

his cheek. In presence of these facts reason bows his concealed head, and faith asserts dominion. Perhaps it is the cats who give power to planchette, and enable Mr. Home to fly out of windows.

We must not be specially bitter on cats because they were so mixed up with the ram-pagings of Lucifer. The canine race had something of the same repute; the ringleaders of the Salem witchcraft were aided by Satan in the form of a large black dog; and Tam O'Shanter saw him at Kirk Alloway in the guise of a "towsy tyke, black, grim, and large." Moreover, grimalkin now and then turned against his satanic master. A French architect of the good old believing times being unable to finish an audaciously planted bridge, the devil offered to bring the work to completion on condition that he might have the first soul that crossed it. The work done, the sly architect scared a cat over; the devil, though disappointed, advanced to seize his prey; the beast made fight and scratched his black face for him; defeat and flight of the arch enemy.

Another true story. A certain Count of Combourg, who was noted for possessing a wooden leg and a black cat, died several centuries ago for reasons best known to his doctor. But something troubled his repose, or he had provocation to trouble that of other people. Every now and then he turned out for a nightly promenade, and was encountered an unpleasant number of times on the grand stairway of his castle; but occasionally, finding that his personal attention was not needed, or being occupied otherwheres, he sent his wooden leg and black cat on these expeditions. Champfleury gives us an impressive sketch of the beast descending the grim old stone staircase, closely followed by the stumpy limb with bandages flying. Such is the verisimilitude of the picture that infidelity must fade before it.

Degraded like Moloch, Beelzebub, Lucifer, and other names of ancient worship, to a companionship with Satan, the cats had a hard time of it among our sombrely and savage pious ancestors. The culmination of many a religious *fête* in France, Germany, England, etc., consisted in pitching some wretched pussy off a height or into a bonfire. In 1373 certain Frenchmen received a quittance of a hundred *sols parisis* for having furnished during three

years all the cats necessary for the fires of the festival of St. John. In 1604 the boyish Dauphin of France, afterwards Louis XIII., obtained mercy of the king for all the cats which were to be scorched on this pious occasion. The same Dauphin, however, was not so far enlightened but that he hunted cats on horseback, doubtless by way of preparing him for the chase of wilder game.

In 1323 the Abbot of Citeaux, assisted by several of his monks, buried a black cat in a box, with provisions for three days, all with a view to dealings with the devil. Animal howls; citizens dig him up; abbot and monks are tried for satanic practices; two are banished and two are burnt at the stake. Now and then a cat got into more intelligent, humane, and truly pious company. A certain hermit of the time of Pope Gregory I. is celebrated by John, a deacon of Rome, for the blessed content with which he regarded his only property, a no doubt exemplary grimalkin. Deacon John even assures us that the holy man received a revelation from heaven, congratulating him on being as happy in his tommy as the Pope in all his splendor and power.

No longer ago than 1818 a decree was issued at Ypres, in Flanders, forbidding the throwing of a cat off a high tower in commemoration of a Christian festival. In France such ignoble devotions were practised among the peasants until very lately. To see the labourers of Picardy skylarking around a pile of blazing fagots, some dancing, some playing fiddles, some firing guns, and the children screaming "Hiou! hiou!" while a cat, smothered by the smoke drops screeching into the flames, is not a delightful religious reminiscence.

If the race had mediæval troubles, it also had an occasional honour, especially in the way of blazonry. Palliot, who has thrown such light on Roman ensigns, blesses us with the further information that the Burgundian Clotilda, wife of King Clovis, inherited from her paternal house a coat of arms representing a sable cat killing a rat of the same. The German family of Katzen had a silver cat holding a mouse, on a field of azure; the Chetatdie of Limoges, two silver cats, one above the other, on azure; the Della Gatta, Neapolitan nobles, a silver cat, on azure.

Meantime the animal had a political signifi-