

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 (Tel.: Wimbledon 2889).

If Nature be a phantasm, as thou sayest,
A splendid fiction and prodigious dream,
To reach the real and true I'll make no haste,
More than content with world's that only seem.
Sir William Watson.

A delightful letter comes from Mrs. Reynolds Sams, who must be an extraordinarily clever and busy person, for amongst her pets, besides Persian cats of all varieties, she numbers bloodhounds and pheasants, and she makes a point of visiting them all each day. Fay of Runnymede went to America recently, also a son of Glitter of Runnymede, who was only seven weeks old, and was taken by hand. Mrs. Reynolds Sams has now more than fifty kittens of all ages and varieties; many have gone to new homes, and many will be seen on the show bench at Kensington. Cocoon of Runnymede, by Champion Cupid of Hyver, was not shown in this country, but was a very nice queen, and had she remained in the land of her birth would probably have done a lot of winning. White kittens are so rare, it is splendid to hear that there are also ten of this exquisite variety, by Swinton Turk, in the Runnymede Cattery, some of whom will visit the Kensington Kitten Show this month. Chinchillas are too numerous to mention, by Ch. Cupid, Glitter and Mowgli of Runnymede, and there are some very good smokes by Ch. Dragon of the Cottage. Swinton Turk, Mrs. Reynolds Sams' imported white male, is siring kittens of a very nice type, and he brings new blood into the country, which is an excellent thing.

Jasmine of Farnborough's kittens by Champion Hercules, are splendid representatives of this cattery, for they weigh twelve and twelve and a half ounces at a fortnight old, and have fine heads and lovely coats.

Son o' Flick has commenced the season well by siring the best kitten at Bath Show, the little mother being Colneside Puff. There is also a splendid litter by him belonging to Miss Nicols, consisting of three

fine cream males and one blue cream female. They all have fine heads, and are a credit to their sire.

To-day I had the pleasure of a visit from Miss Peake and Miss Ridley, who motored over from Smarden, in Kent, the home of the well-known Speedwell Cattery. It was a joy to show them my pets and their families, who came into the garden to greet them and to make friends.

Josephine Jinks, the mother of the late Ch. High Jinks of Wimbledon, has produced three fine kittens by Brookside Michael, consisting of a cream male, a red tabby male, and a blue female. Some years ago a cruel person threw a brick at Josephine, and since then each litter has been imperfect until this one, when all are without blemish.

Mrs. Joan Thompson's Pandora of Pensford is hourly expecting a litter by Mercury of Pensford, and if all goes well their owner will be very proud of these kittens from a sire of her own breeding.

A friend who is quite a novice and has a beautiful little queen, who recently produced her first litter, told me that one of the kittens was born with open eyes, and that there was a lot of discharge from it. Knowing what this usually portends I felt anxious. The friend told me she just wiped the eye and cleared it of all matter, and then applied carbolized vaseline, which she mentioned was her panacea for all evils. When I saw the kittens a little later she did not know which one had had the eye trouble, and certainly their eyes were all quite perfect. I recently had a kitten to deal with whose eyes, although there was nothing actually wrong with them, looked slightly inflamed, and I tried the same remedy with excellent results.

I am more than satisfied with the Ambrosia milk food, which is obtainable from Ambrosia, Ltd., Lifton, Devon. Both cats and kittens love it and thrive exceedingly, and it is a pure and delicious food for them, and is not too relaxing.

The Wilson Veterinary Medicine Manufacturing Co., Ltd., are now making tasteless worm powders for cats and kittens. These can be put in the early

morning saucer of milk, and are quite without taste, and given daily for a week are most effective, causing no sickness or any derangement whatsoever. I think more trouble than we are aware of are attributable to worms, skin and eye trouble especially, which cause havoc in many catteries.

