



To Our Young Readers.

Our young readers are cordially invited to enter our wide circle of cousins, by writing to

COUSIN KATE,
"The Weekly Graphic,"
Shotland Street, Auckland.

Cousin Kate is particularly desirous that those boys and girls who write should tell her whatever interests them to tell, about their games, their pets, their holidays, or their studies. Their letters and Cousin Kate's replies will appear in the "Weekly Graphic" in the Children's Pages.

All cousins under the age of fourteen are accounted Junior Cousins, all above that age Senior Cousins. Cousins may continue writing until quite grown up, and after, if they wish to do so; for we are proud to number among our cousins some who have passed out of their teens.

A badge will be sent to each new cousin on the receipt of an addressed envelope.

COUSINS' CORRESPONDENCE.

Pahiatua.

DEAR COUSIN KATE,—I would very much like to become one of your "Graphic" cousins. I always take great interest in reading the "Graphic" letters. My home is in Pahiatua, but I am attending St. Patrick's College, Wellington, although just now I am home for the holidays. We return to school this week. I am 14 years old, and this year am going up for the Civil Service examination. I am going to study to become a doctor. My father has a motor car which I have learned to drive, and during the holidays we have done a good bit of touring in the country. As the weather here is very hot I spend most of my time swimming and trout fishing. I have got a very nice horse, and when the weather is not too warm, I go out riding. I enclose envelope for badge. I would like a blue one please. With love to all the cousins.—From your affectionate Cousin OSCAR.

[Dear Cousin Oscar.—I heartily welcome you as a cousin. I have sent off your badge. What delightful holidays you seem to have had. Swimming and trout fishing are ideal pastimes for this hot weather. Now you will be back at work, and I trust will be successful at your examination. I am glad you are going to be a doctor. It gives one so many opportunities of helping others.—Cousin Kate.]

Otakau.

Dear Cousin Kate.—My big sister is writing this letter for me. I am four years old. Will you please send me a red badge? With love.—From Cousin JACK.

[Dear Little Cousin Jack.—We are all very pleased to have you for a cousin. Your red badge is posted to you. What a kind big sister you have, to write such a nice little letter for me. Will you love you any pets? With love.—From Cousin KATE.]

Otakau.

Dear Cousin Kate.—My little brother Jack saw my badge yesterday, and he said he wanted one too, so I am going to write a letter for him. I hope you had a happy Christmas, and will have a bright New Year. We had a few presents off our trees a few days ago. When the fruit is ripening the birds have "festiva" every day. With love.—From Cousin KATIE.

[Dear Cousin Katie.—I was glad to hear from one of our far-away cousins again. Thank you for your good wishes. I had a very happy Christmas, and hope you had also. How do you spend Christmas in Africa? Do you have many festivities peculiar to the country, or do you try to keep up in the old English style.—Cousin Kate.]

Tokomaru.

Dear Cousin Kate.—I take great interest in reading the "Graphic" letters, and should be delighted if you would accept me as a

cousin. I shall be counted as a senior cousin, as I am over fourteen. The weather is very hot and dry here. I am not very fond of reading, not unless I get hold of a very interesting book. I like Nelson's books very much. I have read several of them. I have been to several picnics this season. We have a nice bush, and a water-fall creek, and we spend many a pleasant day in the bush. We often go fishing for small fish, and go into the bush and gather ferns. The flower garden is looking very nice at present. But would look better if we had a good rain on it. Please, Cousin Kate, will you write to me and let me know if you will accept me as a cousin? Please send me a blue badge. Best love to all the cousins, not forgetting yourself.—From Cousin GLADYS.

[Dear Cousin Gladys.—Welcome as a cousin. I am glad you have been enjoying the cousins' letters, and that you are now giving them an opportunity to enjoy yours. How many varieties of ferns have you found in your bush? It would be delightful if the water-fall in this hot weather.—Cousin Kate.]

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Tokomaru.

Dear Cousin Kate.—May I become one of your cousins? I am eight years old, and I am in the first standard. My sister and I ride two and a half miles on a little black pony. I have been wishing to become one of your cousins. My uncle takes the "Graphic" every week. I have two sisters and one brother. We have got a parrot, which only talks at night, and a cat, two pet lambs, two dogs. I would like a red badge, please, Cousin Kate. Well, I must bring this letter to a close now, as it is getting late. Best love to all the cousins, not forgetting yourself.—From Cousin IRIS.

[Dear Cousin Iris.—I am very pleased to write to you. What a fortunate little girl you are to have a little black pony to ride to school on, and a sister to go with you and take care of you. What a funny parrot to prefer talking at night. You have a nice lot of pets, but I suppose the lambs will soon be too big to be petted. With love, from Cousin Kate.]

