

CAT · GOSSIP

VOL. 3

Edited by H. C. BROOKE

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OBITUARY.

MR. GAMBIER BOLTON. MR. A. PERCIVAL.

Two well-known figures in the Cat World have passed away. In Mr. Percival, who left us on 12th August, the Siamese world in particular and the animal world at large have lost a true friend. Mr. Gambier Bolton was known to but few of the modern generation of fanciers. He was an old friend of some forty years' standing. A world-famous animal photographer, he was one of the pioneers of this art, and at that period was one of the leading figures in Catdom.

LONG-HAIR LORE.

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

A wee scrap notice of one of Mrs. Oglethorpe's early pets, the first blue Persian queen ever possessed. This queen's name was Vel-Vel, and she was the mother of some lovely pedigree kits, but on one occasion, having managed to get her freedom, she presented her "missus" with two handsome kittens, a tabby male and a black female; the male found an eager purchaser, and the female, who rejoiced in the name of Tinkerbelle, Mrs. Oglethorpe gave to her aunt at the age of six months. At nine months she had a lovely family, and since then she has produced 120 kittens—often blue Persians. Tinkerbelle is now eight years old, and is in most exquisite condition. When in Derby the other day Mrs. Oglethorpe found her looking "quite young"—with her coal black coat, broad head, tiny ears, and enormous orange eyes. A pretty story attaches to the litter of which Tinkerbelle was one. Weather permitting, Vel-Vel was placed with her small family in a cosy basket out in the garden, and here the bonny kits grew and thrived.

Daily, too, a visitor arrived, a big Tom puss, a real tabby, leaping over the garden wall. Purring around he would affectionately kiss both mother and babes, and then disappear.

Mrs. E. Elliot writes: "My winning queen, Mistress Billy Bumpet, 'laid' four lovely kits this morning, July 20th, by Kremlin Mask Marvel; two are very pale, and all four fat and big."

I am sorry to learn from Mr. F. W. Western that the entries for Sandy Kitten Show are on the poor side.

Miss Hilda Cleary now possesses another nice blue female, a gift from Mrs. Elliot.

The Misses Langton will be absent from England for a short period, as they, with friends, are passing some weeks in Normandy.

SIAMESE AND THEIR OWNERS.

By MUANG T'HAU.

Miss Wilson writes: "The Schedules for the S.C.C. have been sent out to all exhibitors and members. If anybody interested has not yet received one will send me a postcard I will send one. Owing to the sad death of Mr. Percival, who had kindly consented to judge Adult Classes, a new judge will have to be appointed, and the name will be published in the Press at an early date. Will exhibitors please note a printer's error in Special No. 51. This should read: Mrs. Claude Reeve gives special for best kitten (M. or F.) bred by exhibitor resident in Sussex. Will exhibitors please note specially the question at the bottom of the entry forms, and fill it in, otherwise it may lose them the chance of competing for Mr. Compton Mackenzie's Cup."

Mrs. de Lisle Mullens has left Bridgwater to reside at Cricklade, Swindon.

Miss Olive Stent writes: "Mr. Percival died on the 12th about one o'clock. He had been chatting with Prof. Hobday quite a little while before, and was with us about 11 o'clock the night before, quite jolly and very happy, playing with one of my Siamese cats. Of course, we knew his heart was weak; my mother and I had been with him to a specialist about a month ago. Almost his last thought was for a sick cat. He had asked me to go with him some distance on the Sunday to help minister to a sick cat. He was not only good to animals, but also wonderfully good to humans, and a wonderful friend, who will be greatly missed."

[Truly an example to the Fancy! A portrait of Mr. Percival will appear next week.—Ed.]

