

CAT · GOSSIP

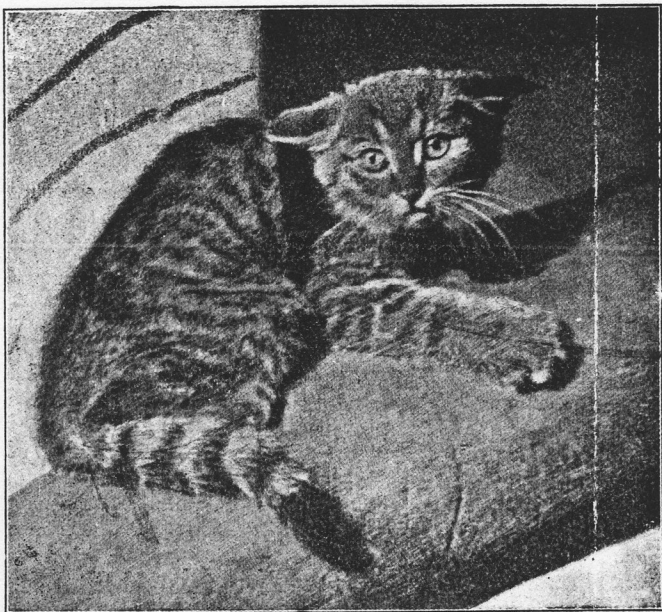
VOL. 3

Edited by H. C. BROOKE

No. 89

AUGUST 22nd, 1928

Price 3d., post free



YOUNG CROSS BETWEEN EUROPEAN WILD-CAT AND "FALB-KATZE" (Nubian or Abyssinian Cat).

[Block by courtesy of the Publishers of "Die Pelztierzucht" (Fur-animal Breeding), published monthly by Messrs. Arthur Heber & Co., Leipzig.]

We are unaware whether the young cross-bred cat whose portrait appears here is bred—on the one side—from a wild African cat, or from one of our Nubian or Abyssinian exportations. It will, however, be noticed that the kitten takes far more after the European Wild-Cat than after the Nubian. The markings are those of *f. sylvestris*: note, too, the very powerful paws. The tail—taking into consideration the fact that it is fluffed out in anger—would appear to be longer and finer than in the wild-cat.

LONG-HAIR LORE.

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

Captain Fergus MacCunn, who include cats in his talks on the wireless, has been kind enough to promise me a contribution to "Cat Gossip" on his return from his holiday. "Country Friends," his charming book recently published, holds unbounded interest to the animal lover.

Last year I happened to stay at Thame for their big Show, and for the night took up my abode at the "Four Horse Shoes," a quaint old world inn, about two minutes from the station, where the hostess made me extremely comfortable. 'Tis no pleasure or profit to recall the unceasing deluge of September, 1927, but, notwithstanding, the Show was a fine fixture, embracing as it does every possible branch of agriculture—horses, dogs, cattle, etc., etc.—with quite an enormous marquee half devoted to cats, which turned up in fair number, but this year, given this enticing weather, a goodly gathering of exhibitors may well avail themselves of a pleasant trip from Town, and as Thame is only a very short distance from Oxford—about 14 miles, I believe—an interesting day or two may be added. Cat judging

does not commence until 11 o'clock on the Show day, so that Thame is easily reached from Paddington on the Show day.

A writer in the "Evening News" asks: "What is the subtle attraction of the Adelphi for black cats? Someone I knew, who lived in one flat in Duke Street for seven years, and has now moved to another not far away, tells me he has been on friendly terms with many a black cat there, but never during the whole time has he seen a tabby, white, or yellow one. Even cats mostly black, but with a spot of white, he says, are rare."

There is no doubt that the exhibiting of beautiful cats all over the country, stimulate the cult and care of our pets, and places them in a higher and happier position. Formerly every house of any size had its cat, but she or he was looked upon more as a necessary, useful, animal, generally with but one "affix"—**kitchen**—which in itself told a tale. Now this is changed—interest and love for the cat is widening, and the understanding of them and appreciation of their intelligence is on the up-grade. Call it "The Fancy," or what you will, I think towards the feline we are progressing.

