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ANCIENTS OF EGYPT

THOU GHT MUCH OF CATS

(New York Sun)

If one of the Egyptian mummies in the Metropolitan Museum could come to life, he—or, more especially, she—would be scandalized at the news of a New York butcher being caught in the act of selling pussy cats for rabbits. For in Egypt they thought so much of cats that when one died the whole family would shave their eyebrows.

Also the spectacle of our homeless alley warblers, and the vagabond cats that live on birds in Central Park until the official cat hunter shoots them would bring tears to the eyes of any tender hearted mummy.

Indeed, one doesn't have to be a mummy to wonder whether we treat cats quite respectfully enough. Without shaving our eyebrows for them or building temples to them, as the Egyptians did in the holy city of Budastis, consecrated to the cat goddess, we might do worse than examine our consciences and find out whether we always give puss a square deal.

Crises in Cat's Life

Passing her off for rabbit of course is an outrage that nobody will defend, and all upright persons will rejoice that the butcher who did it has been sent up for thirty days. We may have smiled in our juvenile days at "Pie," dealing with an unsophisticated couple's experiences with a Chinese cook. But that was back in the time when Chinese cooks were a grotesque novelty, and the humor of the idea was not strong enough to stretch over into a consideration of household marketing today.

One of the mysteries of human nature is that there are families, apparently decent in other respects, who will pet a cat all the winter and then abandon it to the streets when they go out of town in the spring. Conversely they will adopt a country kitten for the summer and abandon it to the woods and snows when winter comes.

That makes two sad seasons in the year for the cat family. And one of those seasons is now arriving. Already a scattering hegira to the suburbs has begun. And presumably it is accompanied by a seasonal increase in the population of alley wanderers. A certain proportion of families have enough of the milk of human kindness to take their pets with them, but a selfish residue leave theirs homeless, unless pussy happens to be a Persian or something of market value.

According to an Arab legend, there was no such creature as a cat on this planet until Noah had marched all the animals into the ark. Then a plague of mice occurred, and Noah's family feared they would be eaten out of ark and home. But Noah prayed to Allah and Allah caused the lion to sneeze a cat from its nostrils. And

the mice immediately ceased troubling.

Legends aside, there is evidence that puss has attached herself to the dwellings of man for at least 4,000 years. And she was highly esteemed until the darkness of the middle ages fell upon Europe, when poor puss was degraded to the office of companion to a witch and symbol of the foul fiend. Every learned monk knew that when Satan wanted to show himself he assumed the form of a black tomcat.

How Cat Defeated Devil

But sometimes puss proved more than a match for the devil himself, as in the story of the builder of a bridge who invoked the aid of the prince of darkness. The latter consented to build the bridge, exacting as payment the first soul to cross it. When the bridge was ready for traffic, the builder chased a cat across it. And when the disgusted devil sought to seize her she went at him tooth and nail and put up such a fight that his majesty was routed.

Many religious festivals in the dark ages included the ceremonial hurling of a live cat from a high steeple to the ground or into a bonfire. And that barbarous practice came down as late as 1818, when it was forbidden by an edict issued at Ypres.

BEADED GOWNS ARE POPULAR AT BRITISH COURT

London, May 29—Elaborately beaded and jeweled frocks have been selected by most of the American and British women who are to share in the courts of King George and Queen Mary this week. Some of the bead embroidery is shaded in patterns suggesting scrolls, floral devices and Oriental designs.

One of the gowns, of Pewter-gray georgette, is embroidered in shaded steel and black tulle at one side and a long oxidized silver train. Another an ivory jersey georgette, is richly patterned in the new shell-shaped pearls, and pearl beads, and has a silver tissue train veiled in net and with the embroidery lightly repeated on it.

An apricot crepe beade is strung with chains of crystals showing touches of gold, looped in front of the skirt with a patterning of larger stones, giving an Egyptian effect, and the train is of chiffon velvet in the same color. Other gowns show Byrantine designs in colored stones repeated on the train. Though there are trains and gowns of great splendor, the train and embroideries are not overweighted, as the short length is against great elaboration.

So far the chief colors are yellow embroidered in gold, almond green embroidered in silver, peach and apricot tints embroidered in opalescent beads, and cyclamen embroidered in silver. Reversible materials like fulgurite and some of the new fabrics to which different names are given are in favor for draped gowns. There is no unanimity about the neckline. The modified "boat" and the square neck are both in favor. Bodices are mostly made to suit individual lines and are by no means rigid in design. There are far fewer "matron" styles, and the useful crossover bodices appear to be mostly intended for dowagers.

Debutants are choosing white or ivory for their gowns, and little advantage is likely to be taken of the permission to wear a color. Embroidered chiffon, jersey georgette, crepe marocain and georgette are favorite fabrics for gowns for the younger set. There are no "metal" materials in young girls' dresses except in the train, for which there are some silver tissues. Charmeuse, beaute, faille and moire are also being used for "young" gowns but the filmy materials seem to outnumber them. Most of the more elaborate frocks will be worn by more mature women this year, as the brides, who will wear their wedding gowns on presentation, will be clad in simpler fabrics than last season, the "metal" bridal gown having been replaced by more subdued styles, of which the Duchess of York's was a notable example.

DUG OVER EIGHT HUNDRED GRAVES

London, May 29—William Oldcorn, who has died at Caldbeck Cumberland, in his seventy-ninth year, had the distinction of being absent from one Sunday service only during forty-five years. He was parish clerk and sexton, dug graves for 892 people and rang wedding bells for 252 couples in the parish.

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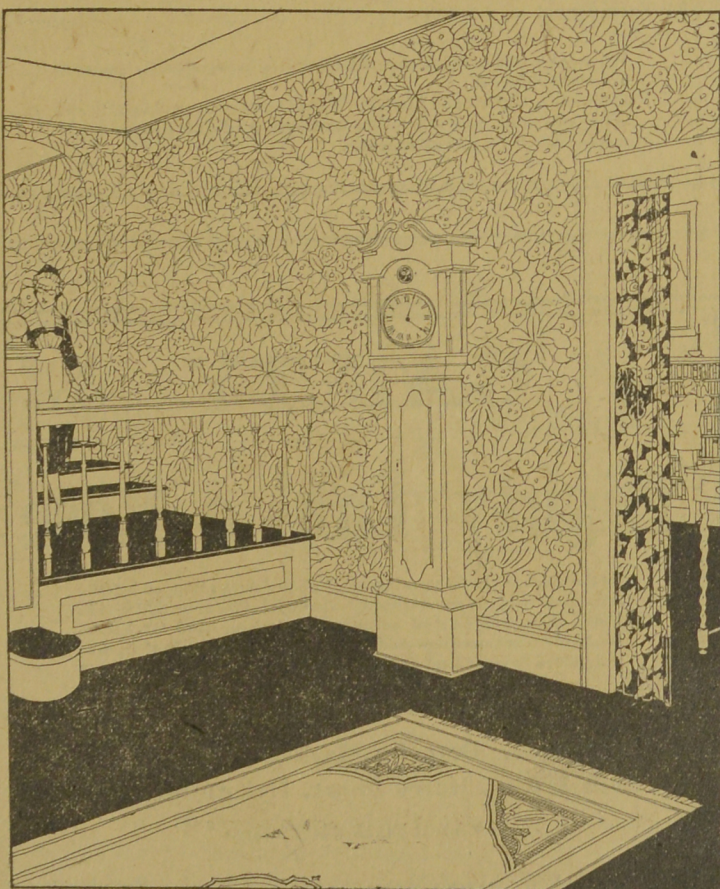
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