As I conclude my notes the news comes that Mrs. Joan Thompson's Pandora has a perfect pair of male kittens by Mercury of Pensford, and I also hear that Mrs. Sharman's little queen, Amber, has five kittens by Son o' Flick, three creams and two blue creams.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

WE hear from Mrs. Burls that her giant brown tabby male, Galantuoma, has had visitors from Dunoon, who had seen his pictures in the paper, and, being in London, came on to Croydon to see him. Mrs. Burls wonders whether there is any other male cat in this country of larger size, and we should be glad to know of any of which our readers can tell us. Galantuomo now weighs 22 lbs., his waist measurement is 26 inches, his face is 11½ inches long, and he is 36 inches from nose to tail. We have certainly never seen a larger cat ourselves, and we think that males of this size must be exceedingly rare, though some enormous neuters used to appear in the days of weight classes at the Crystal Palace. Mrs. Burls also owns a silver tabby, Silver Mist, who is to be shown this year. He is a beautiful creature, very gentle and affectionate.

THE schedule of the Kensington Kitten Club Show, to be held on Thursday, July 25th, reached us a few days ago. There are plenty of classes for long-haired kittens, but the short-hairs have to be content with A.V. tabby, A.V. self, and A.O.C.—in addition to the Siamese classes, of course. We cannot discover who is judging these classes, for though the names of the judges are given, there is no clue as to which classes have been assigned to each judge.

WE have added a Siamese kitten to our establishment. She celebrated her arrival by going up the chimney—just to see what it was like up there—so she is not really looking her best; her language to our Russian is perfectly appalling, and she screams with anger if she is left alone. She also has a habit of emphasising all her remarks by sticking her claws into the ankles of the person to whom she is speaking, which is detrimental to silk stockings. But since she is a most fascinating member of a fascinating race, all these sins are forgiven her, and

one who spends five minutes in her company falls in love with her. Although she is not yet four months old, she looks as though she has already experienced many years of a not too sheltered life, and has acquired a vast knowledge of the world. She makes our Russian kitten look extraordinarily young and unsophisticated by contrast. The Russian cannot believe that she is a cat at all, and is convinced that she is some sort of a devil, even though she does wash her face with her paw, which is not the habit of devils—as far as we know.

"THE Elfin Story Book," by M. A. Northcote (Arthur Stockwell, Ltd., 2s.), is a very charming little volume of poems and stories for children, which will appeal also to older people. In fact, the poem which we like the best, "Peat Smoked Bacon," will be appreciated far more by those to whom the smell of peat brings back their own childhood, as it does to the old lady in the poem, than by children who have not yet learnt the spell of memory. There are some delightful verses, "To my Black Kitty," and a kitten plays a prominent part in another poem, "Time to Come in," when a little girl compares the kitten's lot and her own:

"Time for my bath! Why must a little girl
Be brushed and clean?
My little Kit
Just licks—and no one tries her hair to curl
Nor does she seem
To care a bit
To brush her tiny, sharp, white teeth of pearl."

The happiest of the four stories in this little book is *Midsummer Night*, which tells of the wonderful things which happened to a little girl who managed to be awake at midnight on that most magical night, and in "The Story of a Pearl" Miss Northcote sketches in a few short pages the life and death of an ill-fated little Princess.

OBADIAH, OF OHIO.

A FOUNDED-ON-FACT TALE.

BY MOIRA MEIGHN.

"There! dozens of kittens!" cried Mary, looking proudly at the rows of little sugar biscuit cats she had just cut out with an enchanting tin pastry-cutter that shaped kittens of every variety.

"If only we had a real cat," Mary sighed. Mrs. Silas, who, like her little daughter, loved pusskins as much as Mr. Silas disliked them, sighed also, and agreed that a cat around would be real homely.

"I wish a real cat was as easy to make as a biscuit one," Mary sighed again as she helped herself



to raisins from her mother's pastry bowl. "What do you think real cats are made of, Mum?"

