



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 40s. 3d.; not exceeding 40s. 1d.; for every additional 20s or fractional part thereof, 3d. It is well for correspondents to be marked 'Commercial papers only.'

COT FUND.

Per Cousin Amy (Dunedin): F. E. Acott, 2s; a friend, 2s 6d; ditto, 2s; ditto, 2s; J.A.P., 2s 6d; A. Hay, 2s 6d; M.Z.O., 2s 6d; F.A.H., 5s; A.A.O., 1s; G.N.O., 3s=£4 5s.
Per Cousin Gwen: E. R. Thomson, 1s; M. C. Thomson, 1s; James Thomson, 1s; W. Thomson, 1s; J. Thomson, 6d; Jack Thomson, 1s; Gwen Thomson, 4s 6d=10s.
Carried forward, £3 0s 3d. Total, £4 15s 3d.

Cousin Lily:—I hear there is 17s from you and a letter, but having money in it the letter was left safely in town on New Year's Eve, and not brought out to me in camp, so I must reserve my thanks and answer till next week, as I cannot now receive it in time.—COUSIN KATE.

I HAVE some very pretty Christmas cards to acknowledge, which I do with very many thanks and best wishes to you all. It is so good of you, dear cousins, to remember me like that. The pretty cards are from Cousin Elsie, Cousin Phoebe, Cousin Lilla, Cousin Ilma. I will answer 'B.O.H.'s' letter from Eitham when I get to town again.—COUSIN KATE.

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—I have an old scrap-book for the first child that occupies the cot. We are having holidays now. We broke up on the 18th. I hope it will be a fine day for Christmas. If it keeps like to-day it will be lovely. I am sending the answer to Cousin Ida's 3rd puzzle. We went for a lovely picnic on the breaking-up day to Kohimarama. I think I can fill the collecting card for the cot. Wishing you and all the cousins a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.—COUSIN GWEN.

P.S.—This is the last letter I will write to you until I come up from Waiheke after the Christmas holidays.

[Thank you for the cot card, which I have safely received, and which I will put in the paper next week. Ten shillings is very good indeed. I hope you will enjoy your holiday. We had heavy rain last night—a thunder-storm—and one of our tents leaked badly. The tide is coming up very close. It looks as if we should be washed out of camp. Happy New Year.—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—I received my 'cot' card, and I have collected £1 5s, which I hope you will be pleased with. I have had a sore knee. I fell down and hurt it. We broke up last Wednesday. I did not get a prize, as I only went to this school at the beginning of this term. We go to Brighton to-morrow for two months. Please excuse my letter being so short. I am just going to a party. With love from COUSIN AMY.
P.S.—I am sending money by this mail.

[Thank you very much indeed for your excellent collection for the Cot Fund. You are the first Southern one to come in, and you must have worked very hard. I will put in your card names next week. I am so sorry about your knee, and hope your visit will put you all right very soon. Again thanking you I send best wishes.—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—I wish you A Very Happy Christmas and New Year, in which all the other cousins are included. Thank you very much for that collecting card you sent me. I have already received some money for it. Fitzgerald's Circus came here the other day, and I went to see it. Did you go to see the Flower Show held in Auckland? I saw some very good pictures of it in the GRAPHIC. A very good Flower Show was held here last month, but if the Auckland one was as good as its pictures represent, I am afraid it beats Hawera's down to the ground. I am going to make a suggestion to you, Cousin Kate: Don't you think it would be nice for any of the cousins to write a long story for the Children's Page, and to send it to you, either in chapters or the whole story, for printing a little bit at a time. Of course there would be no need to

have rules, or any particular thing to write about, would there? On Wednesday, the 18th, there was a concert held at the St. Joseph's Convent School by the pupils, of which I am one. There was a fairly large attendance, and the programme was very long, and we had a play at the end of it. Lately in Hawera we have been having such nasty fogs. They would start at about 11 o'clock and continue far into the night. I am sorry to say that I have nothing more to write to you about, so I will say good-bye for the present.—From COUSIN ILMA.

