

CAT · GOSSIP

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Edited by E. K. WAKEFORD

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LONG-HAIR LORE.

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

“ Kittens than Eastern Houris fairer seen,
Whose bright eyes glisten with immortal green.”

This is the day set apart for the Kensington Kitten Show, to be held at Philbeach Hall, Kensington, under the skilful direction of Miss Busteed, whilst the three popular and well known judges are Miss Lea, Mrs. Yeates, and Mr. House. It promises to be an unusually attractive fixture, and, should all go well, will be of yearly occurrence. Mrs. Reynolds Sams is bringing a galaxy of beauty from her famous garden, and there will be representatives of almost every breed from all the well known catteries. Kensington is so easily attainable that, given a lovely day, there should be a record attendance. On show days we get up early, and give a small meal to any entrants for the show. There is then plenty of time for them to digest their meal and to have a run in the garden, when they are all ready for the fray. I think it a great pity it is not compulsory for pans to be used at all shows. Kittens coming from a distance are easily upset in hot weather, or by a long journey, and who, with any thought for their pets, could wish them to spend the day in an unclean pen or on a soiled blanket. We go early and clean out our pens, but all this is without avail if there is an accident later. From the judges' point of view alone it would be an advantage, for who cares to handle a kitten from a dirty pen. I remember once showing a litter about six weeks old. There were six of them, and had all gone well they would have been judged early, but the judge was delayed en route, and they were not judged until 4 o'clock. They had no accident, they were too well trained for that, but I had an anxious time for a few days after the show. Again, even if one's own kittens behave well, it is very disagreeable to be next door to others who have not done so. In Nature all animals go a

great distance from their lairs for their sanitary arrangements. It is one of their strongest instincts, and I can't help thinking that cats in captivity suffer from the inability to carry out their natural inclination. They also suffer in an unhealthy atmosphere, where in too close proximity to their pans, or in a garden that has been used over and over again for the same purpose.

From Mrs. Campbell-Fraser I hear that Hendon Milly* Mittens has three nice kittens by Hendon East-bury Boglie, whilst Hendon Pitti Sing is in kitten to Hendon Fairfax, and Hendon Mad Margaret to Hendon Red Arate, so we may look forward to seeing something exceptional from this cattery later in the season. I believe there is also to be a lovely black kitten at Kensington from the same cattery.

Mrs. Gilbert writes charmingly about her pets, and sends the following, which I give in her own words: “ The following scrap of news may be useful to Mrs. Oglethorpe for that delightful little paper, ‘ Cat Gossip,’ always welcome on Thursday. The five blue kittens by Mercury of Pensford, ex Pet Marjorie, are growing splendidly, and at eight days old weigh exactly four pounds in the aggregate. Three are girls and two are boys, and the largest weighs 13½ ozs. and the smallest 12 ozs. They are the first litter of the little mother, so she was trusted with three to bring up, and a foster took two with her own about the same age. They now weigh 15 ozs. each, and are walking about and stretching their necks above the drawer, which is their bed, and Mrs. Gilbert wishes the five had been old enough for Kensington Kitten Show.”

Yesterday we had a most exciting time, for the first litter of The Aristocrat came to town. The little mother is Powder Puff of The Court, by the late Ch. Colneside Billy Bumpet, and she has three very pale babies. Powder Puff won the special for best head in blue kittens at Kensington last year, and this is her first litter. It was very trying to

have a family in this hot weather with hardly a breath of air, but she has come through quite well, and is a very happy and contented little mother.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

MISS Grayton tells us that she has had some delightful snaps sent to her from Germany of the kittens of the cat she exported, which were born on Easter Monday. Frau Wirth calls the queen Mama-chen, and is very fond of her, and as Miss Grayton's own cats completely rule the house, she is very glad that this one has found such a good home.

SEVERAL people have written to us lately to say that they would like to subscribe to our American contemporary, the "Cat Courier," but that they do not know how to send the money. The most convenient method is to send an American Express Money Order, but we will gladly forward subscriptions for those who live in the country, and whose local postmasters get hot and bothered if they are asked for anything more complicated than a book of stamps.

MISS Oldfield Howey is again advertising her little bungalow, and is hoping that she will once more be lucky enough to let it to some real cat lovers. She has not lost her former tenants, who are moving into an unfurnished bungalow, so that there may be quite a little colony of enthusiastic cat fanciers at Cradley in the near future. There are very few owners of furnished bungalows who do welcome cats, and this is an opportunity not to be missed by those who only enjoy their holidays when they can be shared by their pets.

