

CAT · GOSSIP

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First Edited by H. C. BROOKE

Edited by E. K. WAKEFORD

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LONG-HAIR LORE.

BY MRS. M. ESTELLE OGLETHORPE.

(Phone: Wimbledon 2889.)

Matthew Arnold, who was a true lover of cats, and in his home at Cobham possessed several pets, of whom he has written feelingly and with deep understanding, seems to have made a very complete study of their various personalities, and to have loved them despite their peculiarities. Atossa was a most lovely Persian, and although he admits she is "a red-handed murderess," yet by her endearing ways to her owner she easily wins forgiveness, and her many misdeeds are forgotten in the pleasure of her blandishments. Of her he wrote in his lament for "Poor Matthias":

"Thou hast seen Atossa sage
Sit for hours beside thy cage;
Thou wouldst chirp, thou foolish bird,
Flutter, chirp—she never stirred!
What were now these toys to her?
Down she sank amid her fur;
Eyed thee with a soul resign'd,
And thou deemest cats were kind!
— Cruel, but composed and bland,
Dumb, inscrutable, and grand;
So Tiberius might have sat.
Had Tiberius been a cat."

Then there was an ordinary little black cat, called Blackie, who lost a leg, and spent the rest of his life happily and actively on three! A friend, who recently bought this house for a week-end cottage, tells me that there were several little tombstones put up by Matthew Arnold in memory of his pets. The little graves are still there, but the tombstones are for the time hidden behind a tree, it being too sad to see them always standing there. This friend, too, loves cats, and possesses nine. But she tells me they are cats, and not Persians. Some day I hope she will discover that a Persian can be a cat just as any other!

A very sad event occurred last week, when the lovely Blue Persian belonging to my aunt and uncle passed away. He was but five years old, and was their constant companion. He became ill very suddenly, and passed away very quietly. He is laid to rest in the orchard by his favourite water garden, where he spent so many happy hours. Barrie, as he was called, will be sadly missed, for he had the sweetest disposition imaginable, and the house will feel empty without his presence.

The severe weather is most trying for our pets. I

found Aristocrat on a high shelf in his house one morning instead of in his warm bed. Perhaps the bed was too near the ground, or perhaps he thought the very fact of being near the electric light would bring him warmth, but he looked so desolate I have decided to bring him in at night for the present.

I have to-day discovered a splendid little invention, called "Peter the Heater," which I have placed in his house. It is simplicity itself. It keeps the worst of the cold away, and is fitted to the electric light (with an adapter both "Peter" and light can be used at once), and is very inexpensive. I tried a radiator, but there does not appear to be one small enough, and the one I had, though the smallest procurable, made the house too warm to be healthy.

Mrs. Argent, who is Miss Ethel Hook, and sister to Dame Clara Butt, writes to say she has been obliged to give up breeding because she has not enough time to give to it, and just keeps one pet, who is a son of Son o' Flick, and is very pale with most lovely eyes. It will be remembered Mrs. Argent carried all before her when she showed a lovely litter at Reading, 1927 (by John of Bedale), who were the 1st prize winners.

The Governing Council have just made two new rules, which I am sure will be welcomed by everyone. 1. That no cat or kitten, once registered, can have its name changed in any particular. 2. That no cat or kitten shall be brought out for best in show that has not been placed 1st in its open class on the day. It is also welcome news that blue creams (or blue tortoiseshells) are to be treated as a separate variety, and to have a Championship. Every fancier of discernment will appreciate the fact that these new rules are a move in the right direction.

Mrs. Joan Thompson, of Kew Gardens, who is well known as the breeder of lovely prize-winning kittens (she has now three studs to her credit—Mrs. Bergman's Mercury of Pensford, Mr. Clyne's Leander of Pensford, and Adam of Pensford, who has recently gone to Miss Nepean, of Southsea), has now parted with all her young stock, and has just the two mothers left. Delilah, a daughter of Flick-a-Maroo, and Juno she has given to Mrs. Papengus. Juno has now visited Son o' Flick, and Pandora has been to Ch. Colneside Billy Bumpet.

