

"Miss Martyn," reiterated Floss, with intense earnestness, "I am quite certain it has not happened."

"Yes, my dear Floss," replied the other, shaking her head, "that is all very well, only it *has*."

The girls went out in the garden with slow reluctant steps, looking back to the door, on the other side of which the pet and favourite of them all was disgraced and miserable.

"I couldn't have believed it of Emmy," said Adelaide.

"Nor I," said Louisa. "I never was more astonished or shocked at anything."

"I suppose you'll none of you speak to *me*," said Charlotte, discontentedly. "You all of you consider it as my fault. Of course you do."

"No we don't," replied her sister, sharply, "don't be silly, nobody blames you; nobody is thinking about you at all."

"Oh no, of course not, nobody ever *does* think about *me*."

"But if you don't believe it, Floss, how do you account for it?" asked Adelaide.

"I don't believe it and I can't account for it," replied Floss, very shortly.

"Well, I do," said Charlotte, "because I spoke

to Emmy and I ate the cheesecake; but I did think she was giving you some in the night, Floss."

"She wasn't, then," answered Floss, haughtily. "She could not sleep, and had bad dreams, and I was comforting her."

As she spoke the last two words her pride gave way, and she cried out in great excitement, "Oh, my little Emmy!" and burst into sudden tears.

"It's all my doing, as it always is," said Charlotte, and she began to cry too.

Crying and laughter are both catching. The girls had all of them been overstrained by the sad scene attending the unexpected delinquency of their favourite, and that mixed state of feeling of blaming severely where you love deeply—one of the most painful that can be imagined for anybody—is almost intolerable when you are young. It is not surprising, then, that in another moment every one was in tears.

And this was the end of all the happiness expected from the actual arrival of the canary bird for Eugenie. Louie up-stairs with a pain in her leg, the others all crying in the garden—all except Emmy, who lay crouching on the floor in her own room, a very type of despair.

(To be concluded.)

## OUR PETS.

### CATS, AND HOW TO KEEP THEM.



never at a loss to understand, and most of them know exactly what I say, and what I mean, because

I WHO pen these lines am fond of all animals, and am not ashamed to say so. You see I do not say *dumb* animals, because whatever they may be to others, my pets are certainly not dumb to me. They have a language of their own, which I am

I ever treat them with kindness and consideration and I well know that they are not ungrateful, and their loving caresses often cheer me when my heart is sad enough.

I myself, in my short life, have kept and tamed the queerest animals imaginable. Were I to write the history of some of these to you, as I one day may, I feel sure it would amuse you exceedingly, and all the more so that you would know and feel that what I was telling you was perfectly true and painted from life, for no imagination could invent the drolleries of many of my dead and gone pets.

But in this paper I am going to tell you something about cats, animals that are I think fitted by nature as the pets *par excellence* of young folks. As a rule, they are very gentle and good-tempered—indeed, I have long believed that a cat rather prefers being teased and pulled about by children, and even by dogs. I know of one instance at present, of a very large tom-cat, as black as jet, and with eyes of flaming green, who positively refuses to let any one caress him except his little master, Johnnie Gray. This cat is positively fierce to every

one else. Yet is he Johnnie's constant playmate ; Johnnie can carry him by the tail or pull him thus round and round the garden lawn, and, indeed, I'm not at all certain that he doesn't share Johnnie's little bed at night.

Cats are exceedingly fond, not only of children, but of babies. They have been known to watch by the cradle of a sick infant, and to speedily give

life. Perhaps, too, one of the most wonderful traits of Pussy's character is her extreme independence. Accustomed from her very kittenhood to rely upon her own unaided judgment to guide her safely through the events of her life, she seldom seeks advice or assistance from any one. But if she needs help, she boldly asks for it, even from a stranger. A dog will sit and shiver for four-and-twenty hours



A FAMILY GROUP.

the alarm if baby cried or even awoke. And one instance is on record of a cat's having saved the life of an ailing child. The latter had been left on the sofa of the drawing-room, enveloped in rugs, and had rolled off on to the floor, and but for the outcry that watchful Pussy raised, the little creature would undoubtedly have been smothered.

