

soon, as I have promised to go out there. How you must enjoy your ride to school every day—riding is such a delightful exercise, I think. What have you named your pony? There is nothing I should like better than to take a trip up to Pukekōhe; perhaps I shall some day, and then I will take advantage of your kind offer to show me all over the farm. I went out to Whitford once when the ostrich farm was there, and thought it very interesting. I am very fond of ferus indeed, and I shall be delighted if you can manage to bring me in some when you come to town. I hope the photographs you send me are not flattering.—Cousin Kate.

Dear Cousin Kate,—I was afraid that my letter would be too late for that week. It was very kind of you to put them both together, because it would be rather funny to have two letters in the "Graphic" in one week. If I post my letter on Wednesday night you will get it in time I suppose? We get the "Graphic" on Wednesday, so it does not give me much time to answer it, and especially now I am trying to write every week. Since I have lived in Auckland I have never had any cousins living here before, but when I lived in Wellington I had quite a number. I went out to Epsom last Friday afternoon, and I had a grand time; we played all sorts of games; I came home on Saturday night, so I could go to school on Monday. I see Cousin Muriel is not going to be called "Trixie" now. Cousin Kate, if you give me a nice name I will alter mine if you like, and it would not be so confusing. Cousin Muriel always writes such nice long letters, and I expect she is older than me. I must conclude this note, as it is late. With love to you and all the cousins, Cousin Muriel.

[Dear Cousin Muriel,—You are getting such a grand little correspondent that I shall soon be able to say you are as good as Cousin Gwen and the other Muriel. Yes, if you post your letter on Wednesday night it will always be in time for the following week's "Graphic." It does not give you very much time I know, but I am sorry to say that we can't put them in if they come any later. I wish we could. Did you live in Wellington long before you came to Auckland, and which place did you like the best? It is very nice of you, dear Muriel, to think of altering your name so as not to have any confusion. I think it would be a very good idea, if you really don't mind. Haven't you any other Christian name or pet name that we could call you; if not we will have to invent a pretty one for you. Yes, I think Cousin Muriel is older than you are, but I will ask her her age next time.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I read my letter in the "Graphic" this morning, and was very pleased with your long answer. I have induced Kathleen to write this morning, so I thought I would write to you too. Easter will soon be here now, won't it? I think I am rather looking forward to my first holidays at the college. We learn such a lot of extra lessons at the college, namely, algebra, German, singing, drawing and cooking. Do you think it would be nice to learn cooking, Cousin Kate? I have decided to learn it; we have not had a lesson yet, but I hope I shall like it. We have a German man, whose name is Herr Lemma, to teach us singing. He has not got a grain of patience in him, I'm sure, for he growls at us if we make a single mistake in singing. We are glad he only teaches us for one subject. News is very short here just now. I think my letter will be very uninteresting; it is full of nothing, as the saying goes. I hope I will have more news to tell you next time, so with my love to you from Cousin Ivy.

[Dear Cousin Ivy,—It was very good of you to ask Kathleen to write to me, and I got her letter yesterday, and have already answered it. Yours must have got mixed in the post, as it has only just come to me, and I have only about two minutes to answer it before the cousins' letters go to press. I expect you are looking forward to your Easter holidays; they are coming very close now. Do you think you like going to college as well as the other school? I think all girls should learn to cook; it

is so useful to them in after life, and it is very interesting too when one has learnt a little. Don't you take lessons in Euclid, Latin and French. We used to take all those when I was at school. I expect Herr Lemma requires a lot of patience to teach so many singing, don't you think so? It is so much easier to teach one at a time.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I was quite disappointed at finding my letter was not in last week's "Graphic," and I have jumped at two conclusions: (1) That you did not receive my letter, (2) or that you did not think it good enough to print, and this latter case I believe is the right one. Anyhow, I will try and write a better letter this time. Antonio's circus is in town, and although it has no horses or wild beasts, I think it is very good. The dogs and monkeys are common, but trained birds are a wonder. Lex McLean, the strong man, adds a great deal to the programme. He put a little piece of physical culture in last Saturday's evening paper, and I am sending you herewith a copy. The juggling and sword and fire-eating tricks finish the programme, and the time passes pleasantly away before you know where you are, as the saying goes. Besides the circus, Miss Fitzmaurice Gill's company have been playing here, and I went two nights out of three. I think "The Bank of England," which was played here the first night, and which is another adventure of Sherlock Holmes, is the best. Yesterday a train was run up the country on account of a church being opened for the first time. Quite a number went out, as the trains do not usually run here on Sundays. I liked the short story by Gwen Russell, and she has my congratulations for writing such a nice story, but tell her next time she writes a story to make the boys come out victorious. Now, dear Cousin Kate, I must close, with love to you and all the cousins.—Carle.