[Thank you for your pretty card and good wishes. I saw Fitzgerald's Circus, and thought it good. The Flower Show, or rather Floral Fete, was lovely, though it was so wet I did not go. It was such a pity the rain spoiled it. I must see about your suggestion of a story. I wonder if it could be written in parts?—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—This year we are camping on the beach. As it is full moon we expect to be washed out. To-day, as it is New Year's Day, I went for a walk along the beach. I saw what I thought to be two dead sticks, but on getting near them I found them to be vegetable caterpillars. On going to my tent just now I heard a noise made by a wasp in the tent. I found a wasp's nest with two or three dozen spiders. The wasp uses the spiders to feed the little ones. Yesterday I found a piece of greenstone about two inches long. Have you any idea what it would be worth? What magazines do you get, Cousin Kate? I get the *Boys' Own Paper*, the *Prize*, and *Sunshine*.—COUSIN JACK.
P.S.—Would you please send me a collecting card?

[You were very lucky to find those vegetable caterpillars. If your greenstone ornament is in good preservation you might get two shillings for it. I will send you a collecting card with pleasure, and wish you luck with it. Remember, Rome was not built in a day, and collecting needs patience and perseverance, and a strong amount of courage and hope. I trust you were not washed out, but will soon be dry enough to write to me again.—COUSIN KATE.]

TWO DAYS' CYCLE RIDE THROUGH CHESHIRE.

[CONTINUED.]

At last we found an old inn modernised which had written upon a board 'Accommodation for cyclists,' so we went in and ordered something to eat. We did not stay very long, as it was getting rather late, and we had a good many miles between us and home, so at twenty minutes past six we left the old city, which has for hundreds of years played so prominent a part in England's history. The very soil around its walls has been enriched by the blood of its enemies. A straight road to Birkenhead lay before us, for we returned a much nearer way than we came. Some miles on, on our right stands the ancient Castle of Newall, which formerly belonged to the Andeleys, and now belongs to Viscount Combermere. A mile or so further on is the village of Sanghall. This village was the residence of Mrs Mary Davies. This strange and wonderful woman had a pair of horns growing upon her head. There was also another curious old woman who lived in a place called Hedgerow, near Rainow, not 'Rainbow.' Her name was Margaret Broadhurst, she lived to the great age of 140. Our next and last place before we got to Birkenhead was Tranmere. From Tranmere Hall sprang the family of Holme, of which were the three celebrated Randles Holme, whose manuscripts have contributed so largely to furnish our great repository of literary curiosities, the British Museum. England has need to be proud of the sons of Cheshire. Not only have they so nobly fought for England's cause, when they distinguished themselves on Flodden Field and the Field of Waterloo, but they have distinguished themselves in literature, to say nothing of medicine and inventions. We have to thank John Lambe, Richard Martin, Lawrence Barnshaw, and Charles Lamb for our silk and cotton spinning machines, which were the means of England's prosperity, and you sons of Cheshire who are in New Zealand—I know for a fact there are some—will bear me out that Cheshire, past and present, has done its duty.

After we left Tranmere we made for Birkenhead, took boat to Liverpool, and then home, where we arrived at nine o'clock, having travelled one hundred and thirty miles through Cheshire in two days, and much have I enjoyed my visit to some of the grand old towns and homes of England.

The stately homes of England,
How beautiful they stand!
Amid their tall ancestral trees
O'er all the pleasant land!
The deer across their greenward bound,
Through shade and sunny gleam,
And the swan glides past them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream.

The free, fair homes of England!
Long, long in hut and hall
My hearts of native proof be reared
To guard each hallowed wall;
And green for ever be the groves,
And bright the flow'ry dale,
Where first the child's glad spirit loves
Its country and its God.

Felicia Hemans here describes so beautifully the stately homes of the rich, and the free, fair homes of the

poor. If my Uncle Harry, Aunt Kate, and Cousin Edie should read what I have written, I am sure it will bring to them pleasant recollections of the time they spent in Cheshire, and now, my dear Cousin Kate, I hope I have not tired you with my long account of the ride I had through Cheshire.

