

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).

"Thine heart should feel what thou may'st hourly see,
That duty's basis is humanity."

Bloomfield.

The action of the Captain of the American liner who last week stopped his ship and launched a boat with officer and men to rescue the ship's cat which had fallen overboard will appeal to the heart of all cat lovers. The cat must have been aware of the kindly intention of those on board, for when rescued he was still struggling bravely amid the Atlantic rollers. For my part, it pleases me more than I can tell to find yet another example of humanity in one who could thus go to great lengths to help an animal in difficulties.

I was both surprised and touched to find on awaking yesterday a cable from Australia saying I had been made a life member of the Australian Cat Club, of which there are now eighty members.

Miss Alexander, who possesses a lovely smoke queen, sent her to Son o' Flick, and now writes to say she has from this union one of the loveliest smoke kittens ever bred.

Waffles, a lovely blue queen, one of that perfect first prize litter by John of Bedale shown at Reading about two years ago, has now a splendid family of seven pale kittens, also by Son o' Flick.

Mrs. and Miss Campbell-Fraser, who have been daily visitors to the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament during the last fortnight, have eight kittens in their famous Hendon Cattery, of which I hope to give you further news anon.

There is a pretty story told of an old French Curé and his pets, a female cat and a tame crow. The Curé was appointed to another living, and took with him his old housekeeper and his pets. The housekeeper was blessed with an irritable temper, and although devoted to the Curé and his pets, the latter came in for a good deal of scolding, whilst the Curé watched, with kindly amusement and interest, the constant battles that took place. But, alas, puss did not like her new home, and in a few days dis-

appeared. The housekeeper was terribly distressed, whilst the crow hopped about the house in a dispirited condition, and the Curé became alarmed lest the housekeeper, having no one to scold, should turn her attention in his direction. A little while later a friend from the Curé's old parish came to visit him, bringing with him the cat, whom he had found wandering unhappily round her old home in a half-starved condition. The ménage was once more happily restored, when puss again disappeared. This time she was promptly searched for and was found cold, wet, and starving in her old home. Carried back to the Vicarage every effort was made for her happiness. She was fed on every dainty imaginable, whilst the housekeeper even left open her sacred cupboard, where reposed all her special preserves, hoping to tempt her with a dish of cream. But it was all in vain, and obeying an instinct too strong for her, poor puss wandered away wearily, to die if necessary in the environment of her old home. Then the wise old servant thought out a plan, which showed how well she understood her pet. At the bottom of the garden in the old Vicarage was a pond, where puss had spent many happy hours in the old days. Going herself to the village she bribed a farmer's boy to catch the truant and dip her several times under the cold water. It was enough. To be thus treated on the spot where she had once reigned supreme was too much for the dignity of poor puss, and, dripping and furious, she flew to the arms of the old housekeeper, who was awaiting her, snuggled down under the protection of her warm cloak, and returned home peacefully, never again to visit the scene of her humiliation.

I have watched with keen interest the progress made by Princess Una's kittens since they came to me. Una is a small queen, and four lusty kittens rather much for her, and they appeared to require extra nourishment. I gave them a teaspoonful of raw beef daily as a medicine rather than a food. It was the best English beef procurable, and scraped with a silver spoon, and fed regularly seems to have suited them splendidly, and they have improved like wildfire since taking it. It would be madness to advise everyone to give raw meat at five weeks, but I cannot help thinking that, providing the very best is given, and this carefully, nothing but good can accrue from this form of diet. At all events, "Exitus acta probat."

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

WE are glad to hear from Mrs. Kennaway that her beautiful cat, Hillingdon Black Knight, is extremely fit, and is siring very big litters this season. One of Mrs. Kennaway's own queens has recently had eight kittens by him, most of them being males, so he is certainly proving a useful asset in his home cattery. Although Dorset is a long way off, the journey is an easy one, and fanciers who specialise in blacks would do well to remember this son of Black Justice when they are arranging matings for their queens.

