



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.

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COT FUND.

Per Cousin Lily:—Robert Isaacson, 1s; Mrs A. Isaacson 1s; Mrs R. May, 1s; Mr C. Summersville, 2s 6d; Mr Thomson, 1s; Mrs Worrall, 2s; Mr J. Reiper, 1s 6d; Mr McKay, 1s; A. Ingram, 1s; a friend, 1s=13s. Carried forward, £4 15s 3d; total, £5 8s 3d.

Per Cousin Florrie:—S.G., 2s 6d; Mrs J. J. Dixon, 2s 6d; Mrs Garlick, 2s; A.O., 1s; W.K., 1s; R. J. Parry, 2s; J.M., 1s; B.B., 1s; E.E.G., 1s; E.J., 1s=15s. Carried forward, £5 8s 3d; total, £6 3s 3d.

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—I am afraid I am rather late in wishing you a 'Merry Christmas' and a 'Happy New Year.' What lovely weather we have been having lately! I have a friend staying with me, and this afternoon we went for a bathe in the Waipawa river. It looked very dull when we started, and as we arrived at the place the rain began. We undressed very quickly, and covered our clothes with our towels. We put on our bathing things and ran into the water. It rained very hard indeed, and large hailstones came on to our heads. When we came out of the water we found our clothes and everything soaked. We had to go home in wet things. Fortunately, we met no one, and so far we have no colds. I hope this letter is not too long. Good-bye.—From KITTIE. Waipawa.

[You might just as well have done what I saw a little scamp of twenty months old do last week—walked straight into deep water with his clean clothes on. I hope you will escape any danger from colds. Probably the walk will have kept you warm and well. It is not at all too late for good wishes. Many thanks, and the same to you. Will you take a collecting care for the Cot Fund? If so, please send full name and address, and I will gladly send you one.—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—It is such a long time since I wrote to you last. We broke up a fortnight ago. We broke up on Wednesday afternoon. Mr Blair, the chairman of the Board of Governors, gave out the prizes. Some pretty songs were sung during the afternoon by the girls. After the distribution of prizes afternoon tea was served on the lawn. The front corridors and the central hall were prettily decorated with flags, palms, treeferns, and cabbage trees. On Friday afternoon the Wellington College broke up, and I went to see the distribution of prizes. Their corridors were also prettily decorated with palms and flags, and the guns and swords of the Wellington College Cadets were arranged along each side of the entrance to the hall. Thursday, the day after we broke up, being my birthday, I gave a small croquet party. I invited about—girls, Cousin Elsie being among them. On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, the 26th, the 27th, and 28th December, the Championship Tennis Tournaments took place on the Thorndon Tennis Club's Courts in Murphy-street. Each day there was a large number of people present. Mr H. A. Parker won the gentlemen's Championship Singles. He beat last year's champion—Mr Hooper, of Auckland. Miss Nunneley won the ladies' singles. Mr Collins and Mr Harman—both of Christchurch, won the gentlemen's doubles, and Miss Nunneley and Miss Trimmell, both of Wellington, won the ladies' doubles. I must now close my letter. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,—I remain your affectionate COUSIN LAURA. Wellington.

[Thank you, indeed, for the very pretty Christmas card you sent me. Many and Happy may your New Years be! You Wellingtonians were lucky in the tennis line this season. You do not say how many girls you asked to your party, and I could not supply the number, though I felt much inclined to say so! How surprised you would have been! Please let me wish you many happy returns of your birthday. You must have enjoyed the breaking up parties. How are you getting on with your collecting?—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—As I have never written to you before, I would like to do so now, and hope that you will accept me for a cousin. I am sending stamps for a badge, and will be pleased when I receive it. I am fourteen years old, and I go to school, and am in the Seventh Standard, and at the end of next year (1896) I am going up for the Pupil Teachers' Examination. I had a large number of silkworms this year, the last of which finished spinning this week. I have unwound countless yards of yellow and white silk from the cocoons. I have a grand collection of coloured pictures and foreign stamps. With best wishes for A Happy New Year.—Yours, BELLE. Puketotara.

