



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 haven't read any of the books you mentioned in your last answer, but I have wanted to read "In the Golden Days" and "Romola" for some time. Perhaps I will, although I have waited for a long time. I have just finished "In the Lion's Mouth," by E. Price; it is a pretty story, chiefly about the French Revolution, and an English boy and girl's adventures in it. I am reading now "The Pioneer Boy, and How He Became President"; it is the life of Lincoln, and as far as I've got it seems to be interesting. Now we are all back at school I can't think of anything to say, as I don't go anywhere very often, Saturday being the only day to go. All the other cousins seem to have plenty of news, and are always going or have been somewhere, so that they can tell you. Cousin Lorna writes such an interesting letter, she has plenty to say.

There is a prize of 15/- to be given for a composition written on "Girl Life in New Zealand." I think it would be nice to try it. It is advertised in the "Atom." It is not a very good subject, as there is plenty to say and only 3½ pages of foolscap allowed. I must stop now, with love, from Cousin Alison.

Dear Cousin Alison,—I was very much interested to hear of your composition competition. Do you know, I believe you could say quite a lot about girls' life in New Zealand even in 3½ pages of foolscap. Let me give you a little advice. First write out your rough copy of what you wish to say. Then see by how much that exceeds the 3½ sheets at your disposal. Having done this, begin to score out what seems the least interesting of your remarks. Then see that you have not repeated yourself at all. Finally, try and see if in any of your sentences you could not convey your meaning in, say, half the number of words. "What a lot of trouble," you will say, but if you are fond of composition you will find real pleasure in doing it. It is quite exciting. Try and see. Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate, It is a most lovely day to-day, and as I will be going to church this afternoon, I thought I would take the opportunity of writing to you this morning.

About a fortnight ago there was an exceptionally big flood in the valley, caused by the very heavy rain. On the Monday it was very showery, but on that evening it started to rain very hard, and continued to rain heavily and steadily all that night. On getting up and going out on Tuesday morning, almost the first thing that was noticed was that the river had risen so high that it was flowing over its banks. It still continued to rain on, and of course the river was rising higher and higher. At about 11 o'clock it began lightning and thundering, and then the rain began to cease a little. By this time the water was flowing all over our paddocks, as well as over the other farmers' paddocks. You can imagine the height of it, when I say that the five of our cows that were put on the flat had to swim from one paddock to another, over ditches and fences, and on the other days they are feeding on those same paddocks. The farmers were unable to go to the creamery on that morning, on account of the water flowing all around as well as in it. The school could not be held, as none of the school children could cross the river. There was a great deal of damage done, as the water flooded and washed holes in the road, one being eight feet deep. At night a light was put up, to warn the people of the dangerous state of the road. Many farmers even had some of their apples washed out of their orchards, and others had their young grass and potatoes spoiled. I must now conclude.—From Cousin Bertha.

Dear Cousin Bertha,—What a dreadful flood that was. Your description of it is most realistic, and well, I am sure, interest all the cousins. How sorry I am for all those who have suffered sad losses, but I am glad no lives were lost at any rate. A farmer's life seems full of disappointments and trials, does it not? Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—Thank you very much for the badge. I think it is very pretty. My brother has gone up to Auckland. Our examination is on April 30. Have you ever been down to Opunake? I suppose you haven't, because it is such a small town. Have you ever read "East Lynne" and "Verner's Pride," by Mrs Henry Wood? I think they are the best books I ever read except history books. I think I will try for the competition. My name is Emily, and I am 12 years and 7 months old.—I remain, your affectionate cousin, Emily.

Dear Cousin Emily,—"East Lynne" is certainly a very fine book, but very sad, do not you think? I have often seen it as a play at the theatre, and the people cry till their noses are quite red. They seem to like to do so, but I always think there are enough real sorrows in life without weeping over imaginary ones. I am glad you liked the badge.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I seem to have such a lot of news to tell you, but I don't know how to begin. I think I shall first tell you about the salmagundi; it was such fun. When we got to school we were not able to go into the room until it struck seven. But before going into the

