

Cousin Kate's Correspondents.

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,"

Shortland Street, Auckland.

Cousin Kate is particularly desirous that those boys and girls who write should tell her whatever it 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," on 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.

LETTERS AND REPLIES.

DEAR COUSIN KATE,—I feel very ashamed of myself to think that I have been a cousin for more than two years, and have not written to you. But, really, I have not had your address until mother and the "Graphic" sent to her; so there is an excuse, although a very small one. We came to London a couple of years ago, and I have been going to school. I rather like English schools; the girls are all so jolly and full of fun, and we are always having holidays and plenty of games. At school we had a pet dog—a fox terrier. You can't imagine the fuss that is made of it, being amongst so many girls. I have been to the Tower of London; it is really a wonderful place, and a place that makes you think, because, naturally, you think of all the different wicked deeds performed inside those walls, years ago. We saw the tower in which the princes were murdered and buried, and the block on which one of Henry VIII's wives was executed. I think it was Henry VIII's. We also went to Kensington Palace, the birthplace of her late Majesty Queen Victoria, and there are all so many of her toys that she played with there. Last summer we stayed at Hampton Court. I think Henry VIII. must have been very fond of himself, as in nearly every room there is some painting of him, either sitting or standing. He must have grown very tired. Tomorrow we are going to Scotland, and I hope to see all the old historic places that one hears about. I am afraid this letter is rather long. I cannot write often, as at school we often find plenty of things to do instead of writing letters. At present we are having nine weeks' holiday. It is strange to think that all the news is about three weeks old when you get it. But how do you never think about that—much love, from Cousin KEN.

[Dear Cousin Eva,—I was delighted to hear from you again. What a delightful time you must be having. I am glad to hear you must be happy at school. The average English school is a real good sport. It was interest all the cousins very much to read your nice, interesting letter. I would have sent you a "Graphic" with your letter in it, but the only address you give is London, and that is rather vague.—Cousin KATE.]

Palmerston North.—We are having very disagreeable weather here, raining and blowing nearly all the time. We have a pet lamb at home. It is getting bigger now. I am in Standard VI. at school now, and I was 12 years old last April 4th. I have not quite a mile to go to school, so I am let off easy as far as distance is concerned.—Cousin HERBERT.

[Dear Cousin Herbert.—We surely ought to have a most glorious summer, and won't we only if it were this bad weather! I suppose football will be out of the question now, and you will have to start cricket or whatever game you play in summer.—Cousin KATE.]

Dunverliffe.—Dear Cousin Kate,—You will think I have forgotten you, but you will see I have not. We have shifted back to Dunverliffe again. We were only ten weeks in Pahi-ana, and we have been twelve years in Dunverliffe. Although I have not written to you, I have been reading the letters in the "Graphic." The little canny I told you we had died before we left Pahiana. We do not know what happened to it. I thought Tul was a very pretty name for a cat. I am always so pleased to see my letter in the "Graphic." We are having a school

bazaar in about three weeks' time, and I am in it. I am a butterfly; I have to be dressed in white, and a pair of white wings. I think I will have to close my short letter, as I have no more news to tell you. I hope to see my letter in the "Graphic," as soon as possible.—Cousin ELLEN.

[Dear Cousin Ellen.—Well, it did not take you long to get tired of Pahiana. Surely you had not moved all your furniture as well; if you had, what an awful bother. I hope the bazaar will be a success. You must tell me all about it.—Cousin KATE.]

Te Kuiti.—Dear Cousin Kate,—It is such a long time now since I wrote to you last, that I feel quite ashamed of myself, but I have been so busy studying for my musical examination, which took place on the 10th of September, that I have had very little time for anything else. However, I suppose I am not the only exception, for I see in mostly all the letters in the "Graphic" that someone is begging to be excused for not writing. I have been pleased to see my letters (which have been for a long time in the Cousin's Page). You will excuse my letter being short (but sweet), as I am in a hurry. I will write a longer letter as soon as I possibly can.—Cousin HAZEL.

Patea.—Dear Cousin Kate,—I shall quite forgive you forgetting us if you pass your examination. I often laugh when I am reading the letters, so many begin as your letter does. I shall look for a longer letter next time.—Cousin KATE.]

