

When the captain found, on making inquiry, that there was no such animal as a cat known in the country, he all at once thought of asking leave to introduce Whittington's cat at court, feeling convinced that pussy would soon get rid of the abominable rats and mice that infested it. The royal pair and the whole court listened to the captain's account of the cat's good qualities as a mouser with wonder and delight, and were eager to see her talents put to the proof. Puss was taken ashore in her wicker basket, and a fresh repast having been prepared, which, on being served up, was about to be attacked in a similar way to the previous one, when she sprung in a moment among the crowd of rats and mice, killing several, and putting the rest to flight in less than the space of a minute.

Nothing could exceed the joy caused by this event. The king and queen and all their people knew not how to make enough of pussy, and they became more and more fond of her when they found how gentle and playful she could be with them, although so fierce in battling with rats and mice. As might be expected, the captain was much pressed to leave this valuable cat with his black friends, and he, thinking that they would no doubt make a right royal return for so precious a gift, readily acceded to the request. The queen's attachment to puss seemed to know no bounds, and she felt great alarm lest any accident should befall her, fearing that, in