I have good news of my little Blue Princess of the Court, who went to Sydney, Australia. She has already won twice best in show and eight 1st prizes.

The judges' report said: Perfect in every point, though rather on the small side. It is wonderful how the progeny of Ch. Colneside Billy Bumpet hold their own all over the world.

Our Editress and Mrs. Campbell-Fraser have asked me to write Longhair Notes for the present. I shall be very pleased to do this if fanciers will kindly send me their news, so that we may all unite in our endeavour to support this little paper, which has already done so much good and won such a warm place in the hearts of cat lovers in its own inimitable manner.

"How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world."

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

WE are sorry to say that Mr. Brooke is again laid up with bronchitis and lumbago, as a result of the sudden lapse into Arctic weather, and we are sure that all his friends will wish him a speedy and permanent recovery. He has had to abandon the idea of going to Berlin Cat Show this month and Vienna Cat Show in April, as travelling cannot be considered until the weather is warmer and more settled.

THE news of other invalids is cheering. Mrs. Wade is no longer immured in a nursing home, though she is not yet really on the active list, and is supposed to be very quiet and prudent for some time to come (her doctor must have a strong feeling of sympathy for King Canute). Miss Hotson, who has been in hospital since September, having treatment for a fractured hip, is at last at home again, and able to take an interest in her cats.

Mrs. Tomlinson writes that she has sold her last red male kit of Radiant Morn and Red Viking through an advertisement in "Cat Gossip." The purchaser is Mr. Emerson, of Belfast, who likes the kitten very much, and says that he stood the journey well. Mr. Emerson also owns a black female kitten, which should make a good playmate for the new rival. Mrs. Tomlinson is now kittenless, as Mrs. Glenfield, owner of Red Viking, bought the last litter sister, so all five are now settled in good homes. It should not be long, however, before she again has plenty of kittens, as Radiant Morn has been mated to King of the Reds and Autumn Tints to Kemlin Mask Marvel.

ALTHOUGH most cats thoroughly dislike wet feet, it is evident that they can overcome their aversion if there is anything important to be gained. A correspondent of the "Daily Mail," writing from Auckland, New Zealand, describes how "During the recent high tides, when some of the shallow beaches not usually covered with water were completely submerged to a depth of about a foot, many young eels ventured in to get the food which they expected to find in new surroundings. At one place on the North Shore an old cat, followed by half-a-dozen

kittens, plunged into the water and grabbed by the head an eel fully 18ins. long, dragging it to the shore, where, no doubt, a little later her family would enjoy a good feast."

Mrs. O'Brien, the Chicago Siamese enthusiast (who, by the way, is the mother of the well-known American mystery writer, "Harry Keeler"), tells us that the party responsible for sending out broadcast revolting anti-cat leaflets and pamphlets, containing such choice bits as "The happiest hours of everyone are surely their cat-killing hours"; and "Everyone kills cats and smiles: smiles and kills cats and so on ad lib." is R. Sayre, 5,116, Indiana Avenue, Chicago. If the local S.P.C.A. can do nothing, it is time the activities of this two-legged brute are curtailed by a tar-and-feather party, we would dearly love to be there and take a leading part, it would make us smile and smile ad lib.! What horrible creatures do exist in human shape!

WE trust the description given by Mrs. Ballingall of the agonising death suffered by a pet cat which became stuck on the horrible "bird-lime" now sold and widely advertised in the "Daily Mail" and elsewhere, will be a lesson to readers not to use this filthy stuff to catch rats, even although, we believe, it is used in certain Government Offices. Such a vilely cruel way of catching even mice and rats is a disgrace to civilisation.

SIAMESE AND THEIR OWNERS.

