

Night Thoughts by One who is not Young.

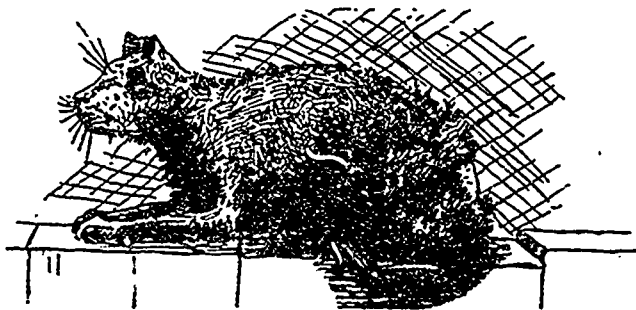
(SUGGESTED BY A TOM CAT ON THE OPPOSITE FENCE.

I SINCERELY, I fervently hope I am a law-abiding citizen. The welfare of Montreal I have at heart. The happiness of its people is my happiness. Peace and quiet, neighbourly affection, innocent ginger-pop hilarity, I gladly countenance. The simple hurdy-gurdy man, the prosperous barrel organ gentleman, even the scion of Italy who once appeared upon our street, playing, alone and unaided, a pair of cymballs, two drums, and a concertina, in short the Philharmonic itself, I can listen to without any overpowering desire to commit the horrid crime of murder. Almost anything that the average middle-aged gentleman can stand with a fair appearance of equanimity, I can stand. But what tries my patience, almost beyond the power of endurance—what rouses the dormant Cain in me, is the concert which takes place in the vicinity of our back-yard, reaching its full vocal force about 2 a.m., lasting till about 4 a.m., when the servant girl, who



resides next door, and she's rather plain about the head, with lungs of leather, and a voice like a cracked fog horn in 'sou wester, begins hanging out the clothes, to the tune of "White Wings," or, "I stood on the Bridge at Midnight," or some such ante-deluvian masterpiece. But of her more anon—in every sense of the word. Now my acquaintance upon the opposite fence, and a most disreputable looking individual he is, is a composer of no mean ability, with a turn peculiarly feline for startling effect. If I may be

allowed the term, he is a dramatic cat. He is, I believe, a leading tenor in the little band of musicians who perform nightly. His character, from a tom-cat standpoint, is good, he is not as dissipated as he is likely to become, and from what I can hear, (and kind heaven knows that's not a little,) he does not engage in more than twenty-eight rough and tumble fights weekly, which is certainly a low average when you take into account the number of temptations a city-bred cat has to fight against. In appearance (I do not wish to be severe,) he leaves much to be desired. For instance, his nose has lost, somewhat, its pristine freshness owing to a scar which crosses it obliquely, running from the right eye to the lower corner of the left nostril. Near the juncture of the tail with the



body there is a bare spot about the size of your hand, got over a slight difference of opinion with my neighbour Jones' Maltese. Jones' cat being an annexationist of the most pronounced type; doubtless my many readers will be pleased to hear that it lost two thirds of its tail and an eye in the encounter, and according to that leading veterinary light Mr. C—s McK—n's diagnosis is at present suffering from softening of the brain, and not at all likely to last the summer term. Half his left ear was lost in discussion with a pet cat believed to be the property of Mayor McS—e.

In colour he is decidedly dark, having given up the slightest pretence at washing for the past two years, in fact ever since he left his mamma, or was left by her, for the old lady met with a fatal accident in the shape of a fox-terrier, unluckily before her son had quite reached the age of discretion.

We, that is, my friend on the fence and I, have known each other by sight for the past year, and I can honestly say, that all his little failings, all his little peculiarities, I would with true Christian forbearance, be willing to condone, if in addition to them he did not possess a most singular idea of fun, and an overwhelming love of a practical joke. This is his idea of a jolly evening. Now as luck will have it, my esteemed right hand neighbor, Thomas Briggs, Esq., is the fortunate



possessor of a rare dog (breed unknown) who rejoices in the name of Fido, or does so when Miss Araminta Briggs, a charming young lady, by the way,—calls him. Fido sleeps, or attempts to do so, for his mistress tells me he suffers a good deal from insomnia (I am quite willing to believe it,) in an old tin bath, beneath the cover of Briggs' back shed; his hour for retiring is about nine. At about ten my interesting orphan *via* the fence, mounts to the roof of the shed, and, from a position directly over the bath, addresses a few cursory remarks to its sleeping occupant, which awakens him. Then the fun begins. Fido first, being a well-mannered animal, begs his visitor to leave him in peace; that is just what he has no intention of doing. To make a long story short, Fido loses his temper. The orphan is happy.

Fido is not. In direct ratio to the increase of the orphan's joy, Fido's exasperation becomes greater; he dances with rage, he barks, he swears, he rushes frantically about, tumbling over and into the bath every few moments. For an hour the hubbub beggars description. Night is made hideous. A little after eleven, excepting for a spasmodic bark, quiet once more reigns.

The orphan has made a study of my habits; he knows that at about eleven, I knock the ashes out of my pipe and think seriously of retiring. By half-past I am dropping into slumber when, suddenly, is heard, M-e-r-o-w-r-r-r-r-o-w-ar-r-r-eow! direct'y under my window. That's his idea of a practical joke. Adieu, sweet sleep! Between twelve and one he fights: one till four A.M. concert; four till seven A.M. "White Wings," "I stood on the bridge at midnight," and other songs.

My dear ANTIDOTE, if you have any pity, any brotherly love, for a loyal British subject, (three cheers for Her gracious Majesty) and a fellow citizen, in the direst distress, suggest something that will relieve the neighborhood of these midnight and early morning warblers. For what that brute suggested to me at the beginning of this article, has left my mind at its conclusion.

ADOLPHUS TOMPKINS