WE hear from Mrs. Allen Maturin that she has just been to spend an afternoon with Mrs. and Miss Nepean at their new house at Farnham. They had very little room for their cats at Southsea, but now they are rejoicing in a long garden, right in the country, with a beautiful field next to it, over which the cats can scamper as they like. Miss Nepean is having some very comfortable catteries built, and intends to go in seriously for breeding blue Persians. Adam of Pensford looks very happy in his new surroundings, and is extremely fit, though he is right out of coat at present, of course. Mrs. Allen Maturin herself has just welcomed the arrival of a very promising litter by Kitya-Nama, and it is to be hoped that they will all survive, and console her for her losses earlier in the year.

BETTY and Sally, our resident cats, have just had a present sent to them of two nice little balls, accompanied by a poem, from a friend's cat. They do not appreciate the poem at all, as we have been too busy to educate them properly, but they love the balls, and have spent hours in playing with them, in spite of the heat. Sally, the Siamese, hides her ball carefully behind a curtain when she has finished playing for the time being, but Betty leaves hers lying about for anyone to pick up. She seems to remember quite suddenly, in the middle of a game, that she is not really a kitten any more, stops playing, and jumps up on to the window ledge, where she will sit for the whole morning watching the people in the streets. We are afraid that, like other idle people, she is very much interested in the concerns of her neighbours and that she is probably compiling a private record of their tradesmen.

PORTSMOUTH F. AND F. SHOW.

There are plenty of classes for cats at the Portsmouth F. and F. Show, to be held on October 23rd, and Siamese are particularly well provided for, as there are classes for males, females, kittens under 6 months and kittens over 6 months. A spoon is to be offered for Siamese Club members only. Mrs. Yeates is to judge, and Mrs. Allen Maturin has kindly said that she will look after any cats whose owners cannot be present at the Show.

Last year 70 cats were entered at Portsmouth, and it is hoped that there will be double that number this year. Everything possible is being done to ensure the comfort of the cats and the satisfaction of their owners.

THE OLD BALL.

With Tino once I sent this ball
To regions rich and far and strange;
From north to south, from hot to cold,
O'er all the world we'd choose to range.

But one sad day dear Tino went
So far away I looked in vain
To find him! Yet our mother says,
"Tino will come to us again."

So Betty dear, and Sally too,
Take this, our ball, and dance and play,
And let your gambols fill with joy
Your mother's heart the live long day.

VALLA.
With her love.



FEEDING SIAMESE KITTENS.

MRS. ALLEN MATURIN'S METHOD.

At this time of the year, when so many novices are faced for the first time with the problem of feeding kittens, it is particularly interesting to hear of the methods adopted by well known breeders. Mrs. Allen Maturin considers that most novices' kittens are overfed, which is the cause of most of the "tummie" trouble. She herself does not believe in giving meat until the kits are five months old, and then only in small quantities at a time. She starts weaning her kittens in two parts milk and one part water, given warm and with the addition of a little sugar, and in two days' time the kittens are allowed a little cornflower, of the consistency of good cream, and also sweetened. Later, she includes flaked rice in the diet, and this is boiled with milk and stirred all the time that it is cooking—it is an extremely popular dish. When the kittens are a little older, fresh eggs are mixed and heated up with the rice, and at 2½ months old fish is mixed with the rice, and ordinary boiled rice is also given occasionally, as well as barley kernels, flaked tapioca, custard pudding, and good gravy on brown bread crumbs—wholemeal is the best, as some of the other breads are too heavy for easy digestion.

Mrs. Allen Maturin never starts weaning before the kittens are four weeks old, and many of the kittens are perfectly satisfied with their mother's milk until they are six weeks old. She always begins by feeding them in a small teaspoon, holding the kitten on her lap and letting it sip very slowly, but never forcing the food upon it.

Nearly everyone has a different method of feeding, and there are well-known breeders whose views are diametrically opposite to Mrs. Allen Maturin's. Her own diet sheet, however, has been evolved after many years of experience, the expense is not prohibitive, and the foods are not difficult to prepare. Novices who live in country districts, and who cannot easily obtain daily supplies of fresh meat, should certainly welcome this meatless menu for their Siamese kittens, and so should those who have had a good deal of sickness in their catteries in former years, and who have decided to make drastic alterations in their methods.

WITH OUR CATS.

BY F. M. BALLINGALI.

(Continued from Page 172.)

