



**CHILDREN'S  
CORRESPONDENCE  
COLUMN.**

Any boy or girl who likes to become a constant contributor, 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 enclosed in are carried through the Post Office as follows:—Not exceeding 4oz. 1d.; not exceeding 4oz. 1d.; for every additional 2oz. or fractional part thereof, 4d. It is well for exceeding to be marked 'Press Manuscript only.'

Please note, dear cousins, that all letters addressed to Cousin Kate must now bear the words 'Press Manuscript only.' If so marked, and the flap turned in, and not over-weight, they will come for a 4d stamp in Auckland, but a 1d from every other place.

**THE 'GRAPHIC' COUSINS  
COT FUND.**

This fund is for the purpose of maintaining a poor, sick child in the Auckland Hospital, and is contributed to by the 'Graphic' cousins—readers of the children's page. The cot has been already bought by their kind collection of money, and now £25 a year is needed to pay for the nursing, food and medical attendance of the child in it. Any contributions will be gladly received by Cousin Kate, care of the Lady Editor, 'New Zealand Graphic,' Shortland-street, or collecting cards will be sent on application.

Dear Cousin Kate,—I hope you are keeping well. It is a long time since I last wrote to you. I am very sorry that you had to leave Auckland on such sad business. How is your garden getting on? Our pansies are looking well. It has been very hot lately, and the plants need rain. We have a sheep dog. Its name is Whisky. Its colour is brown and white. Who is in the 'Graphic' Cousins' cot now? That was a very nice photo, of the little boy in the 'Graphic.' Please send me a card to see if I can collect a little for Christmas. I think I must close with love to you and all the cousins.—I remain your loving Cousin, Vivian.

[I am very glad to hear from you, dear cousin Vivian. My garden is looking very well now. I have worked hard in it since I came home, and cousin Wilbert has been of great assistance. I will send you a collecting card with pleasure. I am going up to the Hospital next week and will see about the new occupant of our cot. What a tipsy sort of name for a dog! And I am sure he is a sober animal. We had eight wee ducks hatched last week. On Saturday night a rat calmly ran off with one. We have moved the ducklings and set a trap for Mr Rat. Do you mean to say you want rain already? What will your plants do when the really dry weather comes? And what shall we all do?—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I expect you have forgotten me, as it is a long time since I wrote to you from Masterton. I meant to send for a badge at that time, but we came to Wellington to live, and somehow I forgot all about it, as there was so much to see here, and all kinds of amusements. Do you remember about our little dog Dick, and how he used to chase the fowls out of the garden and lie on them until someone came to take them away? He is with us here, but so fat now he looks like a woolly rug, he is so curly. He is nearly as old as I am, and I am afraid we shall soon lose poor Dick. We had some other pets—two darling cats and a mollyhawk, and a dear little sparrow. The sparrow flew on mamma's head one day in the garden, and never wanted to go away. He would fly all about the house, and at night would roost high up on the pictures. He seemed quite to love us all, and would hop about

us and nestle under my hair. The mollyhawk was a large sea bird, and was very friendly with Dick. If Dick waggled his tail the bird would try to catch hold of it. It was so funny to watch them. Dick is washed on washing days, but does not like it, so directly he sees any clothes on the line he runs away and hides. I could tell you much more about his funny little ways, but must not fill all my paper. Have you ever been to Wellington? It is a very pretty place; there are so many pretty bays all round it. We generally take a furnished cottage by the seaside for the holidays, and have great fun. We were six weeks at Island Bay last year, and of course went to see the hermit. He has gone away now, and his cave is blocked up. I am sending you some seaweeds which I got at Island Bay. We used to go in the water after them and catch them as they came floating in on the waves. They are much prettier then than when they dry on the beach. We used to go out in the evening and watch the fishermen haul in their nets. I think we are going to Worsler Bay this year. It is such a pretty bay, with hills all round it; which are covered with trees. The Fort is not far away, so it will be a nice walk to go and see it. My little sister and I go to Miss Beere's dancing class, and we had a fancy dress party for the breaking up. It was a very pretty scene. I was Winter (white satin and white fur 'snowballs all over it), and my little sister was Buttercup and Daisies. She looked very pretty. Miss Beere was Evangeline. Prizes and medals are given at the breaking up to each class. Last year I got the medal for my class. I enclose six stamps for a badge, and I will not be so long before I write to you again.—With best love, I remain your loving Cousin Athie.