"Pride and loveliness, mystery, mice, and all that's nice. That's what I guess little cats are made of," laughed Mrs. Silas.

"My! I wish there was a Good Witch in Ohio that would send along her very own cat to make Pops love pussies," said Mary, and this time she sighed thrice.

Immediately the baize door between the kitchen and the parlour blew itself open, and there, mysterious, lovely, and proud as you please, stood Obadiah. As black and shining as ever witch's cat that rode out of nowhere on a broomstick.

Mary's mother was all of a flutter. She reckoned that shoes and shoes would greet the magnificent stranger puss directly Mr. Silas returned.

"That cat looks cute enough to play Puss in the corner, and not keep around when Pop's home," said Mary. "Is it a lady or a gentleman cat, and what do you think is its name?"

"I guess Obadiah 'ud about suit him for a name, and he sure looks most gentlemanly," said Mrs. Silas pouring out cream.

"Bother! then he can't have kittens," Mary frowned.

Obadiah winked mysteriously, but before he had time to give a mew in reply to her question, "Didn't he like kittens?" Mr. Silas stumped up the path.

A flick of whisker, a whisk of tail, and Obadiah vanished behind the desk in the corner.

"Mayor's arranged a rat-killing week," announced Mr. Silas settling in the rocker. "Handsome prizes for the home that kills most. Wish my old terrier was alive, she'd have won a prize for us."

A scuffle and squeak came from Puss's corner, then Obadiah laid a large rat at Mr. Silas's large feet, with a mew—a mew that said something like "Herrrrre-y-arre!"

"By Gee! A cat with a rat." Mr. Silas, too surprised to shoo Obadiah away, spoke like a spelling primer.

"He's a gentleman, he won't bother you with kittens," cried Mary hopping with excitement. "Dear, darling, angel Pops, say he can stay?"

Obadiah, to show that there was no doubt about his staying, jumped up to do paw-pump massage on Mr. Silas' waistcoat.

"By Gee!" Mr. Silas again exclaimed as Obadiah, purring louder than the singing kettle, hummed a witch's lullaby. By no other means could a cat

have magiced fierce Mr. Silas into meekly welcoming it into his family.

For a week all went well, then Obadiah, gentleman though he undoubtedly was, insisted on mothering a kitten. It was the wee prize Persian belonging to the lady down the street whose great-great-uncle had been an English Earl. Mr. Silas had long wished to get acquainted with her, and to be able to say he had seen the picture of the Earl's Castle. Obadiah arranged that he should have both wishes granted.

While Mr. Silas, dressed in his best, was returning the kitten and explaining to the Earl's great-grand-niece that Obadiah had taken it by mistake, Obadiah slipped round the back way and stole the kitten's younger sister. After he'd stolen all five of the family of Persian pusskins in turn the Silases and the Earl's great-grand-niece were real neighbourly.

Obadiah really must have been a Witch Cat, don't you think so?

What other cat have you heard of who came from nowhere after a little girl had sighed three times?

What other gentleman do you know of who delights in washing and bringing up baby kittens?

Obadiah, of Ohio, is no ordinary Puss, certainly NOT.

HOME, SWEET HOME.

I really think I'm going daft, by jim-jams I'm oppressed,

The fates no more are kind to me, no more by luck I'm blessed;

I must be mad, where'er I hunt tho' searching till I'm cracky,

I cannot find our fluffy cat, our very precious Brackie.

In garden, kitchen, wheresoe'er we look with pain and care,

'Neath tables, chairs, in cupboards, still he's not found anywhere;

My missus boasts at finding cats; no one on earth can beat her;

She'll search with all her might and skill, but yet she can't find Peter!

And then our neighbour's garden we have searched all o'er in vain,

Around the rockwork, under sheds, we sought with care and pain;

We tumbled over raspberry canes, and paths both wet and bumpy,

But where on earth's wide surface is that ginger kitten, Gumpy?

