



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.—Just a few lines to ask if you would kindly accept me as a cousin. We get the "Graphic" regularly, and I take a delight in reading the cousins' letters. Dear Cousin Kate, if you have a badge to spare I would like to have one. I am eight years old, and I go to the Avondale school. I am in standard one. We are going to have a concert next Friday week in the Public Hall out here. It will be a very nice one, and I hope you will come out and see it. I have not much to tell you this week. With love to you and all the cousins—I remain, your Cousin Robert.

[Dear Cousin Robert.—Of course I shall be very pleased indeed to add you to my list of cousins, and I am very glad indeed that you like reading the cousins' letters. I will post a badge to you at once, and I hope you will like it. Is it a school concert you are going to have? I should like to come out to it very much indeed, but I am afraid it is rather too far; but you must tell me all about it in your next letter. I hope it will be a great success, and that you will have a fine night for it.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate.—Thank you very much for the badge. I received it on November 19th, and I was very pleased with it. I think it looks nice with the blue pin. Since I last wrote to you it has been raining here very hard, and the men cannot go to work. If it rains when we are in school the master lets us play games in school. We play "touch wood" and other games that make us warm. The boys play leap-frog and throwing a cricket ball round. I am trying to get some other girls to write, if you don't mind. This letter is not very long, but I will have to close with love to all the cousins and yourself.—Cousin Ina.

[Dear Cousin Ina.—I am so glad you received your badge safely, and were pleased with it. I think the ornamental pins are a great improvement, don't you? It seems to have been raining hard everywhere just lately, but your schoolmaster must be very nice to let you play games in the schoolroom. Don't the cricket balls knock over the ink-pots, though, sometimes? I shall be very pleased indeed if any of your little friends care to write to me. I am getting such a number of new cousins now that I shall have to have a whole

"Graphic" to myself to answer their letters in soon, because there won't be room for them in the Cousins' Page. How do you play touch wood? I don't think I have ever seen that game.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate.—Please will you accept me as a cousin, as I am very fond of reading the cousins' letters. My father does not take the "Graphic," but my uncle lends them to us. I am eleven years old, and I am in the third standard at school. I have got a bird, and I am trying to teach it to talk. Our Sunday-school anniversary is going to be held next Sunday, and I am going to help with it. We have got two dear little kittens, they are very playful, and they are into all kinds of mischief. Dear Cousin Kate, I am sending an addressed envelope for a badge—that is, if you will accept me. I did not go to school to-day, as it was too wet. I have been away for a week up at my cousin's place, and I enjoyed myself very much. One night my cousin and I went fishing, and we never got any fish. Dear Cousin Kate, we have got a lot of flowers out, especially roses. Our cherries are nearly ripe; I expect you like cherries. I have no brothers or sisters, so you see I have to amuse myself as best I can at times. I am very fond of reading. I have a mother, but she is very ill. A year ago she went to Rotorua, but it did not do her any good. My father has got a young lady keeping house for him, and I am very fond of her; and we would not like her to leave us, but she is not likely to until she gets married, and then she will be my aunt. I learn music, and my Aunt Rosa teaches me, and I have a lesson every week. Dear Cousin Kate, I have nothing more to tell you, so I will conclude with love.—I remain, yours truly, Cousin Ine.

[Dear Cousin Ine.—I shall be very glad indeed to have you for one of my cousins, and I will post a badge to you to-day. What sort of bird is it that you are trying to teach to talk. I thought parrots and magpies were the only birds in New Zealand that could be taught to talk. Isn't it horrid to go fishing and never catch anything? It always seems such a waste of time. We have a great number of roses out, too, but the heavy rain we have been having lately has spoilt most of them. You are quite right. I do like cherries very much indeed. I expect you do too, don't you? I am so sorry your mother is such an invalid. What is the matter with her? Would you like to have some brothers and sisters to play with? I hope you will like your badge, dear Ine, and that your anniversary Sunday will be fine.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate.—I am writing to you for permission to become one of your cousins. I suppose you have heard of the town I live in. It is famous on account of its marvellous gold mines, the returns from which are unsurpassed by any mine in the world. The majority of people do not care to reside in Waikoi on account of its peculiar climate, but after one has lived there for a few months one gets used to it. Now, I will tell you about my pets. I have a cat called Melba. It is such a pretty little thing. And I have a dog called Blackberry. I am teaching him to do some tricks. He will sit up on his hind legs and beg for food. I went down to a place called Owharua last week. It is about eight miles distant from where we live. I had an ideal time, and am looking forward to another trip of a similar nature.

I must conclude now, with fond love.—Your loving cousin, Alf.
Hoping to see this letter in print.

