

# CAT · GOSSIP

VOL. 4

First Edited by H. C. BROOKE

Edited by E. K. WAKEFORD

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## LONG-HAIR LORE.

By Mrs. M. ESTELLE OGLETHORPE (Tel.: Wimbledon 2889).

Summer is y-cumen in;  
Loude sing cuckoo!

(Song 1250.)

In almost every home of cat lovers now is to be found a mother with her family of kittens, bringing with them an atmosphere of irresponsible gaiety with which to beguile our hearts and to fill our hour of leisure with some of its happiest moments. Only to those who truly understand and appreciate our little fireside friend does she become a gold mine of happiness and contentment; only to those who truly love her does she reveal her powers of sympathy and understanding, blessed by her tranquillizing influence, or, as a little comedian beguile our hours by tricks that are never old.

Wordsworth, who loved to watch a kitten at play, put his admiration and enjoyment of its antics into verse as it chased the falling leaves:

"See the kitten how she starts,  
Crouches, stretches paws, and darts!  
First at one, and then its fellow,  
Just as light and just as yellow!  
There are many now—now one,—  
Now they stop, and there are none.  
What intenseness of desire  
In her upward eye of fire!  
With a tiger leap half-way  
Now she meets the coming prey,  
Lets it go as fast, and then  
Has it in her power again,  
Now she works with three or four  
Like an Indian conjurer;  
Quick as he in feats of art,  
Far beyond in joy of heart!  
Were her antics played in the eye  
Of a thousand standers by,  
Clapping hands with shout and stare,  
What would little Tabby care  
For the plaudits of the crowd?  
Over happy to be proud;  
Over wealthy in the treasure  
Of her own exceeding pleasure."

Of the two grandchildren of that famous sire, Ch. Azure of Hadley, who arrived recently at the home of Mrs. Campbell-Fraser, one is a male and one a female. The former is sold, but the little female remains for the present, perhaps permanently, in the home of her birth. They are now three weeks old, and are most promising kittens.

Missie Maroo is expecting a family on May 9th, and this being her first her owner awaits them with a certain amount of anxiety, but Missie Maroo is a fine young cat physically, and all is sure to be well.

A few days ago I saw a delightful litter at the Pensford Cattery. They are now a month old, and are by Son o' Flick, ex Juno. They are all beautiful kittens, with fine heads, and little to choose between them. The little female is already called Ramona, and is most promising, but there is also a young gentleman named Ug, who has a very pale coat of finest texture, and the tiniest well placed ears, who took my fancy. His two brethren being of superlative quality rather put him in the shade, but in spite of this I couldn't help loving little Ug. Juno, who also answers to the name of The Duchess on account of her stately demeanour, was in fine fettle, and permitted me to admire her babes to my heart's content, but she assured me that her son bears no relationship whatever to that gentleman of American humour who

"Gets hair all over the rugs,"

and I myself can vouch for the fact that he neither — "squirms

Nor coughs when I give him some hugs."

Pandora I did not see. She had gone to visit Mercury of Pensford, that splendid young son of the late Ch. Colneside Billy Bumpet, and great things are hoped from this union.

Court Beauty, who is a fine young daughter of Ch. Gentleman of Henley, has presented her owner, Mrs. Roberts, with two fine sons and a daughter. All are making good progress, and are most promising.

From Miss Peake and Miss Ridley I hear that Twinks' kittens are doing well. Their size is rather abnormal, for they weigh 12½ ozs. at two weeks, and are already thinking of coming out of their basket. Miss Peake also thinks that the mating of Alayne to The Aristocrat is quite successful. If so I shall be more than delighted, for Speedwell Alayne is quite one of the prettiest little queens I have seen. The Aristocrat has, as I wished, only had very few queens this season, and I am glad I have been able to keep to my intention. He is in splendid form, and gambols in the garden like a young kitten. Another queen in kitten to him is Powder Puff of the Court, a very pale daughter of the late Ch. Colneside Billy Bumpet, who won the special for best head in blue kittens Kensington, 1928. It is quite apparent that The Aristocrat is one of those cats who mature late, and my motto for him is *Festina lente*. All famous scientists, including Darwin, are agreed that in

Nature the best things do mature late, and I am, therefore, full of hopeful anticipation of his future success at stud.

### GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

WE hope that we shall be inundated during the next week with entries for the advertisement competition, for which Miss Howey so kindly offered a prize. No entries have arrived so far, but naturally competitors will wait until the last moment before sending them in, on the chance that they may find a few more cat advertisements.

Mrs. Bassett tells us that some people have misunderstood our note a fortnight ago, and think that there is an epidemic raging in her district. The epidemic is really in the neighbourhood of Kelmscott and Lechdale (Glos.), to which she was sending a kitten, who has to stay at home until it is safe for her to go to her new owner.

WE are very sorry indeed to hear that Miss Wilson has lost her much-loved Manx, Starlight Argy, who has presumably been shot by poachers, as he went out for an evening stroll and never came back. He had won two Challenge Certificates, one under Mr. Ambrose and one under Mrs. Yeates, but it is as a pet that he is mourned by his owner, as he was adored by her and everyone else who knew him intimately.

Miss Howey is to be congratulated on the arrival of two promising families, both by her Cradley Fay. Basker, her tortoiseshell and white queen, took 2nd prize for the best shorthair kitten in the open class at last year's Worcester Championship Show, and we hope that her kittens will be equally successful.

WE hear that the Animal Welfare Week Procession was a great success. It started from Hampstead Heath, and was a quarter-of-a-mile long, a conspicuous feature being a banner bearing the words, "We must raise the status of the Cat. Cat lovers! Shall it be registration or taxation?"

This number of "Cat Gossip" is an extra large one, because we have so many interesting items in hand which we do not want to hold over indefinitely. The increase in size is certainly not justified by the number of advertisements! We hope that our readers' appreciation of this number will lead them to send us in dozens of advertisements immediately, so that "Cat Gossip" can grow larger and larger each week, instead of remaining a slim little paper.

THE Cats' Protection League is able to make use of old postage stamps—we have no idea what is done with them. We shall be very glad to receive any number, in packets of 50 and 100, and to forward them to the League. It is such a simple matter to put all envelopes and postcards aside, and cut the stamps off at some leisure hour, and it is always satisfactory to feel that some good use is being made of something which would otherwise be thrown away. Mrs. Ballingall acknowledges gratefully the following donations towards the expenses of the Annual

Miss Grayton, 1s.; Mrs. Dudley Ward, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Begg (Bath Garden Home), 5s.

THE Abyssinian Cat Club have just published a little pamphlet on the breed specially written for it by Mr. H. C. Brooke, who regrets that it has been impossible to learn much as to the history of the variety in this country, although years ago he referred to some of the oldest members of the Cat Fancy for aid and information. Major E. S. Woodiwiss will be glad to send a copy to anyone interested. We hear that several cups have been donated to his Club.

MR. Brooke is looking forward with interest to the shortly expected litter of a tortoise queen by his extraordinary red S.H. cat, which appears to be an absolutely unique specimen, for inquiries in many countries have failed to elicit tidings of the existence of such a cat. Were it not for the quarantine it had been intended to exhibit him at a Continental Show to see if any scientist could account for his origin. Although a full-grown tom, he barely weighs 6lbs.; his legs and paws are very delicate and slender. His colour is exactly that of a squirrel, a dark sorrel red all over, even to his whiskers. In his ways he is unlike any ordinary cat; for hours at a time he paces to and fro in his enclosure at a quick trot, just as do some of the animals at the Zoo. All naturalists are puzzled by him.