[I have much pleasure in adding you to my list of cousins. I have sent you a badge, and have also ventured to send you a collecting card for the Cot Fund. Perhaps you may be able to get a few shillings for it. You are lucky with your silkworms. On what did you feed them? How many stamps have you? Every now and then I start collecting, but give it up when I am very busy. I hope you will be successful in your examination, and also send good wishes for the New Year.—COUSIN KATE.]

DEAR COUSIN KATE.—Please don't think I have forgotten you, because I have not. My mother being a cripple I have to help her, so I have not much time. I received the card on a Friday, and it was filled on the following Tuesday, and I did not go to half the places, so if you would care to send me another one, I would gladly try and get it filled for such a grand purpose, and I think it is a really good idea. I must now close my letter with love and best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you and all the cousins.—From COUSIN LILY.

P.S.—Please excuse such an untidy letter, as it is past my bedtime and I am tired.

[It is good of you to collect for the 'cot' when you have so much else to do. I am afraid your mother will feel this very hot weather; even strong people seem knocked over with it. I keep wishing I was in the ocean all day instead of on the warm land. I have sent you a second card, and thank you very much for the first one. Do you see how nicely we are getting on? A Happy New Year to you.—COUSIN KATE.]

DANGEROUS MOOSE.

STORIES are told of killing moose with an axe, after running them down in the deep snow. 'This may have been done in Maine or Canada,' writes the author of an article on 'Moose-Hunting in the Rocky Mountains,' contributed to 'The Big Game of North America,' 'but, if so, it proves to my mind that the moose there do not possess the same wild, savage, pugnacious natures as those found in the Rocky Mountains. No sane man would dare to attack one of our vicious mountain moose, single-handed, with any weapon short of a repeating rifle.' The writer tells this story to support his assertion:—

'A party of river men wounded a large moose near the bank of Clear Water River, in Idaho, and it took to the water. The eager, but unskilled, hunters rushed upon the wounded animal with a bateen. It was a large boat, and was manned by six strong and fearless men. They were either without a gun, or scorned to use it, and determined to kill the moose with axes, cant-hooks, and other woodsmen's implements.

'They bore down by the side of the swimming moose, which was kept in the current by walls of rocks, and dealt him a blow. He turned to fight. The men rushed to the battle with shouts of defiance.

'The moose struck the boat with his antlers, raised it clear out of the water, and turned it upside down so quickly that the men were all frightened, and two of them were either killed or drowned. The other four were rescued by their companions on shore, after the moose had been shot several times.

'The writer himself once narrowly escaped being killed by a moose he had shot and thought dead. He had chased, on snow shoes and down a decline two large moose, and, at thirty feet above them, fired at the larger bull. He staggered, and kept on, but a ghastly line of blood on the trail told of the deadly effect of the shot.

'The second shot was aimed at the smaller moose. He fell at the crack of the rifle; but the other struggled on, bleeding, snorting from a deadly shot through the lungs. Four shots were fired into him before he fell and buried himself in the snow.

'The hunter, standing exhausted above the fallen moose, gave no thought to the animal that he supposed to be lying dead three or four rods back. Suddenly he heard a loud snort and felt a rush from behind. As he dodged on one side, the moose he had thought dead charged upon him and buried him in the snow.

'His rush carried the moose past the fallen hunter, but he turned to charge again before the man could shoot. His broken shoulder failed him, however, and he tumbled downhill. Again he rose and charged again; but the hunter, having recovered himself, placed a bullet between his eyes. Although the snow was seven feet deep, and the moose had a broken shoulder, it was more good fortune than any advantage the hunter had, that saved him from being cut to pieces by the enraged animal's feet.'

RESOLUTE.