The formation of the Yorkshire County Cat Club, with its President, Mrs. C. W. Whitworth, Lady Mayoress—vide—but, as they say, “read on”—words from the pen of that enthusiast, Mr. J. S. W. Budd: “It is very kind of you to interest yourself in the forthcoming Skipton Show on account of our new Club having guaranteed the classes; this is the first time that cats have been on at Skipton, and our Chairman, Mrs. Royd, of Keighley, only should be credited with the achievement, as she carried out a resolution passed at our last meeting that one of our objects in view be to try to interest the public more in cats by getting classes at the Yorkshire Agricultural Shows, guaranteeing the prize money in order to get the Secretaries to give Cat Sections a chance and exhibitors several opportunities of showing their pets. Only by our Club guaranteeing the classes has it been possible for us to have the opportunity of exhibiting at Skipton, so naturally you can understand that our Committee were very delighted on Friday to hear that you in the South were also helping us. All we have to do now is to satisfy the Skipton Show Committee by plenty of entries to ensure this section being included annually, and we are doing this with other Agricultural Shows in the district, and feel that it will not be long before the bulk of the Yorkshire Shows have Cat Classes included. Either our Club, or its members, have this year so far guaranteed classes at Otley, Harrogate, Keighley, and Skipton. We have now nearly ninety members, and the number grows every week, and the interest so far at the Shows in the Cat Sections has been extraordinary; in fact, at Harrogate on Friday during the afternoon several times it was most difficult to get near the pens, and our 54 entries for the Shows constituted a record. Our Committee held a meeting during the afternoon, and I think two resolutions that were passed might be of interest to you. First, we decided to become affiliated to the Governing Council; and, secondly, to hold another Show for Cats at Harrogate in the middle of October. Full arrangements for this will be made at our next meeting in Leeds next week.”

Friends will be glad to hear that Miss Greta King has returned home from Shanklin, and is now convalescent. She has at present only one blue Persian, that broad-headed brood queen, daughter of the late Ch. Azure of Hadley.

Mrs. Mackenzie's recent purchase, that lovely pale blue kitten, Chang of Culloden, grandson of Ch. Marise of Allington, and son of Ch. Colneside Billy Bumpet, continues to improve in looks, and has suffered no ill effects from his first appearance on the show bench; in fact, I have heard of no illness in connection with that popular fixture, Kensington Kitten Show.

DEBUTANTE'S DIARY.

As kittens do not cut their entire set of “milk teeth” before they arrive at the age of eight weeks, it is wiser not to tax their powers with any food requiring much mastication before they attain this

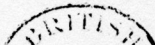
age, or intestinal trouble may ensue. The tiny interiors once upset 'tis no easy matter to set them right again, otherwise this cutting of “baby” teeth gives no pain to young kittens. The second teething, which occurs between the age of five or six months, is sometimes a more trying matter, the gums becoming inflamed. Should this be so, lighten Kitty's meals, giving soft food, less meat, and a dose of salad oil or liquid paraffin once or twice a week, and the trouble will pass.

SIAMESE AND THEIR OWNERS.

By MUANG T'HAÏ.

The “Daily Express” says:—It is not generally known that Lady Londonderry, unlike, I think, the majority of women, is particularly fond of Siamese cats. There are fifteen of these animals at Mount Stewart, and they live in a kind of “nursery” by themselves. Perhaps it is fortunate for them that they do, for dogs play almost as big a part in the affections of Lady Londonderry as do cats, and nine of them, ranging from Kerry Blues to panting lurchers, wander about the house and grounds.

Mrs. Reeve sends us the following delightful and interesting notes anent some visits she has paid in the Siamese world: “On Wednesday last I called on Miss McDonald, of Hollington Park, who has eleven Siamese kittens, the remains of two litters of seven each. One by Beachcomber, ex Pouffie of Achmonia (which was, I believe, Miss McDonald's first Siamese queen), the other by Ch. Tai-Long, ex Lilly Cilla” (a most lovely daughter of Ch. Bonzo and Pouffie of Achmonia). I can call to mind no more beautiful sight than these eleven kittens playing and romping on the spacious lawns, with the Maltese and Yorkshire terriers, framed by some of the loveliest scenery of our Sussex county. Miss McDonald is a real animal lover, and it is always a real pleasure to visit her combined kennel, cattery, and aviary, where all kinds of exquisite foreign birds may be seen fitting in and out of gnarled old apple trees, which have been wired in that the birds may live in natural surroundings. Miss Noble has two litters of kittens, with wonderfully blue eyes, of which her stud, Beachcomber, is the sire. He has very fine eyes, and is a typical Siamese. As a stud cat he is most successful, his litters being large, mostly six or seven kits, with a very low percentage of females. There are several queens at Norcroft, so I cannot remember them by name, but they are all of excellent type, with very light coats and dense blue eyes. Miss Noble is one of our oldest breeders of Siamese, and her advice and generous help are always being requisitioned by us more recent devotees of the cult of the ‘seal and fawn Oriental.’ Another very beautiful queen, owned by Mrs. Matson, and bred by Miss Noble, will, I should think, make history; at the age of two years she has a perfectly clear cream coat with beautiful seal points. She has recently been mated to Iamit, so I hope soon to hear that she