### CONTINENTAL CATDOM.

"Unsere Katze" relates that a young Russian tramp is always accustomed to take a blue tom cat with him on his wanderings. He found it as a half-starved kitten in the ruins of Moscow: short of food himself, he managed to rear the kitten, which now provides for him, entering houses through the window and stealing provisions, which it shares with its human friend. This cat has four ears: a cat belonging to a Viennese publican had four ears and two tails, this "freak" was sold for 600 dollars to America. Our Berlin contemporary is organising a "show" which will greatly interest the public, and should make many friends for cats: of cats living on friendly terms with birds, mice, rats, rabbits, monkeys, or other animals.

Dr. Sonnenleitner, rebutting in "Die Katze" the charge of falseness, selfishness, lack of affection for the person, etc., constantly brought against the cat, instances a cat which is very much attached to his wife, and describes how on one occasion, when he was playfully trying to take something away from her, she called in jest "Fani, Fani," and the cat immediately came to her rescue, biting and scratching the narrator's hand.

The competition organised by the Vienna Cat Club for the best Cat Show placard brought in over 200 entries, including some from foreign countries.

Herr Joe Lesti, Vienna, has just purchased from Mr. J. Killip, through the intermediary of Mr.



Brooke, a black female Manx, and the white-and-black male, Mankie Spots, which won 1st and championship at the Crystal Palace two years ago. He has a phenomenally round rump and very long hind legs. They were sent over through Messrs. Van Oppen.

### KALEEKA.

BY W. A. REYNOLDS.

There was nothing about Kaleeka which would have attracted the attention of a judge at a show. He was just a sleek, grey tabby of unknown ancestry, with a broad white shirt front and curiously pointed feet. But he was a cat with a brain, the chosen assistant in many a strange adventure of Dr. Erik Thallsen, the queer Norwegian experimenter, with whom I have many fascinating—and not a few alarming hours.

It was at Thallsen's house that first I met Kaleeka. He welcomed me gravely with an air of an ancient Norse chieftain: he was neither friendly nor antagonistic. But I had an eerie feeling that those greenish-yellow eyes were searching me through and through, probing into the secrets of my soul. He was more human than cat, yet there was something about him which was neither human nor feline. He was peering, searching, all the time: yet he was filled with an air of reposeful majesty.

Thallsen regarded his friend with an affectionate expression.

"Kaleeka is a strange beastie," he remarked, fondling the great cat. "He has told me much. To-night I am going to try to make him tell me more. He, like all of us, has lived before, and, if I can get in touch with his spirit-self"—he checked himself, and then added gravely—"we may learn much."

"Thallsen," I exclaimed, alarmed at this fantastic suggestion. "What awful necromancy are you going to practise now? Do you really believe that you can pry into the secrets of a cat's past?"

"Certainly," he replied, with conviction. "We will start as soon as the moon rises—for to-night is the Night of Cats, the day of all the year when the high rites of Pasht were celebrated in ancient Egypt." He looked me suddenly straight between the eyes, and I recognised that I was again about to witness an experiment outside the realm of modern science.

\* \* \* \* \*

The moon rose slowly, a great plate of orange in a cloudless sky. Its appearance seemed to satisfy Thallsen, who sat in an easy chair: Kaleeka perched upon the arm, peering with intent interest into nothingness. Gently, the doctor picked up the great cat, gazed lovingly into his eyes and stroked him: then suddenly he spoke sharply in a tongue with which I was quite unfamiliar. Kaleeka purred, rubbing his sharp head into his master's crooked arm.

Thallsen continued to talk, his voice gradually merging into a chant, while the cat answered with queer, half-human cries. . . .

All at once I started, hardly believing what my eyes told me was happening. Kaleeka seemed to be changing—to be growing. His outline became larger and larger, and I found myself gazing with stark horror at a shape which was half human, half feline.