At time above was inflicted on suffering friends and relatives we had three little treasures named Brackie, Peter, and a kitten, Gumpy.

WITH OUR CATS.

BY F. M. BALLINGALL.

(Continued from Page 160.)

A very remarkable instance of reasoning power in cats was furnished to me lately in a story told by a friend of her childhood's days. Her early years were spent in South Africa, some hundred miles from Johannesburg. The home was in a part that had been the scene of gold-mining operations; there were several open shafts still in the neighbourhood—one being quite near to her parents' house. In the night-time wild cats came in search of food—spotted like leopards—and so shy of humanity that they would never let themselves be seen properly, but fled if the slightest attempt was made to approach them.

My friend and her brother—children, then, of about ten and twelve—were very fond of taking walks around their home, generally accompanied by their pets, Tommy and Minnie, two young cats of the ordinary English shorthair variety. One day they set forth as usual; the cats were frisking and chasing each other in front of them, delighting in their freedom, as the children took a favourite path in the direction of the old gold fields. Amused by their graceful frolicking, the youngsters watched them sympathetically, when suddenly, to their dismay, Tommy disappeared from sight, and his place knew him no more! Running to the spot, they found their fears justified. Tommy had miscalculated distance somehow, and had fallen some twenty feet to the bottom of a shaft. His loud and terrified cries almost immediately reassured them—at least, he was not dead! Cautiously leaning over the edge, they discovered the poor little thing, barely visible in the gloom of the deep hole into which he had tumbled.

Seeing their heads bent over the abyss Tommy redoubled his cries, insistently demanding to be rescued from his frightsome position. The children, dismayed, gazed at one another, and Minnie added to the horror of the situation by rivalling Tommy in sisterly lament. Spurred to action by these wails, and terribly afraid that Tommy might have sustained some injury, they decided what to do. Assuring Tommy they would soon be back they raced to their home. There they speedily found what they wanted, and quickly returned to the shaft, thankful to hear Tommy still bewailing his unhappy lot. On seeing their faces once again, he spoke his mind; but the children had laid their plans, which rapidly they began to execute. To the basket they had fetched they carefully attached yards and yards of tape; by means of this they, having approached as near as possible to the top of the shaft, slowly lowered the basket into the hole, keeping firm hold of the ends, wound tightly about their hands. Their fear was

that Tommy might be frightened by this thing descending upon him, and fail to get into the basket, as they desired him to do. They wished they had put food into it, to tempt him—but was he not too terrified to trouble about food?

As the basket began its descent, Tommy for a moment ceased to wail, absorbed by this new portent; then he cried more loudly than ever. Trembling with fear, the children, nevertheless, continued to lower it. They were amazed to notice that, after a doubtful sort of cry, Tommy's tone entirely changed. They knew his voice well, and recognised the sounds that were indicative of pleasure and content. "M-m, m-m-m!" he said, joyfully, and he became barely audible. The basket was now approaching the bottom of the shaft—how to induce him to enter? Craning over in their anxiety, they saw Tommy leap up, and drop neatly into the still descending basket!

It was fortunate he was a light weight, and, at that depth, did not appreciably shake it; and fortunate that the children had a tight grip of the tape. Evidently Tommy had perfectly understood the method of his rescue, and, by his joyful chirps, had "signified the same." He sat still till the car arrived at the brink of the shaft, and was pulled from the edge, when he jumped out, and was speedily caught up and kissed by his happy rescuers. Then the cavalcade set off homewards, Tommy and Minnie bounding in front—apparently eager to be the first to tell the tale.

My friend justly thought that Tommy's quick apprehension of their intention was very remarkable. Perhaps, psychologically, even more interesting was his resolve not to run any risk, but to make sure of his rescue by leaping into the basket the moment it came within his reach, without waiting for it to touch the ground. To keep our head in an utterly unforeseen and unfamiliar situation of peril would be considered no mean achievement in—you and me!

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