[Dear Cousin Alf.—Of course I shall be very glad to have you for a cousin, and I hope you will be a regular correspondent. I think most people in New Zealand have heard about Waikoi. I have been there once or twice, and the last time I was there we went down the Waikoi mine and over the battery too. I didn't much like going down in that horrible sort of cage at first, but I got used to it before we got to the bottom, and didn't mind coming up in it at all. Why did you call your cat Melba? Has she got a specially nice voice? Well, Alf, I am afraid I must stop now, as I am rather busy this morning.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate.—Just fancy, this is the second letter running that I have written to you. You will have to use a slang expression to "chalk it up." I won't be able to write a long letter this time, as I have no news to tell you. Last week we had such hot weather that we were all nearly stifled, and this week it is so cold and windy that I am almost freezing. Everybody has gone back to winter jackets again. I do hope it won't last long. Such a crowd of New Plymouth people have been in Auckland lately, and they have all been to see the Musgrove Company. I do wish they would come here. What we have to look forward to now is the coming of Ada Crossley. I am hoping to hear her, but I do not know if I will be able to. Cousin Kate, have you read a book called the "Pearl Maiden"? I forget whom it is by, but father says it is after the style of "Darkness and Dawn," so I am sure it will be nice. I haven't read it myself yet, but I hope to soon. I hear there is a new book out by Ethel Turner. I do like her books so much, don't you? Another authoress I like is L. T. Meade. I saw in the "Graphic" that one of the cousins had "Seven Maids" by her. Oh! I did envy her, as I have tried all over the town to get that particular one, and failed. You may imagine I was awfully disappointed. I wish you would tell me of a good book to read, as I haven't read a nice one for ages. I hope you do not mind my discussing my dislikes and likes. I am so sorry I have nothing to tell you, but I hope you won't mind for once; so with love to the cousins and yourself I will conclude.—From Cousin Dora.

[Dear Cousin Dora.—I wish I might have to chalk up the fact of your having written two weeks running oftener, say about twice a month. I am not greedy you know, but I really do like a lot. Has not the weather been horrid lately? One cannot depend on it for more than two minutes at a time, and I am getting tired of being wet through two and three times a day. I have met a great many New Plymouth people in town the last week or two. I suppose most of them have come up to be present at the two Taranaki weddings. The one last week was one of the prettiest I have seen, I think, though it was such a horrid day. The Musgrove Company is such a large one, and they have such a quantity of scenery, that I don't think they could put it on in the New Plymouth stage. We are all looking forward to hearing Ada Crossley, too. I met her when she passed through Auckland on her way to Sydney, and thought her charming. No, I haven't read the "Pearl Maiden"; in fact, I have hardly read anything but papers and magazines lately. I seem to have had no time, so I am afraid I can't recommend a book to you this week; but I'll try and think

of some for you next time.—Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate.—Last Saturday evening we went to "As You Like It." I liked it better, I think, than all the others. Were we not lucky to go to all of them? We have played croquet quite a lot of times this season; we even played last Saturday and Sunday between the showers. Yesterday afternoon we went out to Onehunga and back again in the trams. Are they not lovely? Isn't it lovely to think there is only about a fortnight's more lessons, and then we are going up to Rotorua. We are going to be bridesmaids in February—my sister, two other girls, and myself. I think we are going to have wreaths, and veils thrown back over our heads. I think they'll be lovely, don't you? I received such a lovely box of chocolates the other day. It is a sort of brown box, and on the lid is a photograph of five little dogs all raised, and the chocolates are also lovely, you may be sure. Isn't it lovely to have some fine weather again? I think last week was one of the worst weeks we have ever had at this time of the year, don't you? I am counting the days to my sister coming over now, and you can't imagine how excited we are, especially as there are only ten more days. I am sorry to say she is a very bad sailor. Wasn't the forest scene in "As You Like It" lovely? The jester was very funny, wasn't he? Now, dear Cousin Kate, I am afraid I must close this short uninteresting note (I really can't call it a letter) with much love to you and all the cousins.—I remain, Cousin Gwen.

[Dear Cousin Gwen.—You were very lucky indeed to go to all three plays. I went to them all, too, but I liked "Twelfth Night" better than the other two. The scenery was simply lovely in all three, wasn't it? I don't think I have ever seen prettier. Won't it spoil your lawn rather playing croquet when the ground is so soft? I am very fond of going out to Onehunga and back in the trams, but I like going out in the evening best, because there is not so much traffic then, and they simply fly along. I think you will all look very nice indeed in bridesmaids' dresses, as I don't know who is going to be married in February. I expect you are counting the days to your sister's arrival, but you have not much longer to wait, have you?—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate.—I am just a little boy, only five years old. I don't go to school, but my brothers and sisters do. My sister is writing this for me. Will you send me a badge, please? We get the "Graphic" every week. I like looking at Jungle Jinks. — I remain, Cousin Ivan.

[Dear Cousin Ivan.—I am very pleased indeed to have you for one of my little cousins, and when you go to school I shall want you to write a letter to me in your own handwriting. Do you think you would like to go to school? You would have a lot of other little boys of your own age to play with there, and that is rather nice, isn't it? I hope you will like your badge, which I have sent to Percy for you. You must wear it some times to remind you of me.—Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate.—Winnie has just written to you and told you all that is worth telling, so I have not much to write. Baby Neville is growing such a big boy, and he is now shortened. He makes the queerest little noises, and his favourite expression seems to be "googe-goo." I don't know whether there is such a word, but I assure you Neville seems to think there is. Neville has got such a pretty brown go-cart, and sometimes on a very nice day mamma lets me take him out. Winnie and I went to "Arizona" with papa. It was grand, and I think Mary Van Buren and Eva Dennison lovely actresses. Have you ever seen this play, Cousin Kate? I think Winnie told you we were in a mandolin band. We are all going to play at a large concert next week. Our band colours are scarlet and orange, and they make our mandolines look very pretty. We are having very wintry weather just now. I do wish it would clear up and be fine, for it is very miserable to be kept inside all day. Christmas will not be long in coming now,