutely nominal fee cat-owners can insure against cat-caused damages, either personal or to property. Cats at stud and travelling can also be insured. The Munich Cats' Protection Society, **alone**, we note has a membership of some 350!

AMONGST other literary treats for cat-lovers who appreciate reading matter beyond show reports—and we are glad to say we have many such—we shall shortly give a humorous article, by that rising young author whose nom de plume is Richard Carol. A contributor to "Punch," "The Daily News," "The Westminster Gazette," "Daily Express," and other papers, he also, both in 1926 and 1927, was listed amongst the writers of "The Best Short Stories of the Year."

CAT BITS FROM THE LIBRARY.

There is only one cat-pagoda in China. It's a five-storied pagoda. Tier after tier it rises, majolica twisted and knotted, highly glazed, enormously coloured. . . . On every storey's curved edge cats sit or stand erect, grave ones, kittens at play, majolica, too, some of them, time-stained ivory one, porphyry-bodied another. They

all have wonderful eyes, some have splendid whiskers. Cats' eyes appropriately gleam from one, huge deep-set Burmese garnets from another's eye-sockets. One has a sapphire in one eye, a brown carbuncle in another. They are spotted and streaked and self-coloured. They have long tails and short tails and none, tails curled about their necks, tails erect in wrath. Some sleep, some prance, some prowl, two are dancing. One rolls a ball, several carry fans, one a State umbrella. . . . The huge cat that tops the pagoda wears a gemmed collar of gold. The gems are valuable, so is the gold. And its whiskers of bristled copper wire are tipped and dusted with rubies, emeralds, and topaz. . . . The cat pagoda is the most indescribable, unthinkable even; built by the love of a childless woman, who mothered cats at her babyless heart, the wife of a Satsuma vasa, who built it in honour of her little consolers. . . . (From "The Soul of China," by Louise Jordan Milne.)

SOME PROGENITORS OF F. DOMESTICA.

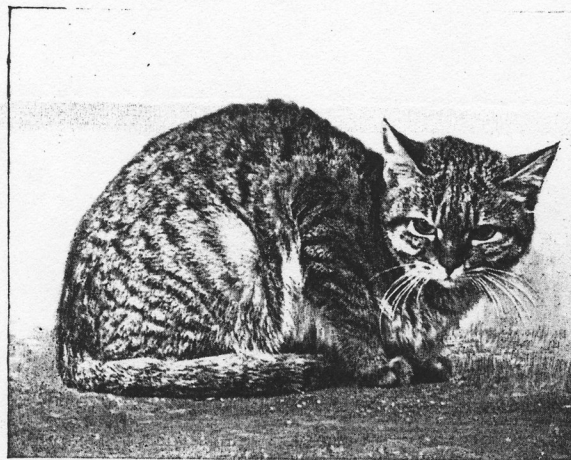
By THE EDITOR.

Whilst it is generally accepted that the European domestic cats are derived from the "Egyptian Cat," which was probably identical with the African Wild Cat, those varieties found in the East cannot well have been thus fathered, nor have other races of small wild felines failed to play a part, if a comparatively small one, in the evolution of the domestic cats of their countries. Through the kindness of Messrs. Hutchinson, the well-known publishing firm of Paternoster Row, we are enabled to give illustrations of three breeds of which it is absolutely known that they will inter-breed with the domestic cat. It



CHAUS OR JUNGLE CAT.
(*Felis chaus.*)

appears almost certain that none of the small cats of the American Continent are capable of this admixture; more's the pity, for it is precisely there that we find the most glorious colours and markings. It has, as already stated in "Cat Gossip,"* been held by some that the Manul or Pallas' Cat of Asia is the progenitor of the long-haired domestic breeds. We think this somewhat doubtful, and do not even know that it has been proved that the two races can be mixed. Personally we consider it far more probable that the Persian, Angora, and similar long-haired races have arisen in course of time as a product of domestication—exactly how and why we do not know—just as have the long-haired rabbits and canines, for there are no wild long-haired animals of these species. Perhaps in time, domestication may produce also long-haired-rats and mice.