No one who owns a cat can have any doubt of the extreme sagacity of this little animal. This is displayed in every action, however trivial, of its daily

at his master's door, if he cannot get in, but a cat, especially a cat brought up in a town, will merely wait till the very first kindly-looking passenger comes along, and forthwith ask him or her, with all the politeness and suavity possible, to "Please pull the bell."

A cat of my own has a habit when she wants to get in-doors, of coming all the way down to the garden room, where I usually write, and mewing at my door. Of course I invite her in. "No, no,"

Pussy seems to say, "that won't suit; you come this way, and open the back kitchen door for me," and away she trots in front of me, with tail erect and loudly singing. And of course I follow her and do exactly as I am told.

Higher instances of the sagacity of cats I could give you in dozens, but that is not my object; it is the wisdom of the animal as shown in little matters I want you to study. The mental qualities of the dog are, I grant, of a higher order, and some of his actions seem prompted by a judgment almost akin to that of the human being. But considering the peculiar mode of Pussy's existence, the enemies she has to encounter, and her struggle, as a whole, for the life that, I am sorry to say, is often begrudged her, the cat is quite as wonderful an animal in its way as the dog. I think, too, that Pussy is of the opinion that she is far superior in intellect to her canine rival.

"Just look now," you may imagine one cat saying to another, "at that monster of a Newfoundland dog. He is big and good-natured, if you please, and loves his master dearly, but there you have him all. I love my master as well as he does, but I'm not going to stick at his heels all day, like a shadow; catch me doing anything so foolish. Now that great dog wouldn't know where to lay his hands upon a mouse to save his life, he can't climb trees and capture birds, and he can't open the latch of a door, nor get out through a window, or up a spout, or anything. He is kind-hearted, but far from clever. Why, if he only goes down one street and up another without his master, he is lost, and can't find his way home again. Only just about a week ago, I met him in a village not five miles off—I had been twenty miles away that day in the woods, and some glorious fun I had too, I can tell you. Well, I was just trotting home again, when I spied our friend there, and a nice to-do he was making. He was tearing along the streets like a mad thing, first one way and then the other, and telling everybody that he had lost himself and had lost his master. 'Whatever is up with you, Master Nero?' I asked.

"Oh dear! oh dear!" he cried, panting for breath, "what a terrible affair, I've lost my master and I'm lost myself, and I'll never, never get home again. Oh dear! oh dear!"

"Keep your mind easy, Master Nero," I replied, as cool as you please. "Just you trot along quietly behind me, and don't let any other bow-wows interfere with me, and we'll both be home in less than half an hour."

A cat's affection for a kind-hearted master or mistress is very great; indeed, it is almost unnecessary for me to mention this, for the animal is gentle and

affectionate, and loves not only the human race, but her own species, and often becomes greatly attached to dogs or any other animals with which she happens to be brought up. Pussy's choice of a friend is sometimes curious enough; I have known many instances of cats having selected as their companions hares, rabbits, guinea-pigs, canaries, starlings, and parrots.

Those who have not studied the nature and habits of this little fireside favourite can have little idea what an honest, cleanly, clever pet she may be made under judicious and rational treatment. Pussy, too, can be taught a large number of funny little tricks, some of which you could hardly believe possible. Now if you wish your pussy to learn any of these small performances, you must begin to teach her when she is young, and you must first and foremost gain her entire confidence and affection. You can teach your puss to jump to surprising heights, by placing morsels of food at different elevations, and encouraging her to spring up for them. A hare's foot tied to the end of a supple wand by a piece of string, about a yard being left to dangle, will induce your cat to perform some wonderfully funny feats. Begging for food like a little dog is an easily taught accomplishment; so is shaking hands, or giving a paw, standing on the hind-legs in a corner, lying down when told, watching a mouse-hole, &c. Jumping through a hoop, or a succession of hoops, gives a cat great delight if she has been early trained to the performance.