A great cat's head, suffused with an expression of diabolical evil, stared full into my eyes; but the body behind the head was human, yet devilish. A pair of sinuous, snake-like arms twined rhythmically, the body swaying as if to some unheard music. . . . Through the miasma of fearful impressions, I recognised the figure before me as that of Pasht, the great evil cat-god of Egypt: I heard low incantations in a voice which seemed to be Thallsen's, though the tone was unfamiliar, the words incomprehensible.

Kaleeka looked straight at me: he commenced to speak. As the tones of his voice reached me, I felt a mad desire to kneel, to worship—pray—give myself wholly to the Shape which lived in front of me. For the voice was of a commanding authority, had a note of greatness, the like of which I have never heard before or since.

"Why have they ceased to worship?" The Voice boomed, echoed as though in some mighty temple. "I am the root of all knowledge, know all, read all, see all. When men were wise, they prostrated themselves before me. I live only by faith, by adoration: when men cease to believe, I sleep, and knowledge sleeps with me. When my temples fell, when my people ran after strange gods of peace and mercy, I fell asleep: strange ills fell upon the world, since I was forgotten—wars and plagues, riot and death."

There came a sound like the moaning of a mighty wind: the room rocked . . . went dark . . . was illumined only by the yellow-green eyes of the Thing which had been Kaleeka. I heard Thallsen chanting, and I knew, without comprehending, that he was worshipping, adoring.

The Voice came again.

"Though I sleep, I die not. I live throughout the ages, returning to those who have not forgotten the ancient wisdom, aiding them, uplifting them. To-night, I demand homage. Worship at the shrine of knowledge: make adoration at the feet of Eternal Wisdom. . . ."

Strangely the Voice faded, and I heard the sound of a great concourse singing in the queer, chromatic style of cats. All about me there were eyes—the eyes of cats, telling of consuming evil. An almost stifling desire to flee possessed me, but the circle of luminous eyes was too close. It drew in upon me: I could feel the near approach of warm, repulsive bodies. Something touched me, sending a cold thrill of horror all over me. In my terror, I cried aloud to Thallsen—then, in a frenzy, struck full in the face of the Thing which had been Kaleeka.

There was a sickening hiss, and I felt the cool, re-



assuring touch of Thallsen's hand on mine. He looked at me gravely. I realised that the terror was gone.

"I played with forces greater than I anticipated," he said seriously. "Another minute, and we should have been swept into the great outer cosmos of life vibrations. And," his voice broke with a sob, "I have lost Kaleeka. Look!"

I followed the direction of his gaze. There on the floor lay the body of Kaleeka, stiff in death. Almost reverently, Thallsen lifted the still form, and I looked into the eyes of the dead cat. I shrank back in horror—for there was, in those eyes, an expression of ecstasy and power: they were the eyes of a sleeping god.

97, Wymering Mansions, Maida Vale, W. 9.

### MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD.

What a wonderful gift from God is memory. In a second we picture the days of long ago as I can writing these notes. Home from school, my dolls arranged on the couch, and my pet pussy, a tortie and white shorthair, all playing school, and after the usual childlike prattle the command is given "twelve o'clock, you can all go home for lunch," and pussy runs off ready for her usual tit-bits. Pussy's sleeping quarters, a drawer made very artistic by my Christmas cards being pasted all round. What a grief when she died in her teens; and eventually a beautiful longhair gentleman was given me from a friend who lived at Pershore, Worcestershire, the county of lovely longhairs in those days. I am glad Mrs. Yeend is keeping up the reputation of Worcester for beautiful cats.

Years pass on, and Peter, my present red neuter, now in his 14th year, was given me, and after he pulled off a 2nd at the first Cat Show we had in Chester, when about eight cats and kits were shown, and last year we had 70 exhibits, then I entered the Faucy by purchasing Ch. Lady Maythorpe from Mrs. Neate, who was then a kit three months old. No wonder I have a weakness for tortoiseshells, when my first pet was a tortie and white. Now I have Ch. Lady Maythorpe, M. Autumn Tints, and M. Radiant Morn, and Peter; also three kits by Radiant Morn and King of the Reds, two cream males and one beautifully marked red tabby female. I was utterly astonished with the creams, as Radiant Morn has nearly all red and tortie blood in her, and has always been mated to reds, and always produced reds. She has bred back to her great-great-grandfather, Ch. John Barleycorn. I wonder if Mr. House could give us any scientific notes, or if any of our friends of "Cat Gossip" ever had any such experience.