EGYPTIAN, FETTERED, OR CAFFRE CAT.
(*Felis caffra.*)



BLACK-FOOTED CAT.
(*Felis nigripes.*)

The Jungle Cat, or Chaus, is found both in Africa and Asia, and it is rather remarkable that this cat, which will breed with tame cats, presents certain signs of a closer relation to the lynxine group. The sandy, fulvous, or "Abyssinian" type of coloration presented by the Chaus, was also, as we find from ancient Egyptian paintings, found amongst the cats of Old Egypt, and is still found amongst the ordinary African wild cats, though, then, as now, the most common marking was a sort of tiger-stripping or "mackerel." Whether admixture with the Chaus caused the fulvous variety, or whether this arose of its own accord we shall never know; but it seems significant that in India, where the Jungle Cat is common, there are also fulvous or Chaus-coloured tame cats. It is certainly curious that a former tenant of the house we occupy (a Mrs. Watson, not unknown in Siamese circles) possessed one of these half-bred jungle cats, and a local mason never tires of telling how when he came to do a job the cat met him on the stairs, and went for his leg. The Egyptian Cat portrayed is a fair average specimen of *Felis caffra*, to which so many names have been given. It is one which verges towards the indistinctly spotted type, most of these cats being lightly striped and some Abyssinian coloured. Old fanciers will remember that some thirty odd years ago some exquisite little spotted African Wild Cats were exhibited by a then well-known Southern Judge and exhibitor, Mr. Billett. These must have been specimens of that charming little S. African variety, the Black-footed Cat. It was stated at the time that a tame queen in Mr. Billett's possession was in kitten to one of these cats, but we never heard how matters turned out. It is a thousand pities that animal dealers never take the trouble to import these cats, from which, with luck, we might obtain a

[* See "Cat Gossip" No. 51.]

really good strain of spotted cats. The Director of the Pretoria Zoological Gardens possessed a half-bred cat a while ago, perfectly tame, which exactly resembled its wild sire; and we feel quite sure that the spotted cat we exhibited at Croydon some five years ago which won first in a good class of "spotties" under Mr. Sam Woodiwiss, was so bred. Considering that the European Wild Cat (*f. Sylvestris*) was at one time very common all over this country, and is still common in many parts of the Continent; and that it will inter-breed with tame cats, it is very singular that it has left practically no type-impression on the latter, though now and then in Scotland tame cats are found carrying the short thick tail characteristic of their savage cousin, probably the most absolutely untameable animal in existence. The tail of the wild cat is quite different from the brush of the Persian. The fact that about the tenth century Welsh laws placed a high value on cats and kittens, the wild cat being at that period common all over Britain, shows that the domestic cats of that day were not derived from *sylvestris*. As regards Indian domestic cats, it has been stated, or assumed, by some naturalists that the Leopard Cat (of which we showed a specimen at Croydon two years ago—and have been sorry ever since) and the little Rusty-Spotted Cat have a share in the production of these, as well as the *Chaus*. The prevalence—formerly more so than to-day—of spotted, tame cats in India would seem to give colour to this theory, but personally we doubt if the Leopard Cat is fertile with domestica, and have never heard of a proved instance of their mating.

PERSIAN V. THE ANGORA.

By C. E. SPRENGER, in "Pets."

(Continued from Page 373)

The Persian cat is a large cobby type, with a massive round head with great breadth of skull and a short neck. The ears are small, round-tipped, set wide apart, deep in the chest, a short, snubbed, and broad nose, broad and powerful jaws, and full cheeks. The eyes are large and set wide apart. The legs are short and thick, and the paws full. The tail, quite short, must not trail when walking, and has the greater growth of hair at the tip end. The coat should be long with an immense ruff, which is very full between the front legs. The coat of a Persian cat is always the owner's despair, the idea being to keep the hair long and thick.

The Persian cat being the most desirable, an effort has been made to increase the type of Persian. The Persian was bred to the Angora so as to increase and beautify the Persian coat, for the Angora has the finer, heavier, longer hair; then back to the Persian so the Persian type will predominate. By so doing, it left few original Angoras in this country.

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All correspondence re "CAT GOSSIP" to the Editor.
H. C. BROOKE.

Bishop's Hull, Taunton.

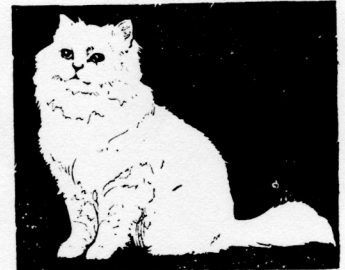
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