NEWELL L. NICHOLSON.

[THE END.]

PUZZLE COLUMN.

Answer to Cousin Ida's third puzzle: 'Wet.'—COUSIN AMY.

THE 'MAGIC' OF LEARNING.

NOTHING is more astonishing to barbarous or primitive people than the use of figures, diagrams and mathematical formulae by engineers and architects. There appears, we will say, among the people of some mountain region of Northern Mexico a civil engineer. He makes surveys and drawings and computations. Then he goes away, leaving his drawings and calculations with others. Men with picks and shovels go to work in his track constructing a railway. Tunnels are cut through mountains from opposite sides, and meet, inch for inch, in the centre. Great embankments are laid, and to make them there is just enough earth brought. The surface of the grade follows an even line as far as the eye can reach—a wonderful thing to these untravelled natives.

All the while the men who build the railway consult the drawings and calculations of the civil engineer. Everything is done according to them. Is it any wonder that the simple lookers-on regard this wonderful paper, which opens the mountains and spans the valleys, as a bit of sorcery, a magician's touchstone?

An African Prince, visiting Paris during the great exhibition, sees the Eiffel Tower, a thousand feet high, slenderly built of iron in such a way that every foot of the material contributes to the strength of the structure or to the architect's scheme of decoration. Nothing is superfluous. When the African Prince returns to his people, he can only give them this account of the matter:

'These white men are wonderful magicians. None of our fetish men can do such things as we have seen. They have there a school of necromancy where men are taught to make lines and figures in such a way that great palaces of iron are built.'

It is thus that a white man of Paris has built a tower which seems to pierce the clouds, and which at night is lighted with fires of many colours. And all that, as it was told to us, by means of lines, and rules of numbers and figures.

But when the white men sought to explain these lines and designs, we understood nothing of what they told us. No doubt they meant that we should not understand their secret. For if we knew their magic, their power would be lost.

But the 'magic' of the civilisation of the white men is no secret. It is simply the magic of patient research and industrious application. Nor is its possession limited to those who are able to go to college.

Every student in the public schools may measure up scientific knowledge which will be of the utmost practical value to him when he goes out into the world. Here is an illustration:—

Not long ago, in a public school, there was a boy who took a decided interest in natural philosophy. He said he was going to be a plumber, and he wanted to understand the facts that lay at the bottom of his future occupation.

His father was a poor working man, and could not afford to send the boy to college. But he permitted him to finish the course at the high school. The boy never ceased to pay particular attention to natural philosophy.

After he left school, he went to work for a plumber. When he had been to work about a year, there arose a great deal of trouble about certain valves that belonged to an important and costly apparatus which had been supplied to many people. No one could make these valves work after they had been in use a short time.

As there was a great deal of value at stake one practical plumber after another was employed, but quite vainly, to remedy the defect.

Meantime, the high school lad had gone to work on his own account to experiment with the valves. He recalled some facts, which he had learned in his natural philosophy at school, about a peculiar corroding effect of water upon certain metals; and he was able through this knowledge, to find the exact spot in the costly apparatus where the fault lay.

The discovery proved so valuable to the manufacturers of the apparatus that the boy was taken into their employ. From this beginning he rose to a leading and profitable position. He attributes his success to the excellent grounding in the 'magic' of natural science which he received at school.

'Well,' said Sir Frog to his neighbour, Squire Turtle, 'life may be slow, as you say, and times hard, but I never have any trouble to raise my bread.'

'I wish I could say as much,' replied Squire Turtle, sadly. 'Pray tell me how you do it?'

'Why, with hops, of course,' responded Sir Frog, as with a spring he bounded ever his companion's head and secured a blue-bottle fly on the wing.

It was all so sudden that Squire Turtle jerked his head in, terrified for a moment, and when presently he ventured to look out again, Sir Frog was out of sight.

'What did he mean, I wonder?' said Squire Turtle, scratching his head against his tortoise-shell collar, 'by "raising his bread with hops?" I wonder if there is a joke in it. Yes, now I begin to see—ha, ha, ha!'

A BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION.

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