Childhood days, days we never can forget, dear old happy childhood days.

(Mrs.) S. E. TOMLINSON.

Maythorpe, Canadian Avenue, Hoole, Chester, May 6th, 1929.

### CAT CALLS.

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

#### To the Editor of "Cat Gossip."

Is not Miss Langston "crying out before she is hurt"? Her name was not mentioned—she is not the only person who has exported cats—nor could she be held responsible if mated cats do not conceive. She is quite justified in saying that the cats she sent out were satisfactory, but scarcely, I think, in condemning our Berlin correspondent's statement?

I much regret to see Mrs. Jarvis' unwise assertions. No one said that vivisection was carried on without a licence; but the number of licensed vivisectors increases yearly, as does the number of experiments performed. (Over 100 licensees in Cambridge alone!) There are only two Inspectors for the whole of the country, to inspect many hundred laboratories. **Cats are being used in increasing numbers** for vivisection, especially since the outcry a while back about dogs being stolen for this purpose. What about the cats at Cambridge, crucified, their spleens brought outside their bodies, a glass window let into the abdomen, and in this condition kept alive for a fortnight, and occasionally made to take treadmill exercise? What about the cats at Guy's, or a laboratory thereto attached; their kidneys drawn forth, a wedge cut out of one kidney, the cat replaced, then, after a few days, the other kidney also thus treated? These are but isolated instances of what cats suffer. An assertion such as that made by Mrs. Jarvis may well cause the cat to say "Save us from our friends," and it is a thousand pities that such a good and sensible letter is spoilt by it.

H. C. BROOKE.

#### To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

Madam.—The Appeal Committee will welcome all reasoned suggestion and criticism, which will be tabulated, and carefully considered by the committee of experts who will finally revise the clauses and draft the Bill for the Parliamentary Committee. But all essentials will remain intact in the Bill which will be presented to Parliament and passed into law. We wish to remind readers that many clauses not in the Appeal will be found to meet various suggestions, doubts, and fears, expressed by some, but we are glad to say that so far almost every correspondent has welcomed both taxation and compulsory neutering. Does Mr. Brooke remember that never before have these two things been part of the scheme of any one Bill? Mr. Brooke—and others—view the swarming population of pussies, and declare an army needed to round them into the tax-gatherer's net. But neutering in itself will largely reduce the numbers, since there will be no toms at large. Taxation will do the rest. The labourer is worthy of his hire. If warehouses, etc., decline to pay for their little servants, let them go without. There are two million of cats in London, Colonel Douglas says. Hundreds of thousands of these are doomed to the atrocious lethal box, the vivisector's rack, the fur dealer's ungodly slaughtering, or the perils and diseases of the homeless. There are too many to tax, say Colonel Douglas and Mr. Brooke; better kill them. There are too many to tax, we agree; better see that they are not born. There will not be too many to tax when **every cat has an owner**, and when every tom is kept where he can do no harm.