[Dear Cousin Carle,—I am sorry you were disappointed at not seeing your last letter in the "Graphic." I did write an answer to it, but afterwards I thought it better not to put them in, but just explain to you how it was. I think the subjects you tackled were a little beyond our criticism just yet, dear Carle, and I hope you won't mind my saying so. There seem to be quite a number of circuses travelling through New Zealand just now. I went to Fitzgerald's the other night, and I thought it really a splendid performance. They have a strong man in that, too, a Dr. Gordon, and he really does remarkable things, though I am sure he will injure himself some day. He lifts tremendous weights with his teeth, and afterwards lifts a horse right off the ground. I heard that the "Bank of England" was very good, but I didn't see them when they were here. I don't think it is good for boys to always come out victorious, do you? After a time, if they did get beaten, they would make a fuss over it, and that wouldn't be sportsmanlike, would it?—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I would very much like to become one of your cousins, if you will accept me. I take great interest in reading the letters. I have written about twelve letters before this one, but have not succeeded in getting to the end of one yet. Have you read "Grimm's Fairy Tales"? I like them very much indeed. My favourite authoress is Ethel Turner. I simply love her books. Can you play tennis, Cousin Kate? I can, and I like it awfully. I can also play croquet, but I cannot say that I like it as well as tennis. Mother, Mary, father and myself went to our school picnic yesterday, and enjoyed it immensely. Dear Cousin Kate, I must now stop, as it is late. And I hope you will excuse my short letter, but next time I will try and write a longer one.—I remain, your loving cousin, Amy. P.S.—Will you please send me a badge, as I would like one very much.—A.S.

[Dear Cousin Amy,—I shall be delighted to welcome you as one of my cousins, especially as I have heard such a lot about you, and have been expecting to hear from you for a very long time, and now that you have started I hope I shall hear from you very often. I used to be very fond of reading "Grimm's Fairy Tales" when I was little, and we have a number of them at home now, and I always like reading Ethel Turner's books

even now, though I am quite grown up. Have you read all of hers? I can play tennis and croquet both, but only a little, as I don't have very much time for games. Cousin Muriel told me in one of her letters that there was to be a school picnic to Motutapu, is that the same one as you went to? I am glad you enjoyed yourselves so much. Does the Bavarian Band ever come out as far as Remuera to play? They are playing just under my window now, and the music is so pretty. I will send you badge to-day, and hope you will like it.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I came to hear of you through Ivy, and also through the "Graphic," and thought it would be nice to correspond with you. Ivy has shown me her badge, and I was quite taken up with it. I would be very pleased if you could send me one, for I am sending an addressed envelope. I travel up and down to college every day by train, which is most enjoyable. The college is much different from our public schools, all the teachers wear long black gowns, which spoil the look of them, and also make us feel a little bit nervous until we get used to them. Most of the teachers are very nice and kind. Some of the girls have been away through mumps, which have been in Nelson for such a long time. We are both hoping that we will not get them on account of staying away from college. Now I must close, Cousin Kate, with love to you.—I remain, Cousin Kathleen.

[Dear Cousin Kathleen,—Ivy told me that you were thinking of writing to me, so I was very pleased indeed to get your letter this morning. I am glad you think the badges pretty, and I will post one to you to-day. I hope you will get it safely. I think it must be very nice for you and Ivy to travel up and down to college every day by train, but it won't be so nice in the winter time, will it? I hate starting out every morning in the cold and rain. Don't you like your teachers to wear black gowns? I think it looks so much nicer to see people in some kind of uniform. In Auckland some of the teachers wear their caps and gowns, and they look so nice in them. Mumps are horrible things to have. I have never had them, but I have seen lots of people with them, so I hope you and Ivy will not get them.—Cousin Kate.]

### Among the Kangaroos.

(By Frank S. Smith, Victoria.)

