

THE CASE AGAINST THE CAT.

Kipling in one of the most charming of his "Just So" stories, offers a fanciful but altogether delightful account of the way in which in remote ages, the first cat drove a hard bargain with neolithic man for food and shelter, without binding itself to yield in return any recompense in servitude, as did the less astute horse and cow and dog. "I am the cat that walks by himself, and all places are alike to me," was the oft-repeated platform from which this sagacious progenitor of the feline race refused to budge in spite of all the blandishments of our prototype, and true enough, from that day to this, *Felis Domestica* has never deserved its specific appellation, for, though tamed, the cat has never become domesticated in the true sense. It is this refusal to submit to restraint or to abandon its natural predatory habits that has of late so exercised the brotherhood of bird lovers. At the annual meeting last November of the National Association of Audubon Societies a resolution was adopted, in the interest of the feathered world, officially expressing disapproval of the ornithophilous propensities of grimalakin: but, though well intentioned, these resolutions will hardly we fear, appreciably reduce avian mortality from this cause. The sanitarian has, however, still more cogent grounds for discouraging the perpetuation of the cat as a household pet, and it would be the part of wisdom for the family practitioner, even at the risk of falling in the estimation of the youthful members of his clientele, to utter a serious word of warning ament the very real possibility of disease transmission through the house cat. The enumeration of scarlatina, influenza, whooping cough, measles, diphtheria and ringworm probably does not exhaust the list of diseases whose communication has been or might be ascribed to this intermediary. Even the proudest and sleekest tabby yields readily to atavistic calls; and prowls in unseemly places, reflections in strange garbage cans, and midnight conclave with the mangy outcasts of the gutter afford ready opportunities for the acquisition of contagious materials. Practically all cats have worms, most of them suffer from catarrhal conditions of the nasal passages, and the feline method of ablution is not such as to command the respect of the hygienically inclined; while no one who has witnessed the enthusiasm with which children caress their pets can fail to realize the magnificent opportunities for infection that are afforded in this way. Cats and fleas are nearly always associated, and the importance of suctorial insects as inoculating agents has been so much emphasized of late that the possibility of danger in this direction also is not altogether remote. At any rate, it appears that the doctor, like the dog—that other "friend of man"—must in the interest of public health set his face against the "fireside sphynx" and warn parents of its possibilities for harm. He should at least see to it that no cat is allowed to enter a sick room.—Medical Record.

HARD TO KEEP STILL.

When little Jennie, who was not quite five years old, went to visit school one day for the first time, she was as gay as a lark. But when school was over, and she returned to her home, she had a tired look upon her face.

When she was asked how she liked school, she said, "I did not like it."

"Why not?" was the next question.

"Oh, I had to work awful hard," answered the little girl.

"What did you have to do?" she was asked.

"I have to keep still like everything," she replied.

One million barrels of cured herrings have been exported from Great Britain's fisheries this season. In addition to this 98,000 barrels have been retained for the home trade.

THANKSGIVING.

By Clinton Scollard.

Thanksgiving for God's boundless blue

Above us brooding; for the hue
And perfumed pageant of the year;

For waters singing lyric clear,
And birds in choral refrain.

For all the varied life we view

About us burgeoning; for the clue
To happiness beyond the Here—

Thanksgiving!

For chance the kindly deed to do

While dawn and dusk their paths pursue;

For hope and its attendant cheer;

For all that's noble and sincere;

For friends—but chiefly, love, for you—
Thanksgiving!

WHICH BOILED FIRST.

There is as much difference in boys as will be found in men, some being quick to observe the importance of common things and other paying no attention whatever to anything they meet from day to day. Alfred Brown is the name of a boy living in Montreal. He is interested in natural science, but cares very little for stories and poetry. He is what may be termed an original, practical boy, and is constantly on the look out for "points," as he terms it. While he is an ardent student of electricity having invented many machines and appliances for his own special use, he devotes much of his time to studying watches, clocks, engines, printing presses and other useful articles. He is not satisfied to simply read about the wonders that are to be found in ordinary things, but he is experimenting at odd times to get practical evidence. Not long ago his mother bought a new kettle for the cook, and instantly he went to the kitchen.

"Well, well," said Mary, "now what be ye wanting, Master Alfred?"

"I have something to tell you," he replied.

"About what?"