At the Kensington Kitten Show Mr. House is judging blues and Siamese, Miss Lea blacks, whites, and shorthairs, and Mrs. Yeates reds, creams, silver tabbies, and smokes and Chinchillas. This information was accidentally omitted from the schedule, and though postcards were sent out later, our postcard never reached us. We ourselves are not able to show, as all our kittens are too young to be entered, but we certainly intend to go and see everyone else's kittens. If any of our readers are sending kittens from a distance, and are not able to be present themselves, we will gladly arrange to wire the results of the judging, and to speak a friendly word to the kittens in the Show.

WE hear that Mrs. Wade's Juliet has reared five of her kittens by John of Downside, and that they are now romping around and are very charming. Most people seem to be rejoicing in specially strong kittens this year, so that the lateness of the season has proved a blessing in disguise. In fact, the few tragedies of which we have heard have nearly all been reported by people who had kittens in their catteries when everyone else was kittenless. Miss Richardson, we are very sorry to say, has been particularly unfortunate, and has decided to avoid January matings in future, as something has gone wrong with almost every early litter that she had.

Our Siamese kitten has been named Sally, short for Salamander, as fire has an irresistible fascination for her. We had a fire on one or two of the very chilly evenings last week, but as the kitten was discovered curled up in the fender, right underneath the fire, we decided that she had better be kept away from it altogether. As a matter of fact, we really called her Sally because she looked like a Sally, and only decided afterwards that it was short for Salamander. We are now searching for information about Salamanders, in the hope of finding some other points of likeness between our one and the true variety, but the only description that we can lay hand upon at the moment is Benvenuto Cellini's, and he says that they are just like lizards. Sally is not yet strikingly beautiful, but she is not in the least like a lizard.

THE following report, from the "Sunday News" of last week shows that there is a cat in England at

present who is even larger than Galantuomo, but it can scarcely be counted as an ordinary, domestic cat. If its owners send it to any of the cat shows—though we do not think it would be welcomed by any show secretary—it would certainly need a special pen. "When Mr. Tom Cartmell, a Freckleton, Lancashire, poultry-keeper, visited his fowlhouse he found six hens dead on the floor, while in the corner there crouched a huge black cat 7ft. long. 'It looked,' he said, 'like a cross between a cat and a bear, and had a sharp, cruel looking head, fiery eyes, and terrible claws.' Subsequently it was found that it had escaped from a Blackpool Show. It is claimed to be the largest cat in the world, and was brought to this country from Sumatra."

L.N.W.C.C.C. SHOW.

The above Show was held in the Zion Hall, Stretford Road, Manchester, Saturday, July 6th. A nice number of members and friends were present, and a few new members received a hearty welcome. Mr. Kuhnel kindly judged, and in his speech he gave us some cheery and encouraging remarks, his keynote being "Progress." He was ably stewarded by Mr. and Mrs. Goddard. There were 35 entries, and I don't think I have ever seen the adults in such splendid condition; the kittens I didn't think came up to our usual high standard. A new class, viz., litter, was added this summer, and was won by Mrs. Clarke with a fine litter of blues.

AWARDS.

BLUE MALE, Adults.—1st, special, and cup, Mr. Atkinson; grand head, gorgeous eyes, sound even colour; special for best cat in show. 2nd, Miss Buckley, Cyrus of Stand; good all-round cat, but not up to standard of winner. 3rd, Miss Buckley, Lord MacAlpine of Stand; failed in eyes to winners, but never seen him looking so splendid.

BLUE FEMALE, Adults.—1st, special, and cup, Mrs. Goddard, Ashton Mahalah; wonderful bone, and in splendid show form. 2nd, Mrs. Jarvis, Mersey Atholine; well known winner, failed in eyes. 3rd, Mrs. Clarke, Betty of Wernerth; beautiful queen, hard pressed by winners.

