



CHILDREN'S CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN.

Any boy or girl who likes to become a cousin can do so, and write letters to 'COUSIN KATE, care of the Lady Editor, GRAPHIC Office, Auckland.'

Write on one side of the paper only.

All purely correspondence letters with envelope ends turned in are carried through the Post office as follows:—Not exceeding 4oz. 4d.; not exceeding 8oz. 1d.; for every additional 2oz. or fractional part thereof, 4d. It is well for correspondence to be marked 'Commercial papers only.'

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—I, with two friends, am spending my Christmas holidays at Raunanga, about two miles from Whangarei. The weather for the first few days of our visit was disagreeable in the extreme, rain falling incessantly and everything outside wearing its dreariest and most uninviting aspect; but it soon cleared up, and we have since enjoyed some really beautiful weather. Last Saturday we arranged to scale Parahaki, a high mountain near Whangarei, which is to that town almost what Rangitoto is to Auckland. We all set out together, but while my aunt and Florrie went straight to the wharf, Hilda and I went through the town to get some lollies. We, carrying the lollies in two bags, then proceeded to the wharf, where Florrie met us with the announcement that we were to hurry up because 'such a nice Maori boat offered to row us across in his boat.' We soon reached the bank of the river, where crowds of small boats were anchored, and there beheld the Maori who had so kindly offered his boat as a means of transit. Remembering Hilda's lollies, I suggested that she should give him some, and she opened both bags and ran after him calling, 'Have some lollies! Have some lollies!' The Maori turned and contemplated the proffered bags half doubtfully, then Hilda, generously urging him to 'go on,' he calmly appropriated the larger of the two bags. Having transferred it to his pocket, he was about to possess himself of the other also, when Hilda hastily put it behind her and turned to us, her face a veritable study as she announced, 'He's taken the bag!' We consoled ourselves with the thought that one bag was left to us, and then got into the boat, and after a short row were landed on the lower slopes of Parahaki. We had a very rough climb, in some parts clinging to the short bit tree and bracken and crawling along on our knees, but the view from the top was ample reward for our exertions. We had a splendid view of the harbour and the town, and the scene to the right was uninterrupted as far as the Kaori Mountain. We rested and admired the lovely panorama, then with a last look to where

'The crystal expanse of the bay,
Like a shield of pure metal lay shining
'Twixt headlands of purple and grey.'

we began the descent, and an hour later were wending our way through the town of Whangarei. Last week we went to visit some wonderful rocks in the bush near here. They were formerly used as a Maori cemetery, and we found five skulls, while Hilda and Dancan, not content with these, went digging with a walking stick, and returned to us in triumph with a number of bones, which they were promptly sent to deposit where they had found them. The rock on which we were is over forty feet in height. I am afraid my letter is already too long, so I will keep the rest of my news for next time.—LILLA, Raunanga, Whangarei.

[I am so glad that so many of our young New Zealanders can write such capital letters. Tell Hilda that if she had only remembered how bad lollies are for the teeth, she could have been quite glad that the obliging Maori saved her and you all from having so many to eat. What a great deal more of Whangarei you have contrived to see than I did. We walked to the falls and back one day—I think Boxing Day, and enjoyed ourselves, also we drank the soda water 'growing wild' as someone described it. Have you tasted it?—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—I am writing as I promised from Raunanga, where I am spending a few weeks. We are enjoying ourselves very well in spite of the fact that the weather has been wet all the time we have been here. It was fine enough, however, to allow us to go into Whangarei twice, and once to the waterfall, not the large Whangarei falls, but a smaller and prettier one in the creek near Raunanga. Hilda, Lilla, and I went on Wednesday morning, and followed the creek for a long way, and just above the point where the Maunū creek joins the creek, we caught the first glimpse of the fall—a mass of sparkling foam through the trees. Hurrying on, we at last reached it, and sitting down on the rocks we looked up at the water dashing, tumbling down the rock wall. Everything was so

solemnly, strangely quiet, too, the only noises being the splash of the fall into the quiet pool below, and the musical call of the tui ringing from the trees above. We cut our names and the date January 9th, 1895, on a large rock before we came home.—FLORRIE ('From Maoriland'), Whangarei.