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has produced something really good. All my kittens are now gone. Li-Chee, the Kensington winner, went to Miss Troughan, of Greenford Place, Middlesex, this morning. Smia, Li-Chee's dam, is the most weirdly intelligent cat I have ever owned (and I have owned many). She is devoted to my dogs (I breed Pekingese and West Highland White Terriers, brings them in field mice from the woods, and tries her utmost to make the puppies play with them as kittens do. When the dogs take their daily exercise Smia goes too, and should a strange dog come in sight she climbs the nearest tree, and my stud dog (a Peke) guards the base with every tooth on view. On one occasion the stranger tried to climb the tree. Wen-Chu immediately closed with the foe, and with so many to control I could help very little, when Smia, seeing her champion was getting horribly mauled by a mongrel quite six times his size, came down the tree, fastened into the brute's back every talon she possessed, and scratched and bit until Wen-Chu was dropped, and the would-be murderer went screaming down the lane. She came back at a trot, purring loudly, and proceeded to lick away all traces of the conflict from Wen-Chu's frills and furbelows. I hear many complaints from Siamese breeders of weak eyes in kittens. I have never had a weak-eyed kitten, and I attribute the fact to Virol, which I give every kitten at three weeks of age by smearing it on the inside and outside of the mouths. Later they get it mixed with milk for breakfast."

Schedules for the Club Show will be out shortly. Novices, we learn, are specially well catered for in the way of specials. Miss Wilson writes us that the Siamese Ambassador will come to the Show at 3.30, and will say "a few words on the cats he has known in his own country"; this should be of very great interest.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

We regret to hear of the death of that well-known novelist, Louis Tracy, who, we think, must have liked cats, as several of his works contained sympathetic references to them.

In the book, "Our Lesser Brethren," by W. Brown, V.S., J.P., the author states that he has been informed of many instances in which cats have brought presents (of their own selection) to comfort (?) invalid mistresses. A cat in the East brought its sick mistress a snake, paralysed by a bite in the neck, a live frog, and a scorpion, fortunately dead. This cat was a London-bred one, so can scarcely have had any instructive knowledge of how to deal with scorpions. Had she learnt from the Malay cats? and, if not, what taught her that the sting of the scorpion was in its tail? She had repeatedly been observed at her scorpion-hunting, which was a long process requiring much agility; the cat strikes the scorpion like lightning in front, and runs round; the scorpion, turning to strike, is again smitten, until exhausted. A very risky game!

WE are told that "The Animals' Dispensary and Dogs' Welfare Club, 97, Kensal Road, N. 10, has special arrangements for **Cats on which operations are performed.**"

OUR Brussels contemporary, "Chasse et Pêche," publishes our article, with illustration, of the wonderful Mexican Hairless Cats, now believed extinct; at least, our offer, published in "The New Mexican Press," of £100 for a specimen, brought us no tidings. In the book reviewed in another column, the author does not, in our humble opinion, attach sufficient value to the power of vision of the cat, which she regards as colour-blind, observing: "My cat . . . does not see colours. . . . She probably sees me as a vague form. Just as she does not distinguish the colour of my dress. . . ." This is a theory to which we cannot yield adherence. It is only the other day that we approached the outside domicile of our pet Abyssinian, wearing a yellow mackintosh. The cat, who detests strangers, instead of calling her usual greeting, prepared to retire into the inner compartment, until we spoke, when she was instantly reassured. How can we, then, assume that she "does not distinguish the colour of my dress?" This cat also knows our step, and when we return after a month's absence, calls frantically directly we enter the house. The step of a stranger puts her at once on the alert and prepared to hide. Our neighbour's kitten also knows our step, and jumps out of the window to meet us directly it sounds on the gravel-path. We are confident that many readers have made similar observations.