KITS, under 9 months.—1st and 2nd, Mrs. Lucas, Kohala and Taka; fine pair, special for best kitten in show. 3rd, Miss Buckley, Tabitha.

KITS., under 6 months.—1st and 2nd, Mrs. Lucas, Kohala and Taka; 3rd, Miss Buckley, Tabitha.

KITS, under 3 months.—1st, special, and cup, Mrs. Tomlinson, red tabby female; rich colour, good markings. 2nd and special, Dr. Ferguson, Soo; promising baby blue, sound even colour, was also runner-up for Breeders' Cup, cup being won by Mrs. Tomlinson. 3rd, Mrs. Goddard, Ashton Son o' Pride; small well placed ears, good colour, should have a future.

A.O.C. MALE, Adult.—1st, Mrs. Peters, Little Christopher Robin; rich red, grand head and eyes, good markings, will win amongst the best. 2nd, Miss E. Mould, Black Prince of Edge Lane; jet black, grand head, gorgeous eyes, one of the best blacks I have seen.

SHORTHAIR ADULT.—1st and special, Mrs. Irwin, silver tabby; fine markings. 2nd, Mrs. Jarvis, Mersey Honey Dew; tortoiseshell, well patched rich colour.

SHORTHAIR KITTENS.—1st, Mrs. Jarvis; very promising tortoiseshell. 2nd, Mrs. Jarvis; black, should have a future.

S. E. TOMLINSON.



CAT CALLS.

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

To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

Madam.--I, like "Protestant," am a cat lover, with an intense admiration for the higher and finer qualities of the cat's character, but, in fairness to myself and to those others who have studied the psychic and religious history of the cat, I must point out that it is not the "gross imaginations" of writers like myself which have made the cat the "symbol of swift death and vengeance"; it is the accumulated mystic lore of many thousands of years.

There was scarcely an ancient people which did not worship the cat—and, in every case, the cat-god or cat-goddess was the deification of vengeance and retribution. Surely, there is nothing detrimental to the cat's character in regarding him as the vehicle of a supernatural justice!

So far from presenting "objectionable travesties of the truth," writers of fiction in these days have to study accuracy to a far greater degree than do those who trade in material presented as fact.

Yours faithfully,
W. R. REYNOLDS.

97, Wymering Mansions, Maida Vale, W. 9, 10th July, 1929.

To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

Dear Madam,—I should like to emphatically and definitely associate myself with all "Protestant" has said, especially as regards her valid objection to the absurd and detestable term "destruction" used in connection with the compulsory death of cats. (The word "deströy" gives every lover of good English gooseflesh.)

To hear the Shelters—alas! so often degraded into shambles—state apparently boastfully that hundreds of cats have been annually "destroyed" makes the sensitive cat lover wince.

At the same time, I fancy that the word "destruction" is used for the sake of convenience and *faut de mieux*, and that the speaker does not by any means necessarily commit themselves to pronouncing their belief that death ends all.

Very few real thinkers—whether animal lovers or otherwise—believe that anything more than the physical existence is terminated when our subhuman brethren die. It is simply that the English language is more or less becoming played out.

Many new words to replace many clumsy and inadequate ones are undoubtedly needed. The phrase "passing on" (to another place) is sometimes used in connection with lethally cats. That is superior to the nonsensical one of "destroying," but even so the former term is not quite satisfactory. Roman Catholics presumably believe that every conscious life which cannot boast of being "creation's crown" and "human," and which hasn't had what they call "revelation" (?), is exterminated at death. But no hidebound iron-clamped theological tenet can destroy the fair, just, impartial, logical rationale promulgated by deep thinkers and scientists—let alone those of us who are proud to call ourselves spiritualists—which shows that every argument supporting the belief of a post mortem human existence applies also to the subhuman race. Mrs. Brown comes to the Shelter and says she wants to "see the end" of her cat. Sir Oliver Lodge might, or might not, convince her that the corpse was not the finish of the poor martyr.