Particularly interesting are two imported Siamese owned by Mr. Albert Edwards, of The Old Forge House, Mersea, Essex, and registered as Mersea Jock and Mersea Jean. They were born at Kuala Lumpur last February, embarked on S.S. Kashmir at Penang less than a month later, and arrived in London in April. The sire and dam were presented to Mrs. W. D. Mavor, breeder of Jock and Jean, by a Prince of the Royal Household of Bangkok. Mersea Jean has now been mated to Mrs. Harvey's Valentino of Petaling, and breeders should certainly be interested in the result of this mating.

Dr. Stoker's queen, Tishy, who was imported from France, has a nice litter of five by Mrs. Baker's late stud, Koung. Three of Mrs. Baker's own queens also have litters by Koung, and it is to be hoped that many of these kittens will survive to carry on his name, in spite of the inclement weather.

If anyone is fortunate enough to have male kittens for sale at present, Mrs. Wade would be glad to hear of them, as the demand at the moment far exceeds the supply. She has several requests for kittens, but none seem to be forthcoming.

Mrs. Ellaby has received six tins of Lactol from A. F. Sherley and Co., won by her brood queen, Princess Cleo, at the N.C.C. Show. This queen won Messrs. Sherley's special in 1927 and 1928. Lactol is eagerly watched for when the kittens see a saucer, a teaspoon, and a kettle—it is made in a minute, like

mustard. At present they much prefer it to milk, and are very well on it.

An enthusiastic new recruit is Mrs. Stratton Knott, of Manor Park Crescent, Edgware, who has a promising young queen, called Box, from whom she intends to breed later on.

Although there are few Siamese in Chicago, their beauty is evidently appreciated by those who have the honour of their acquaintance. In a delightful article in the "Chicago Daily News," Mr. Meyer Levin praises the Siamese, Caen, of whom he says: "Artists in Paris have recognised the aristocracy of the Siamese; the tall, lean cat is the god of the studios; his form is the ultimate realisation of grace, in him exists that tenseness of smooth-muscled beauty that is sought after by all men, and that comes as a miracle to, perhaps, one woman in a century. The blaze in Caen's eyes is the fire that is in sculpture and in poetry. No despot can ever be the perfect poem that is Caen; only cats can achieve the rarity of moments of pure, unobjective hatred, than which nothing is more beautiful."

THE SIAMESE CAT.

"Notre Ami le Chat," par Paul Méguin.
Preface de François Coppée, 1899.

The Siamese, or Malay, cat has begun to be quite well known in Europe, although it has been very rare for a long time. H. Weir, in his book, "Our Cats," says that from 1871 to 1887 only 19 Siamese, of which 15 were females, were shown in England. Since then a great many English and French people have gone to Siam, thus the species has become a little better known.

It seems that the true race only exists in the Palace of the King of Siam, and it is difficult to get any of these. The King is very jealous of the royal race, which is why he does not allow un-neutered males to be exported.

Their food consists of boiled rice and fish. They also eat meat, and prefer small birds and animals. They are very attached to their masters, and follow them about like little dogs.

They are very difficult to rear until they are six months old; they are born almost white, with a little dark grey line on the tips of their ears. The extremities gradually darken until the age of one year.

According to M. H. Weir, the characteristic points of Siamese cats are as follow:—Size and form—A little smaller than our European cat, an elegant profile, low and long. Legs thin and rather short. Feet longer and less round than those of the ordinary cat. Back long and thin. Head small, broad between the eyes, narrowing between the ears. Forehead flat. Nose long and big. Cheeks getting thinner towards the mouth. Lips full and round. Ears big and large at the base, with no fur inside. Eye almond shaped, oblique towards the nose, iris is a beautiful opal blue,

with a luminous pupil which is reddish both in semi-darkness and in the light. Tail is shorter than that of the ordinary cat, thick at the root, and getting thinner towards the tip. Fur short, rather woolly, soft and silky to the touch, brilliant and lustrous on the face, the legs and the tail.

