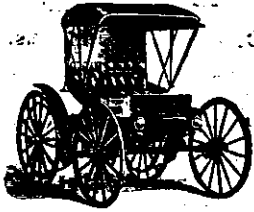


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**Children's Page**

**COUSINS' BADGES.**

Cousins requiring badges are requested to send an addressed envelope, when the badge will be forwarded by return mail.

**COUSINS' CORRESPONDENCE.**

Dear Cousin Kate,—I am glad to say that I received my badge safely. We had such fun on my chum's birthday; we played all kinds of games. I like skating very much, and we go every Saturday night, but last Saturday night I was skating and I fell. I think I have put my knee out, because I cannot stand on it, but I hope it will soon get better, for I have to miss school. My father is very bad too, he is in bed. I am writing this letter in half-dark, so the writing is not good, I must now conclude, with love to you and the other cousins.—Cousin IRIS.

[Dear Cousin Iris,—I am so very sorry to hear that you have had an accident, and sincerely hope that it is not as bad as you think. A displaced knee takes such a long time to get really strong again, and after the first time it is so easily put out again, so you will have to be very careful, and I don't think it would be wise for you to go skating again this winter. You seem to have rather an invalid household just now, I hope your father will soon be well again. You did not tell me what was the matter with him. Write again soon and let me know how you all are.—Cousin KATE.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I don't suppose you will excuse me this time for not having written before, but please do for just once; and I will try and write more frequently. Thank you very much for getting the post-cards, they were just what I wanted. A friend of ours has been staying with us for about a fortnight, but she has gone home to-day, I'm sorry to say, we shall miss her very much. A Taupo resident is leaving for Auckland to-day, and he and this letter will get there at the same time, won't they? Our school examination takes place this week, it is rather early this year.—Cousin ELLEN.

P.S.—I wish we could have over a page for Cousins' letters.—E.

[Dear Cousin Ellen,—I was wondering when you were going to write again, for I was anxious to hear whether you received the post-cards safely, and whether they were what you wanted, so I was very glad to get your note this morning. Had you duplicates of any of the post-cards I sent? I hope not! I expect you will miss your little friend, it was a pity she could not stay over the holidays, wasn't it? It does seem rather early for the examinations to take place, but there are so many schools to be examined that, of course, they must commence early in the year to get them all finished. Do you think you will get through all right?—Cousin KATE.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—Have we not been having most disagreeable weather? I think I dislike wind more even than rain, don't you? The other day I went to catch a car at Newmarket to go to town, and a gust of wind caught me just as I had one foot on the step, and blew me back, everyone laughed so when the conductor caught me by the arm, and absolutely pulled me in. Of course you have been to see Julius Knight Company. My brother took me to see "Robin Hood," and I enjoyed myself thoroughly. I am very anxious to see "Raffles" now, but I am only allowed to go out at night on Friday or Saturday when there are no lessons to do, so I do not know whether I shall manage to see it or not. Wasn't the scenery pretty in "Robin Hood"? I think when I am grown up and allowed to do what I like, I shall go to the theatre every night. I have been practising so hard lately, my music master has given me such a lovely new piece of music. I am going to try to play it perfectly, without any mistake by the end of this month.—Cousin MILDRED.

[Dear Cousin Mildred,—I was so pleased to get your letter this morning, it seems such ages since I heard from you last, you won't be so long before you write again next, will you? I quite agree with you that a really windy day is far worse than a rainy one, and when they both come together, as has been the case once or twice lately, I don't think people ought to be expected to go out. I think I must have been out on the same day that you had your experience getting into the car, I was trying to get along Manukau-road when one of those gusts caught me, and really for a minute I did not know where I was, nor do I know now where my umbrella got to, it just blew inside out and disappeared. However, I don't imagine it would be much use if I did recover it, so I am not grieving about it. Yes, I saw "Robin Hood," and liked it very much indeed. I haven't been to "Raffles" yet, but I have heard so much about it that I must try and get there either on Thursday or Friday evening. Have you seen "Monsieur Beaucaire"? If not, do try to see it, it is absolutely charming. I saw it when Julius Knight played it here before, and I liked it so much, that I have quite made up my mind to see it again. Have you seen the programmes arranged for the "Auckland Chamber Concerts"? They are to be exceptionally good I hear, so I suppose you are sure to go to them.—Cousin KATE.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I am just writing a few lines to let you know how we are getting on. I received the badge safely, and thank you very much. Sailor was the only dog we had, and he was a collie. Toddlers is the only cat we have now. I am eight years old, and my birthday is March the 30th; will you tell me when your birthday is? Please excuse my writing, as my hands are cold. It will be a very short letter this time. Have you ever been to see the procession? I suppose you have. I have not been to see it, but I would like

to go. We are having our holidays, and they will soon be over. I have not got much to say just now. I am very sorry that I did not write before, but I forgot all about it. I will close now with love to yourself, and all the cousins. I remain, yours truly, Cousin HAZEL.

[Dear Cousin Hazel,—Thank you very much for your nice little letter which I received this morning. Next time you write dear Hazel, will you try and remember that the Cousins' letters are to be written only on one side of the paper. Were you not very sorry to part with Sailor? especially as he was the only dog you had. My birthday is in the beginning of August, so you must be sure and write to me then, and wish me many happy returns of the day. I have been to see a good many processions, but I don't know which particular one you mean. Do you mean the Labour Day Procession? I hope you will have a good time and enjoy your holidays; you must write and tell me how you spent them.—Cousin KATE.]

**The Story of the Forty Little  
Ducklings.**

The forty little ducklings  
Who lived up at the farm,  
They said unto each other,  
"Oh! the day is very warm!"  
They said unto each other,  
"Oh! the river's very cool!"  
The duck who did not seek it now  
Would surely be a fool!"

The forty little ducklings,  
They started down the road,  
And waddled, waddled, waddled  
Was the gait at which they go:  
(That line was not good grammar,  
You may change it if you choose,  
But one cannot stop for trifles  
When inspired by the Muse.)

They waddled and they waddled,  
And they waddled on and on,  
Till one remarked, "Oh! deary me!  
Where is the river gone?  
We asked the Ancient Gander,  
And he said 'twas very near  
He must have been deceiving us,  
Or else himself, I fear."

They waddled and they waddled,  
Till no further they could go;  
Then sat upon a mossy bank  
They sat them in a row.  
They took their pocket-handkerchiefs,  
And wept a little weep,  
And then they tucked away their heads,  
And then they went to sleep.

There came along a farmer,  
With a basket on his arm,  
And all those little ducklings  
He took back to the farm;  
He put them in their little beds,  
And wished them sweet repose,  
And fastened mustard plasters  
On their little webby toes.

Next day these little ducklings,  
They were very, very ill;  
Their mother sent for Doctor Quack,  
Who gave them each a pill.  
But soon as they recovered,  
The first thing that they did  
Was to peck the Ancient Gander,  
Till he ran away and hid.

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