"About that kettle. If you are in a hurry, you'd better use the old one."

"Go along wid yez," said Mary laughingly.

"Well let us see," said Alfred. "Fill the old one and the new one with water and put them on the stove at the same time. If the water in the old one doesn't begin to boil first, I will give you a box of candy."

To gratify the boy, Mary followed Alfred's instructions and to her amazement and chagrin, the water in the old kettle began to boil much quicker than that in the new one.

"It bates all," said Mary. "Now why is that?"

"That's very simple," said Alfred. "It is because the old kettle is covered with soot, which not only keeps the heat in, but absorbs it quickly from the fire. It takes a new kettle of water longer to get hot because the bottom is clean and bright. Polished metal does not absorb heat, but reflects or throws it off. I read about it one night and proved it the next day when you were out."

A QUARREL.

There is a knowing little proverb,

From the sunny land of Spain.

But in Northland, as in Southland,

Is its meaning clear and plain.

Look it up within your heart,

Neither lose nor lend it.

"Two it takes to make a quarrel,

One can always end it."

—Selected.

The city of Stockholm, Sweden, can boast the only women's co-operative store in the world. Shareholders, management, buyers and sellers are all women. Only two men are employed; these drive the delivery waggons. Miss Anna Whitlock, leader of the woman suffragists in Sweden, was the promoter of this scheme.

THE SALE OF DICKENS' BOOKS.

"Generally speaking," a *Pickwick* head the sale of Dickens, with *Edwin Copperfield* so close after it that it should hardly be called second, with many people *Pickwick*, I suppose, replaces the Dickens note, the mountain and crown of his writings. *Copperfield*, again, is a story which is touched with his own autobiography, and there, perhaps, apart from anything else, one can see why these two books steadily, year in and year out, hold the first place in the Dickens procession. *Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop* come third and fourth, each selling about 3,000 copies less in the year than *Pickwick* and *Copperfield*. The sales of *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Domby and Son*, and *Black House* are mentioned together, also those of *Little Dorrit* and *Our Mutual Friend* which thus, as a copyright book, comes tenth in popularity. *Great Expectations*, not long out of copyright, as we have noted, would be fourteenth. Finally the books by Dickens which sell worst are *American Notes* and the *Child's History of England*, which is, perhaps, the wooden spoon. —Alfred Waugh in *The Book Monthly*.

THE UNLUCKY THIRTEEN.

Last Friday, you will note the day, I received from an old friend, says a writer in *The Hamilton Times*, a card at the top of which was printed a copy of his wedding notice, and followed by the following: "To our friends and relatives. Greeting: The thirteenth anniversary of the above ceremony (which was performed on a Friday and the thirteenth of the month) finds the principals in good health and cheerful spirits. Here's wishing you one and all at least another thirteen years of health and happiness and freedom from the 'unlucky thirteen' bugaboo." To some this may look like flying in the face of Providence—tempting fate, but it may be only the application of common sense to the affairs of life. Here's a couple, I imagine, who apparently do not bother themselves about portents and omens, have no use for a rabbit's foot, would rather walk under than go round a ladder, would without hesitation make thirteen at the table, and do not care whether they see the new moon over their right or left shoulder. They no doubt put on the first boot in the morning that comes handiest, and never think of turning back when a black cat crosses their path on their way to church. They do not jump to the conclusion that there is going to be trouble in the family because somebody happens to spill the salt; nor do they go into hysterics because somebody else in the house breaks a looking glass. With them Friday is as good as any other day, and they believe there is luck in odd numbers. They are healthy, happy, prosperous and contented, and their strong common sense saves them from all sorts of superstition and old wives' fables. Sensible couple!

SEA TREES.

Forms of life in the sea are far more wonderful than any that exist on land. However much one may doubt the stories of sea serpents, there are probably far bigger fish in the sea than ever came out of it; and as for plant life, it has been conclusively proved that sea trees 1,500 feet in height are quite common in the ocean. These monster trees are a kind of brown seaweed, the uppermost branches being only about a quarter of an inch in thickness. Countless blades, like miniature balloons, and about as big as a hen's egg form among the branches of the tree, and, being filled with air, buoy up the trunk and branches so that they grow almost erect. Mammoth sea animals often build their nests in these trees, as they give off several degrees of heat, which makes the surrounding water comparatively warm.