In my wanderings over New South Wales and Queensland I have come across any number of places where kangaroos were plentiful, but on a station in the extreme north-west of New South Wales I discovered what was apparently the kangaroo's paradise. I was on this station for several months, and during that time I had kangaroo-hunting enough to last for a lifetime. The station covered an extent of nearly a million acres. It consisted of fifteen "blocks," ten miles square apiece; each block therefore containing 100 square miles. A few of these immense paddocks had been subdivided, but most of them were of the original size. It was one of the biggest stations in New South Wales—big enough to make an English county out of—and the greater part of it was covered with scrub

and brush timber, and swarmed with kangaroos, emus and other native animals. So that the station, in spite of its huge area, only carried about 80,000 sheep.

When I was on the station the season had been a good one. Grass was abundant, and everything looked fresh and green. The dams were full of water, and all the creeks (rivulets) were running; it was a good time both for sheep and kangaroo. Witty men were employed constantly in riding round the paddocks, attending to the sheep, repairing the fences, and so on. There were about 200 head of horses kept; and in a place where "the next paddock" meant six or eight miles away, no one ever dreamed of walking. I was given a couple of good horses, and, as I could ride fairly well, the first thing I did was to have a run after kangaroos.

There were thousands of them, ranging from the little kangaroo-rat—not much bigger than his namesake—to the huge, red, "old-man" kangaroo, standing from six to seven feet high. In between these two extremes there were brown or black kangaroos, four to five feet high, wallabies, from three to four feet, and padymelons, rather smaller than the wallaby. Some sorts lived right in the scrub, while others had their home on the open plains, retiring to the scrub for shade sometimes, or for shelter when molested.

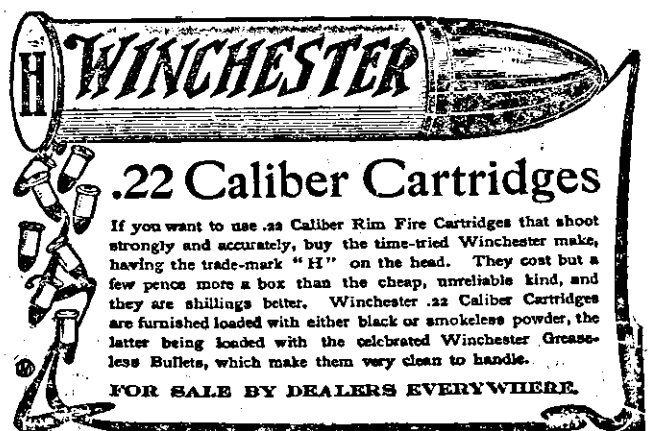
They all had two features in common—that is, they were all in good condition and could run like deer. To talk of a kangaroo "running" however, is, as everybody knows, a perversion of the term. Even when he is quietly feeding the kangaroo hops, and I have never seen a kangaroo move one hind leg alone, except when fighting or playing. Even in covering the smallest distance he hops, just like a sparrow. But when he is in a hurry, when a well-mounted horseman and a couple of good dogs are at his heels—well, then you see what a hop is like when it is done properly. As you gain on him he puts forth all his powers, and his flying leaps over the soft sandy ground are something prodigious. I have at various times measured these jumps, and have found them range from 20 to 30 feet, with an odd one over the 30 feet.

In one of the out-paddocks, through which a big creek ran, the kangaroos were becoming more than usually numerous. It was one of the best-grassed paddocks on the station, and that probably accounted for the fact. But the grass was wanted for the ewes and lambs, so half a dozen of us were given a few days to hurry the kangaroos off the place.

As the paddock was forty miles away from the homestead, we took provisions for four days with us on a packhorse, and half a dozen rugs to sleep in. In that beautiful climate no other protection was necessary at night. The weather was dry and warm, but not too hot, which is often the case.

We set off at sunrise, which was about four o'clock, and the six of us, who were all splendidly mounted, looked like a small Boer commando. We had eight dogs, most of them experts at the game, and a couple of Winchester repeating rifles. We couldn't go very fast, on account of the packhorse, who was well loaded; at any rate, we wanted to keep our horses fresh. It was therefore well on towards noon when we reached the bank of the creek where we were to pitch our camp.

A six hours' ride had given us the keenest of appetites, so the packhorse was



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