[Many thanks, dear cousin Athie for your interesting long letter. I hope you will have as good a time at Worsler Bay as at Island Bay. Yes, I have several times been in Wellington. I was there for a night last month, and spent the evening in the House, listening to a rather dull debate. The seaweed is very pretty. Thank you for it. I have sent you a badge. It is so very hot to-day, I am in a melting mood; and not much inclined for writing. I expect you and your sister are both good dancers. We shall be very gay in Auckland this week, with the Exhibition and Lord and Lady Ranfurly. Write again soon.—Cousin Kate.]

**'REMNANT.'**

The cats of Marblehead always seemed to me a very important part of the population. There was Post-office Tom, over on the Neck, a great, handsome fellow who presided over the distribution of the mails, looking down with big green eyes from his lofty perch on the very top of the pigeon-holed cabinet where the letters awaited their owners.

There was the bewitching Maltese kitten who took me in charge when I went sketching in the old town, and sat demurely at my side while I worked, with an occasional scamper after her own frolicsome gray tail by way of refreshment. There were various aristocratic cottage cats, sleek and proud; and there was Remnant.

The first time I saw her the little steamer had just come in from the Neck, and the people were hurrying to and fro, some going ashore and some running to take their places in the boat; and Remnant, not a bit abashed by all the bustle, looked on with her bright eyes from the post where she lay basking in the sunshine, and evidently feeling herself the proprietress of the whole affair. It seemed a strange place for a cat, I thought; but she was quite as much at home among the boats and piles of timber and dingy wharf-houses as in your own puss in her peaceful back-yard, or her corner by the kitchen stove.

She was a pretty creature, black and gray and tawny yellow, with snow-

white breast and paws, and because of this colouring, like a piece of gay calico, the sailors gave her the curious name of 'Remnant.' She had a family of kittens somewhere among the old canvas in one of the dark sail-lofts; but she had hidden them away so safely that even her good friends the sailors could not find them.

All night she stayed with them, and part of the day, but I am sure she felt equally the responsibility of looking after the wharf, to see that the boats came and went regularly, and that the float was kept as clean as a tidy cat would wish to see it.

And how was she fed? No doubt there were plenty of rats and mice about the wharves, but Remnant had a taste for daintier fare, as you shall see.

When the little steamer had puffed away again, and the deserted float swayed gently on the quiet water, kind Captain T. looked up at Remnant, where she still sat on her post in the sunshine.

'I guess you're hungry, puss,' he said. 'It's about dinner-time.' Then he called, 'Kit, kit, kit!' She blinked her eyes lazily, and did not move. The captain smiled at me.

'This will fetch her,' he said, and took a fishing-reel out of his pocket.

'Kit, kit, kit!' he called again softly, holding it up so that she could see. And Remnant understood. Down she came, stepping gravely along the gang plank, and looked up with questioning eyes in the captain's face.

'Are you hungry, puss?' he asked. 'Me-ow!' she answered gently, with a wave of her plummy tail.

Then the captain knelt down on the float, unwound his reel and dropped the line into the water, and Remnant settled herself beside him, watching every movement with an air of entire familiarity with the proceedings. She was too well-bred to show any impatience.

Her manners were perfect, though she was born and brought up on the wharf, and had not had the advantages which your pussy has enjoyed. She cocked her pretty head on one side with an expression of alert and intelligent interest, restrained by a gentle dignity. Jerk! up came the line. A quiver ran through Remnant's delicate body. But there was only a bit of seaweed on the hook, and down it went again.

Over and over this happened, and still with unwearied patience the man knelt and threw his line, and the cat sat motionless beside him, gazing gravely down into the dark water. The float rose and fell on the tide, and the sunshine lay warm on the boards, and I watched the pretty sight, smiling, from my bench corner.

'I'm afraid you'll have to go hungry, puss,' said the captain at last. 'They won't bite to-day.' And then, as he spoke, jerk! up came the line again, and he sprang to his feet, for this time there was a little fish dangling and shining on the hook!

Remnant would have liked to jump for joy, I think. But she didn't. She caught the fish in her white paws, with a soft 'me-ow!' for 'thank you,' when the captain tossed it to her, and walked away to enjoy her dinner in a sheltered corner; after which she sought her young family to tell them, no about, about the fishing, while the good captain wound up his line and went whistling off to his own dinner.