WE would draw the special attention of novice readers to the remark made by Mrs. Campbell-Fraser this week in *Débutante's Diary*, as to light meals for kittens when teething. They should always have access to bones—such as they cannot swallow or splinter—which help them to cut their teeth. When feverish with teething a little olive oil, as there stated, is excellent; the oil from sardines does well, and many will take it voluntarily. It helps to keep the system cool. Castor oil we regard—as do many authorities—as a loathsome and dangerous drug, though useful at times as a cooling and soothing external application, even in the case of inflamed eyes. We are certain many kittens are killed by the use of castor oil.

OUR earlier readers will remember that some time ago we referred to a most remarkable albinistic strain of Abyssinian, which cropped up amongst the cats owned by Sir William Cooke, of Newbury. They came quite creamy in colour, with blue eyes, and the ears and dorsal or "eel-stripe" pale wild rabbit colour—a most interesting mutation. Unhappily the strain died out; but we now hear from Mrs. Straker, of Richmond, who had a queen from Sir William, that she has a very nice male albinistic kitten, which is probably the only specimen now in existence, and consequently of very great scientific interest. We understand Mrs. Straker is prepared to part with this

rarity, and ourselves regret that our age makes it useless for us to take up any breeding experiments. Eheu fugaces . . .!

WEST Country fanciers seem lying very low; everywhere there are signs of activity, but not down this way. What about more West Country news?

THERE has been a considerable stir in Rome about the ownerless cats in the Forum and Pantheon, which some people feed, and others—it is said—eat. A Municipal edict ordering their destruction aroused so much opposition that it was quickly withdrawn. Our friend, M. Armand Steens, the well-known Belgian "catophile," on a recent visit counted 80 such cats in the Forum of Trajan alone. The sole aim of humanity seems to be to destroy: the London pigeons must go—the Roman cats—misguided humanitarians would extinguish the Exmoor deer—the sea lions, those most intelligent creatures, are mangled and slain by the hundred with machine-guns—truly "Das schlimmste Raubtier ist der Mensch!"

UNLESS more advertisements come in we shall be compelled to make our next issue only a four-page one. As we have often remarked, a paper got up with our high-class printing, paper, and illustrations, is an expensive thing. We put in a very great deal of time and labour on this paper, as do our collaborators—but we do not intend also to dip our hands in our pockets! A section of the Fancy does not give us fair play or a sporting chance; in fact, it has from the first, in a bigoted and narrow-minded manner, determined to give us no support. No paper can live on its subscriptions; but some even of our subscribers, seem to imagine, because this is not run as a commercial undertaking, that we can do without advertisements! Do they really think that anyone else would be (some would say fool enough!) to take the trouble we do for a profit which at the best only keeps us in "smokes"? We feel very confident that our contemporary would not long publish its Cat Section if it had to stand on its own legs, as "Cat Gossip" has to do, and were not borne on the back of the rabbits! In the opinion of many a humiliating position for an important Fancy. We want to do the best we can for our readers—which is a harder task than that of our contemporary, our catty readers being more varied and requiring more varied fare—and such as is of more general interest than purely Fancy matter, which bore many cat lovers—but we repeat, we do not contemplate paying for the privilege of providing the paper!

BOOK REVIEW.

THE MODERN CAT.

"Cats are a mysterious kind of folk. There is more passing in their minds than we are aware of. It comes, no doubt, from their being so familiar with warlocks and witches."—(Sir Walter Scott.)

This is the very latest and most up-to-date contribution to feline literature. It should be in the library of all those who, like ourselves, see in the cat a being

worthy of study and admiration, who ponder over its mental and soul-processes, who find interest in cat lore of the ages. It is less to be recommended to those few whose interest in the cat is governed by questions only of stud fees to be earned, prizes to be won, or saleable kittens to be produced. They will scarcely appreciate it, for the Fancy "n'y est absolument pour rien."

The book is divided into nine chapters: The Modern Cat; Stories about Cats; The Experimental Method; The Cat Compared with Other Animals; The Cats' Instinctive Behaviour; The Cats' Sense Organs; Training the Cat; The Cats' Emotions; The Mind of the Cat. References are made to no less than 60 works.

