

# LITTLE FOLKS

## Elsie's Angora Cat.

Oh, mother, what is this?" asked little Elsie, as she opened a small basket, and found in it what at first seemed to be a ball of fine silky hair.

But before her mother could answer the question the ball unrolled itself; two little paws with pink toes and tiny claws stretched them-

with plenty of milk it will one day grow into a large, beautiful cat," was the answer.

"You dear little thing! you beautiful little Kitty!" exclaimed Elsie, kissing it and stroking its long soft hair. I shall be so fond of you, and I will take so much care of you," she continued; "but I hope you won't spring at me and try to scratch and bite me like Tiger, our

"When you are old enough to study natural history," replied her mother, "you will learn that all animals are classed into "genera," and the genera into "species," and that each species has several "varieties." The genus to which the lion, tiger, lynx, leopard, and cat belong is "Felis;" but the only feline animal that is a native of Europe—with the exception of the lynx—is the wild cat, which is usually, though perhaps erroneously regarded as the source of our domestic cat."

"And do you think, Mother, that the first parents of this dear silky little kitten were ever wild cats?" was Elsie's next question.

She had seen a wild cat in the Zoological Gardens, and had been a little frightened by the manner in which it had looked at her.

"I don't know, my dear; learned men differ on that subject, therefore it would be absurd of me to give an opinion. The ancient Egyptians were very fond of cats, and it is supposed by some scientific men that our domestic cat was originally brought from Egypt; but though I cannot tell you whence it came, I can describe some of the best-known varieties of cats."

"Do, please; what are they?"

"First of all there is the Tabby, like Tiger, who became so fierce I was obliged to send him away."

"And then, Mother?"

"Then there is the Tortoiseshell, or Spanish; then the Chartreuse, of a blue-grey color—I remember we had one when I was a little girl, and we called it a French cat; and then comes the Angora, with long silky hair, described as a favorite drawing-room pet and the gentlest of all the varieties. Among less known breeds are the Chinese, with pendulous ears, the red-colored breed of Tobolsk, and the twisted tails of Madagascar."

"How very funny!" said Elsie. "But I am sure Kitty wants some milk, Mother," and off she ran to feed her new pet.

During the next few months Kitty danced about the house in the most frolicsome manner, but she grew bigger and bigger until she ceased to be a kitten altogether,



ELSIE'S KITTY.

selves forward, and a pair of sleepy eyes opened, ready, even at this short notice, for any frolic.

"Oh, it's a kitten! a lovely little kitten!" Elsie cried in delight. "See what sharp claws it has, Mother! and what funny little teeth, and what soft, silky hair!"

The mother smiled, for Elsie, like most children, was fond of pets and she had been very unlucky with those which had previously been given to her.

"That is an Angora kitten, and if you take care of it and feed it

big tabby cat, that Mother was obliged to send away because he grew so vicious; and I hope you won't try to kill Mary's canary like our tortoiseshell cat, Trixey. Do you think she will, mother?"

"I hope not, my dear, we must teach her not to touch the canary, and if you don't tease her I think it very improbable that she will become vicious, because Angora cats are the most gentle of all the varieties of cats."

"What do you mean by "varieties," Mother?" asked Elsie.