Colour is uniform, a little darker on the back, pale brown, pale silver grey, and orange are the most sought after colours. Deep browns or chocolates are also allowed as long as they are without marks on their body, but we repeat pale colours should be preferred.

Points: Black ears, this colour must not go beyond these organs. Black mask, tail, and legs. The black must not go on to the body nor mark it.

In full health the Siamese cat should not be too fat; the coat should be soft, clear, brilliant, and shining, lying flat on the body, which should show firm and hard muscles.

CAT CALLS.

(Publication of letters does not necessarily indicate that they represent our views.)

GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING.

To the Editor of "Cat Gossip."

I was very surprised to see in a contemporary, in the report of the Governing Council Meeting, held on February 13th, that the application for affiliation to the G.C.C.F. by the "Royal Siamese Cat Society" was granted.

I have always been under the impression that the Governing Council was formed with the idea of looking after the interests of the Cat Fancy, but their action in this matter gives one grave cause to wonder if their policy has changed.

The Siamese Cat Club, founded in 1901, was represented on the original Council of the G.C. on its formation in 1910, by one delegate, and has been represented ever since, during the past eighteen years, and at present, owing to its increased membership, is entitled to three delegates.

When the question of a rival Society, viz., The Royal Siamese Cat Society, being formed, came to the knowledge of the S.C.C. Committee, a very strong letter of protest was sent to the G.C. pointing out that it was not at all necessary, and was founded in opposition to the original Siamese Cat Club, neither was it out to accomplish anything more towards the advancement of the breed than the S.C.C. was now doing. This was the voice of the representatives of over 150 breeders and exhibitors of Siamese.

Of the delegates present at the G.C. Meeting (and it is greatly to be regretted that a very important one, viz., Mrs. Wade, the Hon. Secretary of the S.C.C., was absent through illness), surely some must have voiced the feeling of the S.C.C., and I doubt not but that those really interested in the welfare of the breed would vote against the motion, and yet in spite of this and the strong protest from the S.C.C., a certain number of delegates, not sufficiently interested in Siamese, carry the day and entirely ignore the feelings of the S.C.C.

In common justice to all concerned, I should have thought the Council might have postponed the matter and held a full inquiry before passing a resolution that will cause so much dissension in, and harm to, a breed that has made so much progress during the past five or six years, and there could have been no possible reason for immediate action.

The Show Season is over, and does not commence again for many months; and I very much doubt if this new Society has enough members to entitle it to a delegate next March; therefore why this haste?

As the votes recorded on other motions at the G.C. Meeting are mentioned in the report published, would it be asking too much to inquire how they went on this momentous question, for I presume it was put to the Meeting to vote on?

For my own part I am greatly in favour of more than one Club or Society for any breed of live stock, if it answers any useful purpose and encourages more people into the breed, and works in unanimity with the parent club or society; but when one is formed in direct opposition to the original, or parent, by a dissatisfied ex-member, it is bound to harm the breed and discourage many enthusiasts.

(Signed) E. SYDNEY WOODIWISS.
Danbury, Essex.

Madam.—It is dangerous to let kittens play with puppies, unless they have been brought up together, and sometimes even then. Some years ago Mr. Western, I think, owned a lovely tortoiseshell and white kitten, who had won every prize, and was expected to out-rival a famous mother. One day the kitten was playing with a puppy, as she was used to do, when the puppy, apparently in a fit of ill-temper, seized the kitten, and killed her.

F. M. B.

Do not be vexed with owners who entreat a warm bed for their little queen, ready to mate. At such a time she needs even extra warmth, and no change in diet. I know of one who sent her pet cat to be mated. The cat came home ill, and died within a week. It was discovered that she had been kept in an out-of-doors pen. We often take our pets to bed with us, you know! [Ed. note: So do we!]

CHINA CATS.

There was once a decayed gentlewoman, who lived in a third floor back in West Kensington on twenty-one shillings a week. Her name was Miss Murgatroyd, and she had seen better days.

