



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,—Having read the letters from the cousins' page in last week's "Graphic," I feel I would like very much to become one of the band, and I take great pleasure in writing to you, hoping you will send me a badge. I am twelve years old, and in the sixth class, at the district school, which is a mile distant from my home. I must say good-bye now; hoping you will accept me.—I remain, yours truly, Minnie.

[Dear Cousin Minnie,—I have just sent off your badge, and hope you will like it, and of course I am delighted to welcome you to our band of cousins. I hope you will try and write often even if the letters are short. I wish all the cousins would understand that I would far rather have a short letter than none at all. I quite understand there is often a difficulty about writing a long letter. I was in Whakatane many years ago, and thought it very pretty, and I had a long ride to Matata, along the beach most of the way, and I shall never forget what a glorious gallop we had. Are you fond of riding? I daresay you ride to school sometimes.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I saw by the "Graphic" that I had won a prize, but I have not had time to write to you, as our servant has been for her holidays. I must have forgotten to put my address in the letter. We are having such terrible weather here lately. I have been staying at the Thames for a few days for the St. Francis' bazaar. I was helping in one of the stalls. As it is getting very late I will have to bring my letter to a close. With best love to all the cousins, not forgetting yourself. From Cousin Millie.

[Dear Cousin Millie,—I was very pleased to get your letter, for I have had your prize here, and not been able to post it to you. I hope you will like it. A great many cousins sent in drawings after the competition had closed, so I think I must try another. Did you enjoy yourself at the Thames, and was the bazaar a success? Tell me next time you write.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—May I become one of your cousins? I like reading the children's page very much. Not many boys write to you, do they, Cousin Kate? I am ten years old, and am in the third stan-

dard. I hope I will pass my examination, which will be held about September. We had a trial examination today. Will you please send me a badge? I would like to live in Auckland. I must try to write regularly now that I have begun. We have no cats, but we have a dog and some fowls. We do not get any eggs at all just now. The fowls have not been laying for a long time. They must be laying away somewhere. Now I must close, so good-night. From Cousin Jack.

[Dear Cousin Jack,—It was pleasant to get a letter from you asking to become a cousin, for, as you say, not many boys write. I only wish they would, for I understand boys very well, and if they would tell me about themselves and their difficulties and their pleasures I might be able to help them. What sort of fowls do you keep? Probably they are now moulting, and that is the reason they do not lay. If you feed them regularly and give them some hot food, polard and scraps, mixed with boiling water, they will soon start again. Make them some comfortable nests and they won't lay away. I am very fond of fowls, and will be interested to hear of yours.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I again take the opportunity of writing to you. We are having very cold weather just now. There was a football match here to-day. There were two matches, and our town won one game. I did not go, but my mother and sister went. I have a new music teacher now. She has such a lot of pupils. We are losing our lady school teacher. We will miss her very much. She is such a nice girl. Was not that a terrible fire which happened in Wyndham street? Those poor men that were burnt must have felt it. You asked me what my favourite book and author were. Really, I could not tell you. Have you read, "My Happy Half Century"? It is such a nice book. I have read "Melbourne House," "Little Women," "What Katy did," and several others. Do you think people will be so enthusiastic over ping-pong this year? I do not think they will be, do you? I have not had any driving lessons yet; the horse we have is so slow. We are going to have another one trained for the sulky. I will send you my photo to put in the "Graphic" as soon as I get it taken; I am going to have it taken soon. Next time I come to Auckland I must come and see you. Are you fond of fancy work? I am very fond of it; I like drawn thread work and patch-work. I would like very much to have a camera and take snaps. Do you know of any place in town where you can take lessons? I really have no more news to tell you, so I must conclude with love to you and all the cousins.—Cousin Annie.

[Dear Cousin Annie,—Your letter this week is most interesting, and I thank you very much for it. I shall be very glad to have your photo, and hope it will not be long before it is taken. Photography is a nice hobby, and a lot of girls go in for it now. You could easily get a few lessons in Auckland. I am not very fond of fancy work, for I never get time for it.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—The midwinter holidays are very near, and I suppose that all the cousins that go to school are very pleased, but for a wonder I am not waiting very anxiously for them, as I do not think that I shall be able to spend them as pleasantly as I had anticipated, because the weather is so miserable. Last Saturday afternoon I

went to a very pleasant "At Home" given by Lady Ranfurly in the Government House. There was a very large assemblage of the people of Auckland, and there were three bands in attendance—two on the lawn and one in the room in which afternoon tea was served. The Mayor addressed the people, and presented Lady Ranfurly with two beautiful pictures painted by Mr Goldie. In return Lady Ranfurly spoke a few words of thanks amid great applause. Ladies Ranfurly, Constance Knox, and Lord Northland left Auckland to-day. Do you not think that the fire in Wyndham-street, in which three persons lost their lives, was very terrible. There is a small picture in the paper showing a gentleman rescuing a woman and her child.—With love from Cousin Mabel.

[Dear Cousin Mabel,—What a funny little girl you must be not to care for holidays. I used to want holidays all the time when I was little. Lady Ranfurly's At Home was very nice, and the music was lovely. We shall all miss Her Ladyship very much when she leaves New Zealand, shan't we? She has been so kind to everyone. I think a fire is always a dreadful thing, and when people are killed or injured it is too awful to think about. It is a warning to us to be very careful ourselves, isn't it? Well, Mabel, I have some more letters to answer, so must not write any more to you just now. I hope you will have fine weather for your holidays and enjoy them very much.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I had such a pleasant day on Saturday afternoon. I went to Lady Ranfurly's presentation, and had some good fun. Shall I tell you how I spent the afternoon? Well, I started at three o'clock from home with my sister, and reached Government House at half-past three p.m., for we had been walking very slowly. There was a terrible crowd waiting at the door, so we had to wait till the crowd was inside, but it was not for long, for a kind gentleman made room for us. We had to go through a large writing-room—I think it was—and then round to an apartment where Lady Ranfurly and His Excellency were standing. A gentleman called our names, and Her Ladyship shook hands with us. We next went through some more rooms till we came into a room where the tea-tables were set. Afternoon tea had begun, but I did not know that, and on going up to see what was the matter one of the waiters handed me a plate of fruit salad. I then knew that it was tea, and my sister and friends joined me. After tea we went round and had a look at the pictures. A gentleman spoke about them, and then Lady Ranfurly spoke in reply. There was much clapping and cheers for her. I have nearly forgotten to tell you that I call my doll Flossy, for it has such a pretty face. Did you go to the presentation, dear cousin? If you did, I hope you enjoyed it as well as I did. Next Friday we break up for our midwinter holidays, and I will be glad, for I am so fond of holidays, and once we have them I never wish to give them up. I have forgotten to ask you to excuse by uninteresting letter. Now I must end with my best love to you and all the cousins.—Cousin Ivy.

[Dear Cousin Ivy,—I am so glad you enjoyed yourself so much last Saturday. You must have felt quite grown up going to Lady Ranfurly's "At Home," didn't you? I went too, but I didn't see you there. Perhaps if you had worn your badge I should have. How are you going to amuse yourself during your holidays? You will be able to make Flossie some nice new winter clothes, won't you? I don't think your letter at all uninteresting, Ivy, dear, and hope you will write again soon and tell me all about your holidays.—Cousin Kate.]



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