A wise cat was Remnant. Down on her wharf she might miss some of the privileges enjoyed by her fashionable cottage friends, but which of them had a fresh fish dinner caught and served up every day for her own especial benefit?

MARGARET JOHNSON.

**DOLLIE ON GUARD.**

Cozy in a corner of the big lounge she lies. Sleeping in the shadows of her light-closed eyes. Dreaming of play and the long, long day. And her dimpled little dollie, who never runs away. For dollie keeps so still, and eyes opened And she couldn't go to sleep if she tried! Oh, you know, it wouldn't do for the two to doze. For rats might nibble the little girl's toes. Right through her shoes—or brother might come With the rubby-dub-dum of his new snare drum! So dollie, with pride, keeps her eyes open wide. And watches and waits at the little girl's side!

'Chicago Record.'

**A TOBOGGAN SLIDE IN  
QUEENSLAND.**

Tobogganning is a word which conjures up before the initiated visions of snow clad slopes and laughing pleasure seekers. The home of the sport is Canada, where it is one of the chief amusements of young and old in the winter season, when the hills are covered with snow. The artificial wooden slide with which dwellers in cities of warmer climates must perforce content themselves if they wish to enjoy the exhilarating effects of the wild rush down the sloping way is a much more dangerous affair, except where it ends in a reservoir of water, in which case the only risk is that of drowning. The toboggan itself consists of a plank turned up at one end, upon which the passenger sits with his or her feet pressed against the curved front and slides with fearful rapidity down the giddy incline.

The amusement is one that has great attractions for the Canadian youth, and even grown up people often indulge in a quiet slide. The ingenious young Queenslander would delight in it, but he has no snow to smooth off the asperities of his native hillsides. In spite of this, however, he may extract some measure of entertainment from a substitute, as the youth of Mount Perry, a small mining town in the Burnett district, have already learnt to do. In the township of Mount Perry there is a hill of micaeous schist, the summit of which is covered with succulent herbage. To reach this unnumbered goats have made a well-defined and straight track up the steep hillside. Here a small boy made a discovery. While searching for a straying 'mammie' one wet afternoon he reached the top of the track.

Now, decomposed micaeous schist is very slippery, and our hero felt his feet give way under him. To save himself he 'squatted' on the treacherous slope, and the next moment he was sliding to the bottom with fearful velocity. Down he went with a rush, expecting to be dashed to pieces at the foot of the hill; but as the steepness decreased he gradually came to a halt. He looked at his trousers, now irretrievably spoilt, and thought of the strap hanging behind the back door at home. But what was punishment compared with the delightful sensation he had just experienced! He would try it again! So up he climbed; and this time the descent was so exhilarating that away he went, full of his discovery, to convene a meeting of all the boys in the township. Soon they gathered in force, and then commenced a tobogganing carnival that lasted till dark.

There was much wailing that night, and the next day a council of war was held to devise means for carrying on the sliding without injury to their clothing. A short plank, with a cross piece for the feet, was adopted as a seat. A number of these were hurriedly made from porter cases, and all adjourned to the hill. But, alas! the rain had cleared, the ground was dry, and the boards would not slip. But the boys of Mount Perry are not easily daunted, and accordingly a squad of six were told off to procure some kitchen dripping, and after lubricating the under sides of the boards the tobogganing recommenced. As it could be carried on without detriment to the trousers it received the reluctant sanction of the parents, and in time excited their interest. Even the grown-up young ladies are now taking to it like ducks to water. Tobogganing is becoming quite the fashion, and about four o'clock every afternoon small boys and girls, youths and maidens, may be seen venturing their way to the hill with sliding boards under their arms, and tins of dripping in their hands.

Why should men be less courteous to their mothers, wives, and sisters, than to other women? That they are so, as a rule, cannot be denied. Courtesy bubbles forth to new acquaintances or guests, but somehow the same manner, the habit of thoughtfulness in regard to little things, is not worn in the every-day life in the home circle. A husband of only a few months' standing is not so careful about offering to his wife the attentions that were always ready for the fiancée. Brothers snub their sisters, and assume dictatorial airs towards their womankind, distinctly at variance with the elegant demeanour in use for other men's sisters.