ENGLAND has been made by men of resolute and uncompromising character, who had both the courage to express their convictions, and the willingness to sacrifice themselves at the call of duty. One of this class was the Rev. Richard Venn, of London, who, during the reign of George II., actually vetoed the appointment of an improper person to be bishop, by threatening to appear publicly and oppose the confirmation.

Venn's decision of character was so well known that the Lord Chancellor, whose interest at court had procured the appointment, sent a gentleman to threaten or bribe the resolute clergyman into silence. The man found Venn in his study, with his wife and little boy, the afterwards famous Rev. Henry Venn, and hinted that he might be appointed to the Deanery of Wells, provided he would desist from his opposition to the appointment.

'Let the Chancellor know that I scorn his bribes,' answered Mr Venn. Whereupon the gentleman changed his tone.

'You will be ruined, Mr Venn, you will be ruined and all your family!' said he.

Mr Venn calmly turned to his wife, who was sewing, and said, 'My dear, could you not support yourself and me by your needle?'

'Yes, if it were necessary.'

Then turning to his son, he said, 'Harry, would you not like to be a waterman?'

'Yes, papa, very much.'

'There, sir, report what you have heard to the Chancellor, and tell him I defy him.'

The appointment was cancelled.

THE SAND-MAN.

The sand-man lives down on the beach,
Where the waves roll on and on,
He always keeps just out of reach
Till the day is past and done.

I look for him and dig and delve,
But he never can be found,
Yet six hours after half past twelve
He is sure to come around.

I wish he'd show himself to me,
And not wait until the night,
When it's so dark I cannot see
Anything that is not light.

I want to ask him why he takes
Little boys and girls alone,
And leaves the big folks wideawakes,
Until half the night is gone.

I'm going to dig for him some day
Right down through the miles of sand,
Until he's found, or I cut a way
Clear through to some foreign land.
FLAVELL SCOTT MINNS.

AMONG THE WALRUSES.

THE walrus in the water is the noblest and most courageous game in the Arctic seas. It is a huge creature, often more than fifteen feet in length, with an average weight of a thousand pounds. Its tusks are from one to three feet long, and when full grown weigh about five pounds. Walrus hunting has its dangers, as in this instance, related by Dr. I. M. Mills in *Outing*. One or two walruses, it appears, had already been killed.

Suddenly we saw the walruses coming for us in all directions, and we had been warned of their desperation.

Vorse grasped a gaff. He would hold the boat near the ice, he said, and I must keep the boats at bay with my Winchester. Shot after shot was fired into their ranks. They could not stand such a fusillade, and finally turned and left us.

Thinking they had departed for good, Tom calmly proceeded with his work of chopping off the dead monster's head. But the wounded walruses had merely gone to gather reinforcements, and soon we found ourselves again in danger.

The fierce, ugly beasts were coming from all directions, bellowing discordantly, lashing the water with their strong, heavy flippers, raising their gleaming white tusks, and glaring at us with bloodshot, revengeful eyes.

Tom sprang into the boat and Vorse pushed off, and as they came within twenty feet we gave them a volley, trying to make each shot tell, as we found we had only six or eight rounds apiece. We saw a mother carry her two offspring away, one under each flipper, and then return to the battle.

Again the herds retreated, only to return and make another charge still more furious and determined. (One fellow attempted to raise his trunk over the side of the boat, but was prevented in time.)

At last, when we had almost despaired, for our ammunition was falling fast, they could no longer withstand the leaden shower, and turned and fled in terror-stricken disorder. We also turned the other way, and beat a hasty retreat, proud of our success in capturing two gigantic sea-horses.

A DISPUTE.

Tom and Joe quarrelled
I've heard people tell;
About a queer animal
Hid in a shell.
'I tell you, it walks, sir!'
Said Tommy to Joe;
'It swims!' cried Joe, loudly,
'I've seen, and I know!'
'It walks!'—'No, it swims!'—
And the boys grew quite wrath,
But the turtle peeped out,
Saying, 'I can do both!'
AGNES LEWIS MITCHELL.