

many cases have largely to support themselves and to escape diverse dangers. But man, owing to the difficulty of pairing cats, has done nothing by methodical selection; and probably very little by unintentional selection; though in each litter he generally saves the prettiest, and values most a good breed of mouse- or rat-catchers. Those cats which have a strong tendency to prowl after game, generally get destroyed by traps. As cats are so much petted, a breed bearing the same relation to other cats, that lapdogs bear to larger dogs, would have been much valued; and if selection could have been applied, we should certainly have had many breeds in each long-civilized country, for there is plenty of variability to work upon.

We see in this country considerable diversity in size, some in the proportions of the body, and extreme variability in colouring. I have only lately attended to this subject, but have already heard of some singular cases of variation; one of a cat born in the West Indies toothless, and remaining so all its life. Mr. Tegetmeier has shown me the skull of a female cat with its canines so much developed that they protruded uncovered beyond the lips; the tooth with the fang being $\cdot 95$, and the part projecting from the gum $\cdot 6$ of an inch in length. I have heard of several families of six-toed cats, in one of which the peculiarity had been transmitted for at least three generations. The tail varies greatly in length; I have seen a cat which always carried its tail flat on its back when pleased. The ears vary in shape, and certain strains, in England, inherit a pencil-like tuft of hairs, above a quarter of an inch in length, on the tips of their ears; and this same peculiarity, according to Mr. Blyth, characterises some cats in India. The great variability in the length of the tail and the lynx-like tufts of hairs on the ears are apparently analogous to differences in certain wild species of the genus. A much more important difference, according to Daubenton,⁹⁹ is that the intestines of domestic cats are wider, and a third longer, than in wild cats of the same size; and this apparently has been by their less strictly carnivorous diet.

⁹⁹ Quoted by Isid. Geoffroy, 'Hist. Nat. Gén., tom iii. p. 427.