Speaking for my own family, I may say that our cats always wore collars, always went with us everywhere—among the mountains and lakes of Scotland, in the fair English beauty of copse and dale, they have had liberty, and never an accident. A soft, but strong, leather collar, neatly buckled, is absolutely safe. We shall invite the trade to devise the perfect collar for official recommendation. As for fanciers and breeders—we will not imitate Orlando, and say there was no thought of pleasing them when we framed our Bill! But we will aver that they count for nothing in comparison with the welfare of the cat. **Why** they should



recent inspection I know not. One is usually rather pleased to show off one's fine arrangements. We of the Canine League positively entreat you to come and see what we can do for doggies, and love to observe you turn green with envy. Do not gentlemen and ladies, with note-books all complete, visit your white Persians and your blue-eyed Siamese, and do not you entertain them handsomely, and next day read with pleasure their candid appreciation of what they had seen? No! I cannot believe but inspection will be a delight—something to be looked forward to, and remembered happily. Far should it be from Mr. Brooke to call these delicate attentions to fanciers "having their lives worried out of them." That really is not a right thing to say, Mr. Brooke. Since you, Sir, admit that 99 per cent. of the Fancy are indifferent to any methods for ensuring the better treatment of the cat, do not wonder that we are profoundly indifferent to anything that 99 per cent. may say or do regarding the Bill we shall present to Parliament with that end in view.

I think Mrs. Egerton Free means simply to point out that thousands of dogs are turned adrift or killed at licence time. The numbers are small compared with that of cats killed all the year round. Moreover, most of those thousands are due to the chance mating of female dogs in the streets. Confine females during mating periods, and the thousands will automatically diminish.

Walking one day down a mean street of poor shops and dingy passages, I noticed, sitting before me on the pavement, a small black cat. He was just an ordinary English shorthair, you might say, but to me he did not seem, in such a place, at all ordinary. For he sat, tail curled round, with an air of pretty confidence, and a fan leather collar was neatly buckled round his trim little neck. A shabby collar you might say, but to me it seemed a love-gift, with a price above rubies. I stooped to caress him, who showed no fear, and instantly a treble voice rang out a shrill warning: "He belongs in there!" So quick was the child to guard the cat's rights that I smiled with pleasure. "That is good!" I replied; and the child smiled back. As I walked on, her words rang in my ears: "He belongs in there." **He belongs!** Why, I thought, should not every cat "belong"? Why should not every cat, adorned by love, sit secure, with pretty confidence, beside his own door-step? One day, I said to myself, this thing shall be.

F. M. BALLINGALL.

#### To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

Madam,—I am afraid Mr. Brooke has got hold of the wrong end of the stick. I only mentioned "the law" as proof that Mrs. Ballingall was in error in stating that cats had nothing in their interests in the law. I agree that the detailed record is of little use, equally as much as is all the talk about taxation of cats, so let us all get on with our various jobs and help the strays as much as we can. I have had many letters agreeing with me that Mrs. Ballingall was very unfair in her wholesale attack on cats' homes, and can only suppose she was very unfortunate in choice of home (if any) she visited. Kindly put Mr. Brooke wise that it is not my wife who is in this correspondence.

Yours very truly,

THEO. F. MEGROY (of Bath).

Marine Hotel, Barmouth, N. Wales, 5th May, 1929.

#### To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

Dear Madam,—Owing to the exigencies of Animal Welfare Week, in which processions, etc., the Cats' Protection League is participating, I have not time to enter fully into the pros and cons of Mrs. Ballingall's Cats' Taxation Bill scheme, to which I have been converted after having been as dead against it as Mr. Brooke. But I must protest against one of Mr. Brooke's objections, i.e., the collar clause entailed "a lot of hanged cats" as untenable. I get almost as much annoyed with people who decry collar-wearing as with those who (criminally) decry neutering. Cats occasionally wriggle off elastic collars, also get a forefoot through, and get a sore "arm-pit" in consequence, but

I have never known one hanged. The only danger and mischief lies in the common fault of putting on collars too slack. No cat wearing elastic could hang itself; nor have I, as I say, known any accident yet accrue from a narrow satin-lined leather collar (such as are sold at Whiteley's). I am a strong upholder of neutering of males (four or five months preferably to six months old). Also I think there should be more female neutering in preference to wholesale killing of females (whom I adore), and female neuters are a positively charming type, as I can testify to those whom I have boarded. Unfortunately it makes them difficult towards their own species, though delightful with humans.