room we all had to take a card from a basket, and these all had numbers on. Instead of a lady and gentleman going round the room together, it was two gentlemen together, and two ladies. On some of the tables were potatoes, which you had to put in a bowl with a little salt spoon, and to use your left hand. On another you had to make a house of cards, etc. It was lovely fun, and we all enjoyed it very much. I wonder if you get the "Strand," because in it is a lovely story, called "The Round of the Baskervilles." Oh, it is so exciting! I have been reading a lovely book, called "The First Violin." It is so interesting, but it had a lot of German words that I could not understand. I was very interested in that story which was going through the "Graphic," called the "Childerbridge Mystery." I am sorry now that it is finished. My music teacher had a concert yesterday, and all her pupils were asked to play. We were all very nervous, but we got through somehow. There were two little boys that played a duet, and they were only about six or seven. When they came out they were fighting, because one said the other made the most mistakes. The other said it was not true, and that he was only waiting for him, because he would get behind. I will tell Cousin Aileen. Most likely I will see her this afternoon. Wasn't it unkind of the teachers they did not give us a holiday to see the Contingent go. I suppose they think that the going away of Contingents is too common. School is as nice as usual, and we are going to break up in two weeks, so we will soon have our holidays. I went to see a cinematograph a little while ago. It was so nice. It showed the Prince and Princess of Wales going through New Zealand. The weather is nearly as cold as winter, so we cannot go to the baths, but gymnastics have begun instead, and I like that much better. I must now stop, with love to all the cousins and to yourself, Cousin Kate.—From Cousin Zaidee.

Dear Cousin Zaidee,—The salmagundi seems to have been capital—much nicer than the dish after which it is called, I am sure. I think some of the cousins who read about it will try and get their elders to arrange one for them. "The First Violin" is really an excellent novel. Have you read any of Norris's books? "Major and Minor" is capital, and so is "My Friend Jim." Christie Murray is a novel-writer you can safely patronise. "Val Strange" and "Joseph's Coat" are both particularly good. I liked your letter very much indeed. Mind you keep up writing regularly.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I saw the competitions for the cousins in last week's "Graphic," and should very much like to become one, so that I may be able to compete with the rest. In your answer to Cousin Alison's letter you said you had read both "Donovan" and "We Two," by Edna Lyall. I have read "We Two," and think it lovely, but I have not yet been able to read "Donovan," as each time I have inquired for it at the library it has not been in, but I hope to get it soon. Have you read "Teens" and "Girls Together"? by

Louise Mack. They are very interesting, and amusing. Have you ever been to New Plymouth? It is such a pretty little place, the greatest attraction being the Recreation Grounds. It has three lakes, one with just a small island in the middle, another covered with water-lilies, and which has in the middle a fountain, while the third and largest has about four islands in it, and two pretty bridges, which span it from side to side. On the borders of the lakes are all kinds of ferns and wild-flowers. The grounds themselves are also covered with ferns, the punga being the chief specimen. There are three caves, and if you go there at night they are most brilliantly lighted with glow-worms. It is such a lovely sight. Another pretty place is the waterworks. It is surrounded by bush, and is a most delightful place to have a picnic in. But I will tell you about it next time I write, so hoping you will accept me as a cousin, I remain, with love (Cousin) Dora. P.S.—Please could you send me a badge.

Dear Cousin Dora,—You have doubtless got my note telling you how pleased I am to have you for a cousin. I am sure you will like "Donovan," when you get it. It is a charming book. I know New Plymouth and the Recreation Grounds very well, and think they are lovely. I would love to go up Mount Egmont some day. I expect you have been. Would you send a photo for the cousins' page? I want some of the cousins to start.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I have for some time wished to become a cousin, and so I am now writing you my first letter. I see that in last week's "Graphic" you are asking some of the cousins to send you their names and addresses, so I will put mine below this. I used to have two canaries, but they fought until they killed each other, like the "Killenny Cats." It seems rather late to write about the Easter holidays, but it is all I have to tell you. I went up to Te Aroha on the Thursday, and enjoyed myself very much; the baths especially were very nice. I came down to Auckland on the Wednesday after Easter. I must close now, with love to all the cousins. I remain, yours sincerely, Grant.

Dear Cousin Grant,—I am very pleased to have you for a cousin. Te Aroha is very nice, is it not? A few days there always seem to do me so much good. Did you drink the water, as well as bathe. It is not nice at first, but I really got to like it when I was there for a week or two. Did you go up the glen to the waterfall? It is very pretty.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I did not see my last letter in the "New Zealand Graphic" this week. My brother, who is sick, is laid up in bed again, because Dr. Wheeler cut his arm open two or three days ago. The Kouta mill cut the first log yesterday. It will be starting work in about four days. Our examination is coming off about Thursday week, and I do not know whether I will pass. I have got two more young kittens, and I want you please to try and find names for them. Now I must end this short note, with love to yourself and all the rest of the cousins, so good-bye.—I remain, yours truly, Cousin Newton.

P.S.—These letters that I am going to write now are for the competition for the most letters written within the three months.

Dear Cousin Newton,—I am keeping all the letters the cousins write in a book, so that I can see who writes most regularly. Yours are safely pasted in with the others. I will try and think of names for your kittens next week. I called two dogs Rags and Tatters, but that is not so good a name for quiet cats, is it?—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I am so glad to see that there are so many of the cousins writing. I expect that is why mine did not appear in the