Personally I often meet my "dead" darlings on the astral plane, and I am as convinced of meeting them after my own death as I am of meeting my mother.

The advance of psychography, etc., will soon render an amplification of the English language imperative, and then we shall no longer have our ears vexed and decent sentiments outraged by these careless misnomers. Till then presumably we shall have to suffer gladly the

fools who rush in with loose and ambiguous phraseology of "destruction" to add to and aggravate the tragedy of taking beautiful life at all.

Yours faithfully,

M. DUDLEY WARD.

15, Upper Westbourne Terrace, W. 2, 4th July, 1929.

MISS MIRANDA AND THE MONKS.

BY MOIRA MEIGHN.

This is the tale of a little lady cat whose tail tip had been pinched off in a door when she was a month old; the fright and pain left her very timid. Her name was Miss Miranda, she lived in a barn, and caught rats for her dinner. She was so shy she only left home when the dusk was falling, then, if your luck was in, you might see her frolic and dancing like a wind-blown autumn leaf along the quiet lane that leads to the Monastery with the tall bell tower.

Cats know everything, so little Miss Miranda and her bold bad brazen sister, Mrrowers, knew that ladies are never allowed to live in monasteries. Miranda never dreamt of going near the Monastery, but Mrrowers frequently marched into the monks' dining-room. She was always shoed out, but she didn't care.

Mrrowers had impudence enough to mount the Lord Abbot's throne and preach a sermon. Mrrowers would have been cross and scratchy, not trembling and meek, if rude boys had caught her and dressed her up in a girl doll's clothes and tossed her over the Monastery wall with an impertinent note to the Lord Abbot tied round her neck to the doll's bonnet elastic.

Gentle little Miranda nearly died of terror when all this happened to her, and she was flung plop amongst the monks' beehives. The bees were frightened, too, so they stung her. Mad with pain, Miranda clawed off the insulting letter, but she couldn't shake off the doll's clothes. She tripped over the gay pink skirts with her hind legs. Her front paws were hampered by the tight green sleeves of a dolly's jacket. She was blinded by the red and yellow flowers in the bonnet she managed to half scratch off. Dazed with horror she dashed for a hiding place.

A very old monk was closing the chapel doors for the night, when Miranda, crazy with terror, shot between his legs into the sanctuary.

The poor old man, who was nearly blind, believed that little Miranda must be an evil spirit; he ran to tell Father Abbot. Father Abbot said, "Pooh! Rubbish! Folderol! Nonsense!" but came with his book and a candle to make sure.

Miss Miranda heard him coming. She dashed into the little chapel of St. Francis. Father Abbot and the monk followed, and the stamp of their boots on the stones seemed to her like the tramp of a million nightmares. Once she rushed over the Abbot's shoulder, and up the twisty wirley corkscrew stairs

leading to the bell tower. Puffing and blowing the Abbot and the monk thudded in pursuit. There seemed no further chance of escape till Miranda spied the rope hanging from the great bell. With a spring she was on it. Her weight set the big bell swinging. Its loud boom boom finished her; paralysed with fright she let go her hold, and dropped into the safety of Father Abbot's kind arms.

But before she fell her bell-ringing had awakened the guardian of the gate, who, looking from his narrow window saw that the Abbey ricks were on fire.

The same wicked thoughtless boys who flung Miranda into the monastery grounds had shielded squibs after her.

If she hadn't got on the bell-rope the monks would have wakened too late to save their farm. The bees, the cattle, the horse, and even the monks themselves might have been burnt to death.

They were so grateful that they decided that even though little Miss Miranda was a lady she must never leave the Monastery. So now Miss Miranda lives happily in the Monastery, and feeds daily on fish and cream, but miauling Mrrowers is still shooed away.

WITH OUR CATS.

BY F. M. BALLINGALL.

(Continued from Page 166.)