Through the medium of "Cat Gossip" the Vienna Cat Club offers a Gold Medal at the Siamese C.C. Show. We shall next week announce how it will be offered.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

WE have of late received anxious inquiries as to what, in our opinion, is the etiquette to be observed when a member of a cat club is dissatisfied with the official action of the Secretary or officials of such club. In our opinion—and note, we speak with the experience of many years as Secretary and Committeeman of important and leading London Dog Clubs—the only proper course for such member, before making a public complaint against his or her own Club, is to seek redress in the Club itself, by appeal to a Committee or General Meeting. Only if denied redress in the Club should the member attack his (or her) Club in the Press. Such action is devoid of all loyalty to the Club, and if one feels no loyalty, why not resign and attack as a free lance? But to publicly attack one's own club or its officials, especially when such officials are new, without first seeking redress in the Club and being denied it, is the worst possible form. Every paper has, and is entitled to have, its own policy, but the policy of "Cat Gossip" is not, and never will be, to allow its pages to be used for the settling of internal Club quarrels or complaints against officials which do not concern the public at all, and should be settled strictly within the confines of the Club concerned.

In the late Mr. Percival "Cat Gossip" has lost a good and true friend. When the paper was mooted he promised to help, and has been a subscriber from the first, though he wrote: "I wish you every success, but candidly I do not believe a cat paper will ever succeed in this country; most of the cat people have too little energy, especially those in high places, and are content to keep in the same old groove." And, by Jove, his estimate was not very far out! He gave practical proof of his sympathy by suggesting a guarantee fund to back up the start of "Cat Gossip" and cover eventual loss in the first six months, and first put down his name for £5, if required. The Siamese world in particular is the poorer—and, incidentally, a new referee must be appointed for the Club Show. To us, Mr. Percival was especially sympathetic because of his love for quaint animals of all kinds. Although he did not, as we used to, especially favour the larger animals such as wolves, he was very fond of "queer pets"—lemurs and such like—his favourites, perhaps, being the "Bush-Baby"—or Maholi Galago. His Siamese cats, of course, were well known, as were the artistic photos thereof which usually accompanied his stud advertisements—groups of kittens—of his clever queen opening a door, and so

forth. He was also one of those Fanciers who yet take an interest in the poor and needy of the feline tribe, and it is not so very long ago that he installed a lethal box with a view to "doing his bit" to lessen the cruelties perpetrated in getting rid of the unwanted.

BUT few of the present generation knew our old friend, Mr. Gambier Bolton, who, at the ripe age of about eighty, passed away at Bournemouth. We last saw him about a couple of years ago when we visited him at his pleasant home in Exeter, where he was then residing. He was the Grand Old Man of the Fancy—a contemporary of Harrison Weir and Miss Frances Simpson. A widely travelled man, he was one of the earliest of the great animal photographers, and at one time his studies of lions, tigers, etc., were in every shop window where such things were dealt with. His studies of our own Esquimaux crack, Arctic King, and one of our Dingos, were usually amongst those exhibited. He did much work for the Duke of Bedford, that eminent naturalist. In cats his fancy bent strongly towards the Maux, one of his best being the Katzenjammer son, D-Tail, a blue tabby, and the black Maux, Primrose—which, if we remember rightly, was the cat used by the Railway Companies to illustrate their posters of the Isle of Man. We remember his visiting us some thirty odd years ago at Bexley Heath, to photograph our white wolves, and the fright we had when our Wild Cat, the trap-door of his bed functioning badly, made a spring and landed on our shoulders just as we were bobbing out through the door of the big cage! When the "Great Upheaval" took place in the Cat World, and The Cat Club was formed with the openly avowed policy of wrecking The National, we regretted to find our friend ranged on the side of the iconoclasts.

WELL, well, such is life! One by one the old figures disappear; we are, no doubt, very much "laudator temporis acti," and, perhaps, biassed, but it seems to us these democratic days, with their terribly commercial spirit which now invades and permeates everything, produce no such outstanding figures in every walk of life as in days gone by, and this seems especially the case as regards "Fancies."

THAME entries very short. A first-class judge—good stewards—**please** do not let down the local enthusiasts, whose names are guarantee of good management!