All kittens, except those for whom homes are guaranteed, should be chloroformed as they emerge from the mother. A great deal of rubbish is talked about the cruelty of not allowing females to mate when heat has worn off—it wears off absolutely, and sexual temperament differs as in human beings. The only trouble is when females start abusing one another, as they will do occasionally. I have known passionate friendships between females and neuters. All my cats (12, including boarders) have restricted freedom, i.e., three rooms inter-communicating and a wired-in run with two small trees, and I insist upon all being collared, i.e., elastic, with tab or disc, or one of the C.P.L. excellent make sold by Mrs. Avery. A needle in a bottle of hay is on the whole easier to find than a tabby cat in London's two millions, and I swear by collars as clues and incentives to return by public.

The killing craze—gloried in and boasted about by caretakers and ostensible cat champions—is atrocious. I infinitely prefer females to males or neuters, and it is with the hope of saving them that I for one espouse this prospective Bill. As Napoleon said: the word "impossible" is only to be found in the dictionary of fools. Why does Mrs. Bazeley quote that miserable depressant, Omar Khayyam? My flowers will bloom for me elsewhere. Of that I have knowledge—not "hope" or "faith." Why should "truth" be eternal heartbreak—and "the rest lies?"

Hoping someone will send and relieve the S.O.S. of the Anti-Slaughtering Clinic and "Real Home" at Rosemarie, Cornwall.

Yours faithfully,

M. DUDLEY WARD.

15, Upper Westbourne Terrace, W. 2, 3rd May, 1929.

#### To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

For some time past much has been said and published about the apathy of shorthair cat breeders and exhibitors, and the Shorthaired Cat Society has come in for its share of criticism. The Show—for S.H. cats and kittens only—which the S.H.C. Society proposes to hold in St. Michael's Hall, near Croydon, on June 26th, will give an opportunity to all those interested in S.H. breeds to come forward with offers of help to make this, the first venture of its kind, an unqualified success. **The Show can only be held if S.H. breeders and exhibitors will co-operate with all the help they can, both financial and by entries.** All promises of support must reach the Hon. Secretary not later than May 15th.

HELEN HILL-SHAW, Hon. Sec. S.H.C.S.

18, Elgin Road, Croydon, Surrey.

#### To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

The forthcoming Shorthaired Cat Show, to be held at Croydon on Wednesday, June 26th, is now well in hand, but through "Cat Gossip" I do most earnestly ask for a generous response to our appeal for guarantees, donations, specials, and advertisements. If fanciers will help us we can give you a good show, and we can further the interest in the shorthair cat, and, perhaps, in time put it in its pre-war place in the Fancy. Time is very short, please let us know what you can do to help us at your earliest convenience. Individual papers will be sent out in the course of a few days, but please will all fanciers take this as an individual appeal, and help us all they can.

KIT WILSON, Hon. Show Manager.

Chalkpits Boarding Kennels, Springwell, Rickmansworth.

## WITH OUR CATS.

BY F. M. BALLINGALL.

(Continued from Page 111.)

All our cats were pets, and had the run of house and garden for much of their time. In one room slept Pearl, in charge of his two little sons and their adopted sister. They each had a very large hutch, raised above the floor, for their nightly occupation. Three of these were ranged along one side of the room, beyond the door; and round the corner was the fourth hutch, which belonged to Hector. His brother, Felix, owned that nearest the door, next came Sylvie, and then Pearl. Hector, therefore, was furthest from the door. To make sure that each ate his own dinner I used to put their saucers in their hutches. Knowing this full well, the moment I opened the door at dinner-time, bearing the tray with four saucers, the three kittens raced to their hutches, jumped in, and sat awaiting my services with expectant faces. Naturally, as Felix was nearest, he was served first, then Sylvie, then Pearl's was placed on the floor, as he would have scorned to jump for anything, and lastly I turned to Hector. I was accustomed to look across at him as I lifted up Felix's saucer from the tray, amused at his aspect. He sat bunched up as tightly as possible—as if to hold his impatience in bonds—with serious eyes regarding my methodical movements, my too slow approach to his own hutch! Felix was served—his head patted; Sylvie's head was over her saucer almost before it touched the floor; Pearl stood majestically still, singing his grace so low that I had to bend close to hear that soft music; and then, as I crossed, I saw Hector look up from Pearl—and oh! the restrained rapture on the little face as I drew near! "Darling Hector! here you are!" and, singing, he ate.

