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**THE CAT.**

The cat is an animal. Our cat is a beast. She lives in our house, and yet she cannot be called a dependant. She is perfectly tame, and yet she drives us wild. She does only what she thinks fit, nor can art nor slippers, flung promiscuously, control any of her inclinations. As we write, she is chasing her own tail in the back garden. Happy feline!

The cat keeps late hours. No naturalist has discovered where she keeps them; nor, indeed, does it signify. Science rises superior to such quibbles. She haunts the tiles, and makes them vocal; just, indeed, as though they were the roof of her own mouth. She is fond of horse-flesh, and generally sportive. She does not shine as a mother, but can see in the dark. She likes good milk, and consequently never wets her whiskers with ours; indeed, she always runs away at the sound of the dairyman's tins. She does not go in much for mice, as their retreats are too narrow to admit of her doing so. She has a weakness for mackerels' heads and fowls' gizzards, and could be utilized for fiddle-strings after death. Truly can we add, in the words of the blank-verser: Pussy, with all thy faults, we love thee still. Ay, yes; the stiller the better, for a lively cat in a literary sanctum is a mistake.

There are many varieties of cats. Some are dangerous to man—such, for instance, as the tiger cat and the tip cat. The tip cat is prevalent in England during certain times of the year, and flies savagely at its innocent victim, succeeding in many cases in gouging out his eye, or inflicting a life-long injury. "It is all done in play," says old Buffon; but, as the itinerant showman remarked, when speaking of this deceased naturalist, "Buffon is a 'owling old fool!"

The civet cat is sent for a wise purpose; no doubt is scented for the same reason. The pole cat does not smell sweetly, but it has its place in the mysterious economy of nature. More it would be impolitic to add.

There is the gaol cat, too. This is a most useful animal; though some humanitarian gentlemen maintain the contrary. These gentlemen want to have its claws clipped; but they should remember that the ruffians for whose benefit this cat is kept don't put boxing-gloves on their hands when they assault their helpless victims.

Unlike the ox or the sheep, the cat, when dead, becomes anything you like, from pork up to veal and ham. It makes nice muttonpies. From the circumstance that cats are so often covered by crust after death, an ingenious correspondent, who signs himself a collateral descendant of Cuvier, writes to suggest a new reading of an old line—"Requiescat in pace" should be, he says: "Requiescat in pastry."

If a body kiss a body,  
Need a body cry?  
Well, hardly—if some other body  
Isn't standing by.

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