

our houses, are entirely domestic. The most familiar are not under any subjection, but rather enjoy perfect freedom, as they only do just what they please, and nothing is capable of retaining them in a place which they are inclined to desert. Besides, most of them are half wild, know not their masters, frequent other granaries, and never visit the kitchens and offices belonging to the house but when pressed to it by hunger.

Cats have less attachment to persons than to houses. When taken to the distance of a league or two they will return to their former abode of their own accord, possibly because they there know all the retreats of the mice, the outlets and passages about the house, and because the labour of the journey back is less than it would be to acquire the same facility in a new place. They fear water, cold, and bad smells; they love to be in the sun, and to lie in warm places; they are very fond of perfumes, and willingly allow themselves to be taken and caressed by those who make use of them. The scent of the valerian root has so powerful an effect on them that it appears to transport them with pleasure; to preserve this plant in the gardens it is necessary to surround it with a close fence, for the cats smell it at a distance;