THE "Cat Review" (Texas) for May contains an interesting article by Laura B. Jones (who, by the way, is a sister of Mrs. O'Brien, whose remarks on Siamese we recently quoted on "An After Show Sickness"). It describes how her kittens developed those symptoms—so well known, alas, to many of us—prominent amongst which is the throwing up of a brilliant yellow fluid, preceded by inability to chew and swallow, and speedily followed by death. The writer took some of the bodies to be examined, and was informed their death was due to hemorrhagic septicæmia, which often kills in a few hours. "I



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asked the doctor if this kitten had not died from gastro-enteritis, and he answered, 'No signs whatever of gastro-enteritis.' He made a small slit in the kitten's stomach with his knife, and it was full to bursting with the bright yellow fluid. I asked him again if that did not denote gastric-enteritis, and he said, 'that is simply dammed up bile.' Dr. Boyd said that this infection is very fatal among cattle, often attacking herds numbering thousands, and that they will be found lying dead everywhere, and that it also sweeps through the fox farms. I told Dr. Boyd what I had given the two kittens that died, and he answered, 'You could give all the medicine in the world, and it would have no effect whatever on this disease.' He said: 'We are doing experimental research work with cattle by injecting hemorrhagic septicemia a-gressin.' Dr. Boyd had none of the a-gressin in the office, but he told me if my little male lived until Thursday morning to bring him in, and he would try it out on him." The author then narrates how the doctor twice injected a cubic centimeter of a-gressin into the shoulder of the last surviving kitten, which, though terribly ill, recovered, and continues: "I recently had the opportunity to describe this sickness in detail to a well-known physician, and he said: 'I think it is the same thing that we call "Perpura hemorrhagica," a very fatal disease.' The Gould dictionary of medical terms gives Perpura as 'a hemorrhage into the cutis' (true skin)—Perpura hemorrhagica 'a very grave form with mucous hemorrhages.' . . . I told the doctor that show cages

were often stored for long periods between shows, then used again after perhaps being washed with soap and water, but in many cases not. I asked him if he thought the infection could come from the cages, and he replied: 'I do not think the cages have anything to do with it; in my opinion, the infection is spread by the hands of the judge.' I told him that most judges now use alcohol very profusely, but that the attendants rarely do, and that the veterinarians often do not, and, of course, we all know that the exhibitors and the general public are continually handling cats."

PERSONALLY, our worst experience with this accursed disease was one summer some five years ago, when it appeared, though not after a show. The inability to swallow, yellow vomitiation, and speedy collapse, were very marked. In three days we lost a dear black Maux, a lovely Abyssinian male given us by Sir William Cooke, and our spotted African cat; we just saved Katzenjammer's Ghost and our present pet Abyssinian.

MISS GRAYTON (Husthwaite) writes: "I have a lovely copper-eyed white queen, with beautiful head, small ears, and lovely coat—and not deaf." Miss Wilson (Chalkpit Kennels) also writes she has a "yellow-eyed" one, but, of course, we cannot say if it is really golden-eyed. Are there no more? Let only three or four be announced, and we feel sure our very good friend, Miss Hill-Shaw, will be willing for us to provide for them at Croydon! But the usual "greenery-gallery, Grosvenor Gallery" eye of the

non-blue-eyed white we most emphatically do not want! Personally, we fail to see why, if the golden-eye is preferred in Germany and Austria, and is catered for on equal terms with the blue eyes in America, why then should England obstinately refuse to acknowledge it? The more so as it is a very beautiful variety and worth recognition. There is no doubt some who might take up whites are deterred by their frequent deafness. Those who prefer the blue-eyed could stick to them, as is done by some in America.