The story reprinted in "Cat Gossip" for June 19 of a cat's watch for his friend's return home, reminded me of another puss I knew well in my salad days. "Hamlet" and "Horatio" were reckoned among the "family names" held by our cats, dating from the time when, children still, we made our first acquaintance with the genius of Henry Irving. A pair of kittens I possessed bore those honoured names, but as Horatio turned out to be a girl I was persuaded to give her to my brother, who was very fond of cats. He lived then in a house on the sea front, a long garden stretching down to the road, along which, at regular times, a Slater's 'bus conveyed passengers to their destinations.

The ability of animals to reckon time cannot be questioned, but how they do so remains a mystery. In some cases recurrent hunger might afford a reason entirely lacking in others. Racy grew devotedly attached to my brother, and, in some way, learned the hour at which, his editorial duties over, he might be expected to arrive in the 'bus, which stopped for him at the garden gate. As surely as the time approached Racy sought a room on the first floor, whose window commanded a good view of the garden, the gate, and, on its approach, the 'bus. If the door was closed, she cried and scratched at it till it was opened, when she ran in, and, jumping upon a table, eagerly watched the road. At sight of the omnibus she became excited, but, when it stopped, when her friend descended, and unlatched the gate, she would

stand up, beating her hands upon the pane, and answering with little cries of pleasure the smiles and waving of the home-comer.

No sooner did he disappear from her view, going round to the side entrance, than she descended. Rushing to the hall door, she waited for the familiar sound of the latch-key, and scarcely had he crossed the threshold than she was on her friend's shoulder, caressing him with her cheek against his, and uttering those pretty sounds of endearment familiar to all who have gained a cat's faithful love.

Many years ago Harrison Weir, an old friend of my father's, gave me a pen-and-ink drawing of his pet cat. Looking at it now, I cannot but marvel at the difference between his lithe form and that demanded by the Shorthair Society for the English cat. Cossett was a striped tabby, and my readers may be interested in the following quotation from Mr. Weir's letter concerning him: "I have been away some days. When I returned last evening he was lying asleep on his chair. I sat down in my easy chair, and, feeling ill and tired, put my legs on a chair, and laid back with my eyes shut, or nearly so. Suddenly he awakened, looked up at me, and then immediately jumped down, and then jumped up on to me, and, putting both his fore-feet on my chest, rubbed his head against my face, purring softly. Those people who say that cats do not care for individuals, know nothing of cats, but merely, parrot-like, shriek out what has been said in their presence."

There are few of us who have not looked for a welcome from our cats when we returned home—if we have deserved one! I had a dear little cat, very fondly loved—another Racy. He lived with me and Pearl in a house which had a long front garden, whose double gates opened into a quiet road, shadowed by aged trees that bordered the paths. Our own garden was rich in trees and shrubs, both cats delighting to bask there in hot weather. Racy was absolutely impervious to the softest blandishments either of friends or strangers, and while Pearl walked majestically to and fro, accepting caresses from hands thrust through the open-work of the wooden gates, Racy retired to the porch steps, and watched warily. Yet so sweet and gentle was his expression, so pretty he looked with the sunlight on his striped red coat, the blue bows of ribbon on his collar adding another touch of colour, that many were the voices raised winningly to call him back.

(To be continued.)

FOR THE LIBRARY LIST.

We have just read Miss Naomi Royde-Smith's new book, "Summer Holiday or Gibraltar" (Constable 7/6), and, though it has nothing to do with cats, we commend it to the notice of our readers. It is not a book to be appreciated by those who like a conventionally happy ending, but those who prophesied long ago that Miss Royde-Smith would

some day write a very remarkable novel will find in this book the fulfilment of their prophecy. It is the story of the disastrous holiday friendship between the sixteen-year-old Winnie Skinner, daughter of a prosperous chemist, and George Esdaile, first violin in the hotel orchestra, and moves inevitably towards a tragic climax.

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

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