The attitude adopted by the author towards those who not infrequently arouse the scorn of the scoffer by magnifying every trifling and, perhaps, accidental occurrence into a proof of wonderful reasoning powers, is eminently a common-sense one; for, as she observes, these instances only present one side of the picture. The chapter on The Experimental Method, dealing with various experiments tried with different animals with a view to studying their behaviour in unwonted and difficult situations, is of very great interest. A large number of psychological tests are described. Naturally, for the reasons mentioned and emphasised a few lines further on, their tests and their results cannot be regarded as conclusive, for as Professor Gates observes: "With regard to the comparison of the cat's learning ability with that of other animals, we find these experimenters agreeing with the common-sense notion that the cat is inferior in learning ability to the monkey, and superior to the chick and the rat. She appears to be considerably brighter than the horse, and possibly, though not certainly, as clever as the racoon. One investigator finds her decidedly less intelligent than the dog; one finds no reliable difference since both species failed equally at the task set them. The fourth reveals the cat to be much superior in speed of learning. We attribute this variation in opinion to the fact that in each case different animals, of possibly varying grades of ability were used, and tasks varying in complexity given them. . . . Certainly the experiments give no support to the popular notion that dogs are universally and surely superior in speed of learning to cats."

The chapter on Instinctive Behaviour is most interesting, and especially the statistics as to the rotatory movement invariably made by cats when dropping from a height; some, it appears, will turn even during a drop of six inches. The mysterious power possessed by some cats of finding their way home from a long distance, is dealt with, as also the matter of the reactions of kittens towards mice—of fishing cats—including a description of the manner in which a mother cat taught her kits to fish, of her manner of handling her young kittens, and of feline behaviour in time of earthquakes. The author evidently shares our disbelief in the often-quoted old ideas as to weather changes being foretold by the behaviour of the cat.

Of enthralling interest is the chapter on Sense Organs, and we are told: "Though there is fairly satisfactory evidence that fish, frogs, turtles, and birds all possess colour-vision of the human type, the results of a large number of careful experiments suggest colour-blindness in the case of all animals. The cat perceives only shades of grey in the world. So, according to investigators, do dogs, racoons, mice, rabbits, and bull-calves!" The study of the cat's sense of hearing and discrimination of human speech is also most absorbing.

Training the Cat, but this you really must read for yourselves! We will content ourselves with quoting the opening lines by Ruth Kimball Gardiner:

We train the dog to hunt the birds,
And beat him when he fails,
He works all day, and never gets
A single taste of quails,
The cat is wiser far than he,
She hunts for birds to eat;
She does not run her legs off, just
To give some man a treat.

Man harnesses the lightning, and
Makes steam perform his will,
The horse and dog his bond-slaves are
The cat eludes him still.

Which evident fact proves that with all our modern knowledge and flurry there is something lacking in our mental make-up which was possessed by the Ancient Egyptians!

The chapters on The Cats' Emotions, and The Mind of the Cat, will, we believe, appeal especially to those who live with their cats, as distinguished from those who only "keep cats"—a mighty difference. As a light set-off to the more serious side of the book we will just quote two tit-bits (the author does not vouch for the truth of the first!): "A cat whose kittens had died in an inaccessible place hearing her mistress observe 'I would give ten dollars if those kittens were out from under the floor,' immediately left the room, to return with four little corpses!" Had the offered reward been a plate of fish it had lent more verisimilitude to this (evidently American) yarn!

And this amusing genuine advertisement in a German paper: "Wanted, by a lady of rank, for adequate remuneration, a few well-behaved and respectably-dressed children to amuse a cat, in delicate health, two or three hours a day."

Is it not possible that this advertisement was "writ sarkastik?"

"The Modern Cat: Her Mind and Manners." By Georgina Strickland Gates, Professor of Psychology at Columbia University. Illustrated. Macmillan and Co., Ltd., St. Martin's Street, London, W.C. Price 8/6 net.

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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.

PORTRAITS. Cats standing at stud (not less than 5 insertions) can have their portraits published for the price of block and post age, i.e., from 15 6, according to size, or two done together £1 2s. 6d. the two. We challenge competition in this offer. For Cats not advertised at stud the portrait fee is £1 1s. 0d. [N.B.—The Blocks become the property of owner of cat, and may be used for printing stud cards, advertisements in Schedule, &c.]

All correspondence re "CAT GOSSIP" to the Editor,

H. C. BROOKE.

Bishop's Hull, Taunton.

"CAT GOSSIP" VETERINARY SERVICE.

OUR Veterinary Adviser will reply FREE, through the columns of "Cat Gossip," to our SUBSCRIBERS' queries about their cats; all such FREE queries to be sent as early as possible to "Cat Gossip." URGENT ADVICE will be sent by post for the fee of 2/6. This nominal fee will also be charged for Post-mortems. In these cases, the query, or the body, with the fee, must be sent direct to

"Cat Gossip" Adviser, "Croyland," Finchley Rd., London, N.W.
NOTE.—Any bodies sent to "The Editor" will be at once destroyed!