WE have so often had to remark on the callousness of local magistrates in cases where cats are concerned, they not infrequently considering a fine of a few shillings sufficient punishment for the grossest cruelty to a cat, that it is pleasant to note the kindly feeling displayed by a J.P. of Abergavenny, Mon. On a man who was sent to prison asking what would become of his cats, Mr. Hanbury, the magistrate, instructed a milkman to call daily and leave milk for them, and send the bill to him. Three cheers for Mr. Hanbury, of Abergavenny!

THE "New York Herald Tribune" contains a very interesting article on "Cats About Town," by Sophie Kerr. It tells of the personal idiosyncrasies of these very independent animals—the only domestic animals which retain to any marked extent their individuality. "The grand tiger cat of the fruit store at Fortyninth Street, is pleased to have anyone pat him twice. Twice you may lay your hand on him with impunity, but do not do it the third time, for a lightning quick claw will mark you." Another fruit shop cat in Madison Avenue is an enthusiastic retriever, and will play for hours bringing back small objects thrown for him. There is a suburban cat who loafs regularly in a certain spot, and, having ideas of his own as to the behaviour of human beings, rewards undue familiarity on their part with a bite in the leg. "One evening at twilight he was seated majestically in his favourite haunt when a pompous policeman came by and stopped to look at a car parked with its lights not yet turned on. It was really not dark, but the policeman is well known as officious and fussy, so he advanced to the car, leaned over, and switched on the lights. The cat saw this unnecessary act of authority, and, promptly advancing also, bit the policeman smartly on the leg. The policeman, surprised and confused, imagined himself the victim of a large and vicious dog, and, turning hastily he drew his revolver, only to behold the cat, self-contained and calm, sitting beside him and looking at him with the air of a mentor. Shouts of laughter from the onlookers told him the rest. Red with fury, ridiculous, he wrestled for a moment with a desire to kick the cat, but thought better of it, and passed on. Whereupon the valiant cat went back to his former place, well satisfied with his evening's exploit. Ever since then it is said that the policeman, when he turns on lights of cars for delinquent motorists, first looks carefully about to be sure there are no cats near."

SHINGLED OR NON-SHINGLED.

BY MRS. CAMPBELL-FRASER.

In this present-day "shingled world," 'tis a marvel that this craze has not spread to our pets, and that L.H. dogs and L.H. cats are still tolerated!!* In the hotter regions, consultations held on the matter, and the question put to the vote, our long-coated felines might voice with one acclaim their wish to join the ranks of the "neatly cropped," and emulate in shininess their elegant sister, the S. hair, but luckily both species are with us in all their beauty, and no doubt the flowing tresses will ere long re-adorn the heads of the now bereft human.

Why this homily? Because, contrary to Burns, that most typical poet of the land o' cakes, it "is" the coat that makes the chief apparent difference between a Persian cat and the various S.H. varieties.

'Tis sometimes circumstance, sometimes inclination that throws the winning dice, or weighs the balance of choice, on the day we first embark on a pet of our very own. When calculation puts down its prosaic foot, then fancy is free no longer, an arithmetical sum frightens away the delights of sweet imagination; therefore, without mundane speculation! let the approach be made to the choice of those interesting intimate friends, the dainty denizens of the cat world.

L. or S.H. each has a distinctive character to be studied and drawn out, no matter on which variety our choice faces. Possibly the short hairs, having reserved to themselves a life of freer independence, nearer the wild, their personal characteristics stand out more boldly than those of the Persian, who long lapped in the luxury of mi-lady's boudoir, have for the nonce forgotten, but given the scope for his faculties, the Persian will prove himself a "four-footed wisdom" who can teach us, as well as learn from us. As a pet the choice is on either—or——. Both reward affection given, and suffer acutely, like all highly strung sensitive creatures if neglected or ill-used.

A short-haired cat, with its sinuous body, graceful ways, large wondrous eyes, and neatly tailored suit, year in year out keeps itself spick and span, without the help of the beauty parlour, and is a joy in "self-culture." The long-hair beauty, with its wavy billows, is a gorgeous sight, but the Court Hairdresser must be "around," or the queenly tresses will look at times grievously dishevelled. Choose which you will you cannot "gang agley!" Here is the similitude: The neat, svelt, lithe S.H. represents the **Present Age**. The dainty, luxurious L.H. the **Victorian Period**.