One morning I entered with my tray, and, as usual, the kittens made a rush across the room. Felix, being nearest at the moment, tumbled into his hutch; Sylvie followed into hers. Hector was half-way to his—when quite suddenly he stopped. A thought had evidently struck him. Turning, he ran back quickly towards me, and leaped in on the top of Felix! Felix, thus assaulted, fell over most ignominiously, while Hector sat in his place, holding up to me a delighted face, his eyes ashine with happy smiles. "Now," said he, "now I shall be served first!"

I was really astonished at his cleverness. In that moment of conscious thought he had **reasoned** it out. "Felix is served first. I will take Felix's place, and I shall be served **first**." What to do? I laughed. I kissed that smiling, happy face—but discipline must be maintained. And Felix's large blue eyes seemed to be growing larger as, from behind Hector, he watched the usurper being caressed! Hector had a few pieces of the raw beef from my fingers, and then I lifted him out of the hutch, and carried him over to his own. I looked back—the resignation, the

gravity of that disappointed little boy! His ruse all in vain! He had been so **sure** he would be served first.

I bore this attitude of unmerited suffering for two or three days. Then, one morning, I gave in. Exclaiming aloud, to relieve my feelings, "You **shall** be served first, Hector," I crossed over—ignoring Felix's gentle surprise, Sylvie's dismay, Pearl's displeasure—and laid a saucer before Hector. Never shall I forget the smiles that broke over his countenance as he realised his good fortune—his delicious expression of incredulous happiness. So incredulous was he that for a few moments he hung over his saucer, almost as if he thought it were quite too splendid to be real! Then, singing, he ate—and ate with the same good manners that distinguished him even when served in the accustomed routine.

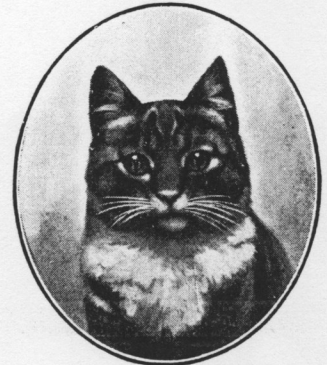
I did not always thus diverge, but from time to time came the joyous morn when Hector was served **first**.

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The widely advertised dictum of the vivisector that certain animals exist mainly to provide "spare parts" for human beings, is foreshadowed in the Celtic myth of the porter who kept the gate of the Irish god-king Nuada. This man, who had by misfortune lost an eye, sat one day at his post nursing a cat that had leaped upon his knees, when two strangers arrived before the castle portal. He inquired who they were, and received reply that they were two physicians, Miach the son, and Airmid the daughter, of Diancecht, the god of medicine. "We are good doctors," they added challengingly. "In that case," said the porter, "perhaps you could give me a new eye?" "Nothing easier," they answered, "we can take one of the eyes from your cat, and place it in your eye-socket." The porter, being no more troubled by scruples about the suffering of a mere animal than are the mass of people to-day, begged the doctors to do as they said, and accordingly one of Pussy's eyes was transplanted to the man.

The result was not entirely satisfactory, for the engrafted eye retained its feline peculiarities, and when night fell, and its possessor wanted to sleep, it was wide awake watching for mice, whilst in the daytime he could hardly keep it open. Still, like similarly doubtful cases of to-day, the operation was described as a marvellous cure.

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TOM LEON.

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