[Judging from the date at the head of your letter, someone forgot to post it. I only tell you in case you have a cousin or uncle or somebody who kept it in his pocket for a fortnight or so. But I am very glad to hear from you. By this time all the rain is over, and you will be really enjoying your holidays. Your description of the waterfall is good. I must not write much, as I want to save my ideas for a school treat this afternoon, when I am usually expected to tell a story 'out of my own head' to amuse the children whilst they wait for tea.—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—I am staying at Raunanga (Whangarei) with two friends, who, already being cousins, are anxious that I too should write to you. We went into the township the other day, and as it is rather a long walk, we gladly accepted Lilla's offer to take us home by a short cut. Going through a gate, and down a very muddy road, we reached a creek, expecting to find a plank on which to cross. To our dismay we found that it had been washed away, and the only thing to do was to wade across. As I had lately suffered from neuralgia Lilla and Florrie volunteered to carry me, and after some discussion as to which was the narrowest part, they landed me on an island in the middle. Then they discovered that it was impossible to go any further, so they tried to take me back to the starting place, but when half-way there dropped me into two feet of water. Fortunately, only my shoes and stockings were wet, but I had to take those off and proceed barefooted. After wandering dismally up and down we had to cross right under the bridge at the entrance to the town, and scrambling through some briar-bushes and barbed-wire fence, we came on to the public road, having taken three-quarters of an hour to reach the other side of a bridge which we could have crossed in two minutes. Florrie and I were weak enough to yield to Lilla's persuasions to go by still another short cut, and crossing another creek, we found ourselves in a large paddock. Regardless of the fact that this was private property, we tramped on, Lilla encouraging us with the information that wild balls were sometimes kept in this paddock. At this point we heard a roar, and behold! right ahead was one of the said bulls, watching us with anything but friendly interest. Dashing into the tree, we crept quietly along by the creek, till a second roar warned us that our foe was near. We hastily tied our shoes and stockings together, and threw them, with a packet of lollies and the GRAPHIC (which, by the way, was the cause of our going to Whangarei) to the opposite bank. We made several unsuccessful attempts to get over, and were about to give up in despair and take to trees, when a man appeared on the scene. He advised us to go back, but, remembering our property, we told him that we could not, so he made a bridge of trunks, on which we crossed. Calling our thanks to him, we collected our belongings, which we found had been thrown into a pool of water. Even then our trials were not over, for we had to walk nearly a mile along the road, barefooted, and reached home long after tea time. We had taken three hours instead of the usual one, so perhaps you will not wonder at our firmly resolving never again to come home by a 'short cut.'—HILDA, Raunanga, Whangarei.

[I must confess to a weakness for 'short cuts,' though, your sad experience ought to be sufficient warning to any one not to wander from the straight and narrow known path. How could the GRAPHIC be the cause of your going to Whangarei? you have quite roused my curiosity. I am very glad you wrote, and hope you will keep up the practice. For your neuralgia do try bicarbonate (I think it's bi.) of iron. Get sixpennyworth from the chemist (it is a red powder) and put as much as will lie on a threepence between a bit of bread and butter at breakfast and tea. I took a larger dose. It did me good.—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—I must acknowledge I have been lazy not to let you know how I spent Christmas. Some of my schoolmates and I went in the bush next week, so I will have more news to tell you in my next letter. I must now say good-bye until I come home again.—COUSIN LILLY.

[I hope you will enjoy your holiday, and have plenty to tell about it.—COUSIN KATE.]

PUZZLE COLUMN.

CHARADE.

A COMMON verb you'll find my first,
Which beautifully expresses
What tides may do
And windmills, too,
And women (to old dresses).

My last a tyrant is, accused
By those who see most clearly,
Though woman kind,
Can men of mind,
May sometimes love him dearly.

My whole the place from the very first
Frequented met at the Fair,
I was no nice place to be,
There was nothing to see,
But you saw me each day you were there.

From A to H: Bonafid. From I to Z: Splitting. Base: A check; a commotion; fluent; benedictions.

ANSWERS.

Answers to Cousin Maude's riddles: (1) Because they go too, too, too (two and two and two.) (2) A good appetite. (3) Because it is read (red.) (4) When he is a board. (5) Because having eyes they see not and ears they hear not. (6) Because it is a tanner.

Answer to Cousin Jack's conundrum: When its run down.

Answer to anagram: Team, tame, mate, mate.

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

HE was a very small boy, and he very much admired his tall, beautiful cousin Emily. He was too shy to tell her he loved her, but he thought he might send her a valentine. He had no money just then—at eight years old, money goes very rapidly—so he set to work to make one. He secured some rather sticky silver paper, which had once contained chocolate, and this he pasted on to a somewhat shabby-looking piece of pink paper. But Bobby thought it exquisite. With a great deal of care he wrote, in his best school hand, letting the words wander about between the bits of silver paper:—'Dearest Lady. If you'll be my Valentine I'll be yours for ever nadever amen so be it.' The spelling was rather peculiar, and the words a little mixed up, but Bobby was quite sure that never had fair lady received such a lovely letter from her true knight on Valentine's Day. He did not know her address, and was uncertain about the spelling of her surname. After some puzzling he wrote:—'This letter is for Miss Righte. Wellington, so please postman take it to her. But the young lady never received it.'

EASY CLUE.

TOYS and dolls will break. Here is some glue, easy to make and strong. From the druggist get half an ounce of gum-acacia and dissolve it in half a cup of boiling water. Add plaster of Paris until a thick paste is formed and then apply it with a brush to the crippled pieces of the toys. Hold firmly till dry.

EXPLAINING IT.

A LITTLE girl of this city recently gave a forcible though unconscious illustration of what foreigners find a perplexing peculiarity of our language. Her younger brother inquired:

'Do cows give beef and ham?'
'Of course they don't,' was the scornful reply. 'You ought to know better than that. Cows lay milk.'

SALT-RHEUM,
or any other
SKIN DISEASE

Will quickly leave its victim, when the remedy taken is

Ayer's Sarsaparilla

R. H. STABLE, of Des Moines, Ia., U. S. A., says: "My little daughter was, for several years, afflicted with salt-rheum, none of the many remedies prescribed by the physi-



cian doing her any good. When we had about given up all hope of curing her, my wife suggested the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla. We tried it, and before one bottle had been taken, a great change for the better was noticeable. We continued the treatment, and a thorough cure was the result."

Ayer's The Sarsaparilla
Admitted at the World's Fair.
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