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[My Dear Cousins.—I fear the holidays have made some of you a little bit lazy. There have been very few letters the last week or two, except from cousins wishing to join our society. I hope you have all had a happy, healthy holiday, and that those of you who have been away have found all your pets well when you returned home. I knew one family who were away for three weeks. When they came back their poor little fox terrier (although left in good care) was nearly starved. He fretted so, he would not eat, but used to spend most of his time running about the roads to look for his young masters. He is happy and well now, and sometimes wants to go with the boys when they go to school, but only has to be told, "Boys going to school, poor puppy would be whipped if he went." Then he gives a funny little whine, lies down on the verandah, and watches them away.—Cousin Kate.]

Old Lady (in a shoe shop): "Have you felt slippers?"

Small Boy Assistant (solemnly) "Yes, ma'am; many a time."

Sailing as a Fine Art.

Continued from page 38.

will awaken the same response of pleasurable emotion or conscientious endeavour. And the sailing of any vessel always receding from us on its way to the overshadowed Valley of Oblivion. The taking of a modern steamship about the world—though one would not minimise its responsibilities—has not the same quality of intimacy with nature, which, after all, is an indispensable condition to the budding up of an art. It is a less personal and more exact calling; it is less arduous, but it is also less gratifying in the sense of close communion between the artist and the medium of his art. It is, in short, less a matter of love. Its effects are measured exactly in time and space as no effects of an art can be. It is an occupation which a man not desperately subject to sea-sickness can be imagined to follow with content, without enthusiasm; with industry, without affection. Functuality is its watchword. The incertitude which attends closely every artistic endeavour is absent from its regulated enterprise. It has no great moments of self-confidence, or moments not less great of doubt and heart-searching. It is an industry, which, like other industries, has its romance, its honour, and its rewards; its bitter anxieties and its hours of ease. But such sea-going has not the artistic quality of a single-handed struggle with something much greater than yourself. It is not the laborious, absorbing practice of an art whose ultimate result remains on the knees of the gods. It is not an individual, temperamental achievement; it is simply the skilled use of a captured force. It is merely a step forward upon the way of universal conquest.

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Every passage of a ship of yesterday, whose sails were filled eagerly the very moment the pilot with his pockets full of letters had gone over the side, was like a race—a race against time, against an ideal standard of achievement outstripping the expectations of common men. Like all true art, the general conduct of a ship and her handling in particular cases had a technic which could be discussed with delight and pleasure by men who found in their work not bread alone, but an outlet for the peculiarities of their temperament. To get the best and truest effect from the infinitely varying moods of sky and sea, not pictorially, but in the spirit

of their calling, was their vocation, one and all; and they recognised this with as much sincerity, and drew as much inspiration from this reality as any man who ever put brush to canvas. The diversity of temperaments was immense among those masters of the fine art.

Some of them were like Royal Academicians of some sort. They never startled you by a touch of originality, by a fresh audacity of inspiration. They were safe, very safe. They went about solemnly in the assurance of their consecrated and empty reputation. Names are odious, but I remember one of them who might have been their very president, the P.R.A. of the sea-craft. His weather-beaten and handsome face, his portly presence, his shirt-fronts and broad cuffs and gold links, his air of bluff distinction, impressed the humble beholders—stevedores, tally-clerks, tide-waiters—as he walked ashore over the gangway of his ship lying at the Circular Quay in Sydney. His voice was deep, hearty, and authoritative—the voice of a very prince among sailors. He did everything with an air which put your attention on the alert and raised your expectations; but the result somehow was always on stereotyped lines, un-suggestive, empty of any lesson that one could lay to heart. He kept his ship in apple-pie order, which would have been seaman-like enough but for a flinching touch in its details. His officers affected a superiority over the rest of us, but the boredom of their souls appeared in their manner of dreary submission to the fads of their commander. It was only his apprenticed boys whose irrepressible spirits were not affected by the solemn and respectable mediocrity of that artist. There were four of these youngsters; one the son of a doctor, another of a colonel, the third of a jeweller—the name of the fourth was Twentymen, and this is all I remember of his parentage. But not one of them seemed to possess the smallest spark of gratitude in his composition. Though their commander was a kind man in his way, and had made a point of introducing them to the best people in the town in order that they should not fall into the bad company of boys belonging to other ships, I regret to say that they made faces at him behind his back, and imitated the dignified carriage of his head without any concealment whatever.

This master of the fine art was a personage and nothing more; but, as I have said, there was an infinite diversity of temperament among the masters of the fine art I have known. Some were great impressionists. They impressed upon you the fear of God and Immediacy—or, in other words, the fear of being drowned—with every circumstance of terrific grandeur. One may think that the locality of your passing away by means of suffocation in water does not really matter very much. I am not so sure of that. I am, perhaps, unduly sensitive, but I own that the idea of being suddenly spilt into an infuriated ocean in the midst of darkness and uproar affected me always with a sensation of shivering distaste. To be drowned in a pond, though it might be called an ignominious fate by the ignorant, is yet a bright and peaceful ending in comparison with some other endings to one's earthly career which I have mentally quaked at in the intervals or even in the midst of violent exertions.

But let that pass. Some of the masters

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