

“has at the same time met with defective development of the dental system.” Certain forms of blindness seem to be associated with the colour of the hair; a man with black hair and a woman with light-coloured hair, both of sound constitution, married and had nine children, all of whom were born blind; of these children, five “with dark hair and brown iris were afflicted with amaurosis; the four others, with light-coloured hair and blue iris, had amaurosis and cataract conjoined.” Several cases could be given, showing that some relation exists between various affections of the eyes and ears; thus Liebreich states that out of 241 deaf-mutes in Berlin, no less than fourteen suffered from the rare disease called pigmentary retinitis. Mr. White Cowper and Dr. Earle have remarked that inability to distinguish different colours, or colour-blindness, “is often associated with a corresponding inability to distinguish musical sounds.”²³

Here is a more curious case: white cats, if they have blue eyes, are almost always deaf. I formerly thought that the rule was invariable, but I have heard of a few authentic exceptions. The first two notices were published in 1829, and relate to English and Persian cats: of the latter, the Rev. W. T. Bree possessed a female, and he states, “that of the offspring produced at one and the same birth, such as, like the mother, were entirely white (with blue eyes) were, like her, invariably deaf; while those that had the least speck of colour on their fur, as invariably possessed the usual faculty of hearing.”²⁴ The Rev. W. Darwin Fox informs me that he has seen more than a dozen instances of this correlation in English, Persian, and Danish cats; but he adds “that, if one

²³ These statements are taken from Mr. Sedgwick, in the ‘*Medico-Chirurg. Review*,’ July, 1861, p. 198; April, 1863, pp. 455 and 458. Liebreich is quoted by Professor Devay, in his ‘*Mariages Consanguins*,’ 1862, p. 116.

²⁴ Loudon’s ‘*Mag. of Nat. Hist.*,’ vol. i., 1829, pp. 66, 178. See also Dr. P. Lucas, ‘*L’Héréd. Nat.*,’ tom. i. p. 428, on the inheritance of deafness

in cats. Mr. Lawson Tait states (‘*Nature*,’ 1873, p. 323) that only male cats are thus affected; but this must be a hasty generalisation. The first case recorded in England by Mr. Bree related to a female, and Mr. Fox informs me that he has bred kittens from a white female with blue eyes, which was completely deaf; he has also observed other females in the same condition.