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety.

* Note.—On the Continent L.H. dogs are constantly clipped in hot weather, for their own and owner's convenience: we refer, of course, to house-dogs, not exhibition specimens. A clipped St. Bernard, for instance, looks very funny.

THOUGHTS ON "PUSS IN BOOTS."

BY M. OLDFIELD HOWEY.

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The story of "Puss in Boots," which so delighted our childhood, will repay a second glance from the eminence we have attained through climbing the stairway of the years. The belief in the possibility of changing the outward form that robes the soul was universally held by primitive man, and is reflected in the folklore of every land. The untutored savage was free from the fettering limitations exact knowledge of cause and effect has imposed on the scientific observer of to-day. His belief was not baseless, but founded on the analogy of natural phenomena. He knew that a caterpillar could become a butterfly, that an egg might be transformed into a bird, and a seed grow into a mighty tree. Then why should he doubt that a hero might become a lion, or a coward assume the fitting form of the timid mouse? However wild ancient legend may appear to our imprisoned imaginations, it was based on supposed facts which made it acceptable to our ancestors.

When primitive people credit animals with the power to think, speak, and act, exactly as do men, we need not suppose they are drawing upon their imagination. To the savage it is an unquestioned fact; our own children will unhesitatingly accept it as at least a possibility, and the peasantry of many European countries think that it may once have been the case. Clearly, then, the talking beasts of folk tales have been handed on to us from those who lived in an age when the belief was widely held that animals were as often as not disguised human beings. Examples of stories embodying the idea, so ancient that we may describe them as prehistoric in the Buddhist Jatakas, and the Persian fables of Bidpai, and are inscribed on the tablets in the library of the Egyptian Assur-bani-pal.

Solar and lunar myths are decipherable in many of these ancient tales, and "Puss in Boots" is a good example, for both luminaries are represented in its allegory. A significant feature in these myths is that the Sun God is as often associated with the mouse as with that rodent's traditional enemy, the cat. It has even been suggested by Lang that the god's title, "Apollo Smintheus,"* might be justly rendered "Mouse Apollo," or "Apollo, Lord of Mice." And a myth of the Troad accounts for the worship of this deity by fabling that he once rid the country of these undesired inhabitants. Baring Gould gives us the key to this fable, when he asks if Apollo charmed away the mice with his lyre, even as the Pied Piper enticed the rate of Hameln with his unearthly music.

[* The name Smintheus has been adopted by zoologists as the scientific designation of a variety of small rodent.—Ed.]

For the mouse (or rat, the glyphs are interchangeable) is emblematical of the human soul. The music of the piper is the irresistible call of death, and the mountain into which he leads those who hear his strains is the grave. My readers will recall the proverb that tells how the mountain in labour produced a mouse.† From death's dark womb issue forth the gray mouse shadows, or ghosts, to wander in the twilight. They are chased by the cat-moon through the illusions of night, until, at last, the glorious cat of the sun arises, and pounces upon, and absorbs into his own being the separate souls who had so long eluded him.

So, in the story of "Puss-in-Boots," when the ogre of death was induced by the cat representing Ra, the God of Light and Life, to appear as a mouse—that is to say as the self that ensouled the dread form—it could no longer offer effective resistance to the passionate desire of the god for his absorption, but was devoured, even as was Metis by Zeus.

† "Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus."

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Please note: Any alterations or information necessary for exhibitors will be published in *Cat Gossip* and *Fur and Feather*.

K. WILSON, Hon. Show Manager, Chalkpits Boarding Kennels, Springwell, Rickmansworth, Herts.

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H. C. BROOKE,

Bishop's Hull, Taunton.

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NOTE.—Any bodies sent to "The Editor" will be at once destroyed!