When I went out, he accompanied me to the gate, and, walking along the inside of the low wall, surmounted by iron railings, he followed along several gardens. There I bade him farewell. "Home now, Racy!" Looking back now and then, as I waited he retraced his steps to his own domain. A neighbour said to me one day: "My husband was at home this morning, and I called him to see what your cat would do when you went out, as I have so often watched him. He never leaves the garden, and always seems to know when you are returning. I see him walk down to the gate, and wait, and very soon you come in sight, and open the gate, and he welcomes you." This was so. Always, however long I might be, I found Racy at the gate—where he never went by himself at other times—and, as I bent down to stroke him, his gentle eyes spoke a love that needed no words.

Nicco, too, would watch—passionate, eager Nicco, the antithesis of my little Racy—but he watched from a window. Now Nicky was totally deaf, though few would believe it. Some say that deafness impairs the intelligence, but Nick had, I think, the quickest brain of any cat I have known. Nick sat on a table in the window, near the hall door. The room door was at the further end of the side wall, and close to the door was another table. My mother sat in her chair near the window, and so frequently observed Nicco's proceedings that there could be no question of mere coincidence.

On arriving home I usually went up to the window, to amuse Nick by making figures on the glass with my hands or my umbrella, while he, from within, played the game of pretending to seize them, leaping up and down, and rolling on the table to do so. This over, I repaired to the front door. Nicky, my mother said, **seemed** to hear the door opened (no latch-key!), perhaps a few words spoken to the servant—**seemed** to hear me walking (as she did herself)—towards the door of the room, for he gradually turned round, his eyes travelling along the wall, till, even as I reached the door, he, with a bound (she declared), reached the table and jumped up on it. I opened the door, he was on my shoulder like lightning.

Only those who knew Nick could realise the incredible swiftness of his movements. He seemed to fly.

How could he so accurately judge the moment he should spring to the door? He was, I believe, singularly sensitive to vibrations of the air. A friend who knew him well, watching him one day, when several were assembled for tea, declared that he could hear as well as she could. "He sat up on the piano, and turned his head towards each one who was speaking. He notices everything that is said and done." It was quite true, and his ears moved as if he were conscious of sound, but he was certainly quite deaf. He was pure white, with very deep golden eyes—not amber or orange, but shining gold—covered with minute black specks, invisible unless you looked very closely into them. His mother was a white Persian, but there was nothing of her in him as regards appearance, though his hair was longer than that of the pure shorthair, and his very thick tail did not taper.

When he was a babe of a few weeks old I proceeded to wash him in the lavatory basin, where was plenty of hot water and hot towels, for I did not know till later that cats should never be washed, their skin being far too delicate. Nicky kept himself clean when he was older, and never needed magnesia powder or anything else. Nicky in his bath was a pathetic sight, and so he thought, for he bewailed his state with piteous cries. Looking up into my face, he loudly reproached me. To pacify him, oblivious of the fact that he could not hear, I reproached myself for my sins, assuring him that I was a very wicked and unnatural mother, and he was a poor little ill-used boy. To my surprise and satisfaction, as I thus talked, his cries gradually dwindled into softer protests, and died away. Emboldened by this, I unconsciously ceased to talk, and gave all my attention to the bath. Nicky's eyes left me, and fell upon his dripping person. Overcome by the sight, he uttered cries of anguish, and bewailed himself anew. Kissing his snowy head, I began afresh to vilify myself as he raised his appealing eyes to mine, and redoubled my expressions of anger and horror that he should be so ill-treated. And again, his eyes never leaving my face, he seemed soothed and quieted, uttering only spasmodic little moans, after each of which he seemed to look for the sympathetic answer he received.

Still, the reason for this did not dawn upon me all at once, but when it did, I made experiments that convinced me. Nick was **lip-reading**. He watched the movements of my lips, and understood their meaning.

I have now a little cat that loves me to talk to her. She sits on my lap, and watches my lips. When I cease talking, she gently touches them with her velvety glove, until I begin to talk again.

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FOR THE LIBRARY LIST.

"Summer Lightning," by P. G. Wodehouse
(Herbert Jenkins, 7s. 6d. net).

There are many people to whom the arrival of a new Wodehouse book is an event, and they will certainly not be disappointed in "Summer Lightning." Several of the characters who have played prominent parts in the author's former books reappear in this one, including Hugo Carmody, Ronnie Fish, Lord Emsworth, the Efficient Baxter, the butler, Beach, and that "blister of the first water," Pilbeam, the private detective. People who do not appreciate Mr. Wodehouse's peculiar form of humour complain that his books are all just alike—all equally amusing. They will chuckle over the adventures of Lord Emsworth's fascinating pig, Empress of Blandings, who helps to straighten out the tangled love affairs of Hugo and Ronnie, and to discredit the unpleasant Pilbeam.

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