Miss Murgatroyd had always been devoted to animals, but her landlady, Mrs. Murphy, always put "No children or pets" in her advertisements, and though she looked the other way when a Great Dane puppy appeared in the first floor front, it was certain that she would see even the smallest kitten in the third floor back. So Miss Murgatroyd collected china cats.

Every Saturday, she did all her shopping for the week, and there sometimes remained a few coppers in her purse, as well as the shilling for the gas meter. She saved them up carefully until she had enough to buy another china cat, to add to those which stood on the little shelf which she had put up with her own hands. She found her cats in all sorts of places—in toy shops, and fancy shops, and sixpenny bazaars, but the most beautiful of all came from the second-hand furniture shops.

On Thursday afternoons, Miss Murgatroyd always washed her cats and re-arranged them in different positions. She only did it once a week, because it was the greatest pleasure that she had, and so she liked to make it a real event.

Miss Murgatroyd went out to do her shopping one Saturday afternoon, and left the window open, for it was the first really warm Saturday of the year. It was so warm and fine that Thomas, the big black cat who lived in the opulent flats up the road, was

tempted to make an expedition across the roofs, a thing he seldom did except on moonlight nights. And he came to Miss Murgatroyd's window.

Thomas was a cat of very sensitive disposition, and when he caught sight of the china cats, he realised at once that they were caricatures of his handsome self. He growled with rage, and hurled himself into the room. Miss Murgatroyd was not a very efficient carpenter—if she had been efficient at anything she would not have been a decayed gentlewoman—and the little shelf crashed under Thomas's furious onslaught. When he jumped out of the window again, there was nothing left of the china cats except hundreds of little pieces of china scattered all over the room.

When Miss Murgatroyd came in and saw what had happened, she sat down on a chair and wept. She wept for thirty-five minutes by the clock—half-a-minute for each of the china cats—and then she got a dustpan and brush to sweep up the pieces. Her eyes were so dim with tears that when she found a little roll of paper among the bits of china she did not realise at first what it was. It was a hundred and fifty pounds, all in notes, screwed up very tightly. Somebody must have hidden it inside one of the cats, which she had bought from a second-hand furniture shop.

Miss Murgatroyd prudently put most of the money in the bank, but some of it she spent with reckless

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abandon. She bought a brooch for the little maid who brought up her coals, and she bought a collar for Thomas—which he did not like at all—and she bought a big cupboard with glass doors to hold her new collection of china cats.
M. H.

WITH OUR CATS.

By F. M. BALLINGALL.

Analogous to this is the story of another cat who suddenly disappeared from her home—causing great anxiety to her friends, as it was known she would soon be a mother. The next-door house was an old one, parts of which were in a decaying condition. Inquiries were made here, and the search apparently ended. It seemed that the basement stairs were so rickety that they were seldom used, but a strange Puss had been observed to squeeze through a hole at the back of one of the steps, nor could she by any means be induced to come out.

Being kind-hearted, the house people had put food outside the hole, and it had been eaten, but only when no one was there to see! This was, perhaps, the missing Puss? The description fitted, so the anxious lady was escorted to the spot, where she called and entreated in vain. If Puss were still in hiding, she made no reply. At length it was arranged that food should be provided as before, and the result awaited. As before, the refreshment evidently was appreciated. But after another day or two, the owner of the house agreed that the hole should be enlarged, since fears were expressed as to the danger to the health of a little cat so near her time, and needing care.

Still Pussie did not respond to the gentle entreaties addressed to her, so a hand was inserted in the hole. In a few moments it found the warm body of the truant—and she had her babies cuddled close in her arms! With great caution, the hole being further enlarged, the family were removed into a basket, and triumphantly carried home—none the worse for the strangeness of their earliest cradle!

(To be continued.)

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All Foreign News and Exchanges to be sent to the Foreign News Editor, Mr. H. C. BROOKE, Bishop's Hull, Taunton.

All other correspondence re "Cat Gossip" to the Editor and Proprietor,

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