I wish from my inmost heart that poor cats were better treated than they generally are. They are often cruelly used, but only, I think, by those who never studied them, and who do not know what kind and gentle creatures they become when properly cared for. Others, again, badly use their pussies from ignorance. There is a belief pretty generally held, but a very erroneous one nevertheless, namely, that the withholding of food from her will make a cat a good mouser. The very reverse is true; if a cat is hungry she has no heart to hunt, and the very best vermin-killers are those pussies who are well fed, but not over-fed, so as to make them fat and lazy.

The best and handiest food for a cat is just a little of what you are having yourself, but not given as tit-bits, but placed in a saucer after you have had your own meal. She ought to have a double porcelain dish, one side of which is for the food or milk, and the other for *pure clean water*. The dish ought to be washed every morning.

Over-feeding I look upon as one of the cruelties to cats, for it not only induces lazy habits, but brings about diseases, some of them very loathsome and almost incurable.

Some people have a habit of turning their cats out-of-doors at night. This is not only a flagrant injustice to the puss herself, but is often the means of greatly annoying the neighbours. A cat turned out-of-doors at night gets dirty in habits, thievish, and half wild. The best-trained pussy treated thus soon gets into all sorts of mischief, robs pigeon lofts, poultry-houses, and rabbit warrens, and tears up and spoils beautiful flower-beds. No, keep your cat in-doors at night if you care for her. You may or you may not make a special bed for her, but if you do, a round basket and a soft cushion, you will find, will be very much relished by your pet.

Cats are the better for being occasionally washed. When you do wash them you must use only the very mildest soap and soft lukewarm rain-water. Long-haired Persians and Angoras, those silken beauties you see at shows, require brushing every morning with a hair-brush, in order to keep their lovely coats in order.

There is a species of cruelty to cats that is, I am sorry to say, far from uncommon, and which I sincerely hope none of the readers of *LITTLE*

FOLKS will ever be the means of inflicting on them, but which, on the other hand, they might do much, by seasonable advice, to prevent. When people go away to the sea-side, then, either in the bustle and excitement of packing, poor Pussy is entirely forgotten, or, imbued with the idea that she can easily shift for herself, they purposely leave her behind. The sufferings of a cat shut up in an empty house, and left to starve by slow degrees, will hardly bear thinking about, but even supposing she can find egress and ingress, where is she to seek for the food to which she has been accustomed? She must of necessity join the ranks of vagrant cats, that live for the most part on what they pick up out of doors. Besides, there really is no necessity for leaving a cat behind and not taking her on the annual tour, for much as a pussy may love its home, it loves a kind master or mistress far more. Cats make capital travellers, and when taken to a strange place, if those they regard are near them, they will settle down comfortably in their new quarters in a single night, and even be the happier for the change.



## A DRAWING LESSON.

HERE were three young people learning to draw,

And they drew such things as you never saw.

They drew the master's attention first,

And drew him out, as much as they durst.

They drew lots for the prize, and drew a blank ;

And drew a deposit out of the bank.

They drew the blinds up and drew them down ;

And drew the people out of the town.

And then they drew rein, and drew breath as well,

And drew more corks than I can tell.

They drew beer from a barrel, a charge from a gun,

And then they tried drawing one by one.

They knew they must draw a line somewhere,

So they crossed the equator, and drew it there.

They drew their boots off and drew their gloves on,

(By-the-by they had queer things to draw upon :

They drew on their funds, their imagination,

And drew on account without hesitation.)

They drew an audience, drew applause,

And drew their swords in a worthy cause.

They drew an inference, drew a bill,

And drew the long-bow, which they're drawing still.

They drew a badger, and, to their surprise,

Drew blood from their hands and tears from their eyes.

They tried to draw back, but he held them fast ;

And they drew a veil over their feelings at last.

CLARA J. BROOKE.