Te Kuiti.—Dear Cousin Kate,—I would very much like to become one of your cousins. I am nine years of age. I am in Standard one. We have a football team at the school, and I am one of them. We won three games out of five. I am learning the piano and violin, and I like playing very much. I have one brother two years old, and one sister nine months old. I wrote to you last night, but did not know your proper address, so I am writing again in case you did not get it.—Cousin NORMAN.

[Dear Cousin Norman.—Little boy cousins are always welcome. Fancy a boy of your age being in a football team. You must be strong and big for your age. How do you like babies? I suppose you have to take care of your wee sister sometimes.—Cousin KATE.]

Puketarata (Kio Kio).—Dear Cousin Kate,—We are still having wet, bleak weather. We have a pet kitten. Every morning, as soon as the door is opened, she jumps into bed with us, and lies on our arms just like a baby, and goes to sleep. At school on Thursday the girls played the boys' cricket. The boys won by 23 runs. We only made 30 runs. The boys ride together.—Cousin PHOEBE.

[Dear Cousin Phoebe.—Our weather is very mixed, but we have had some lovely days just to cheer us up. What a dear the kitten must be. Have any of your schools played basket ball? It's a great game, and one of the few that boys and girls can play well together.—Cousin KATE.]

Utakura.—Dear Cousin Kate,—May I become one of your cousins? I am going to school, and in the fourth standard. We have three horses, and one of them belongs to me. It has been raining a lot lately. How do you get on with your line badge? What is the difference between an oak tree and a tight boot? There is a riddle for you.—Cousin ILLIE.

[Dear Cousin Illie.—I am very pleased to have a new cousin. I am glad you have a horse to ride; it must be horrid not to have one in the country. I can't guess the riddle.—Cousin KATE.]

Utakura.—Dear Cousin Kate,—I wish to become one of your cousins. I am nine years old, and I milk six cows. I am going to school. It is raining just now. We have been having terrible weather lately. Here is a riddle: Why was Adam's day the longest?—Cousin ADA.

[Dear Cousin Ada.—New cousins are always sure of a welcome from me. You poor child, fancy a child of your age having to milk six cows. What ever time do you get up to get through before school time?—Cousin KATE.]

Scott's Gap.—Dear Cousin Kate,—I see you have quite a big circle now. The weather has been very bad lately, and there have been great floods down here, but we have not been stopped from going to school. We have a week's holiday, so I hope it will be fine. We have some flowers out, and the fruit trees are coming out in blossom, and they look very pretty. It does not seem like spring, as it is so wet, but I suppose the weather will be better in summer. We have not very good roads here, but every year the people try to improve them, so they will soon be good roads. We are not going to have our examination until Christmas, so we have a long time to wait. If I pass I will be in the sixth standard.—Cousin THELMA.

[Dear Cousin Thelma.—Yes, indeed, our circle is a very big one, and grows every week. Surely summer weather will come now for it is so near Christmas. I hope all the wet won't spoil the fruit for the summer.—Cousin KATE.]

Collingwood.—Dear Cousin Kate,—May I become one of your senior cousins? I am fifteen years old, but do not go to school. We are having very miserable weather lately. The lucky girls here played their last game last week. Tennis starts here next week. I hope it will be fine for the opening day. We live on a farm, and we have two horses, and we also have nine cows in milk. I have three sisters and four brothers. I am sending an addressed envelope. Please will you send me a dark brown badge?—Cousin LILLIAN.

[Dear Cousin Lillian.—I am very pleased to read you as a cousin, and I hope you will be a good correspondent. I suppose you have left school. What do you do with your spare time?—Cousin KATE.]

Huntly.—Dear Cousin Kate,—I suppose you are wondering what has become of me. We have been having very wet weather here lately. I have got a flower garden at school. Standards three, four, five and six have got gardens at school. The boys have vegetable gardens, and the girls flower gardens. We are having our holidays this week. The subject I like best is reading. We are having an examination. My brother has written one letter to you. I don't know when he is going to write again.—Cousin IVY.

[Dear Cousin Ivy.—I should have thought you would be more likely to write in wet weather than fine, just for something to do. You are having all sorts of trouble at the moment in Huntly. Don't you hate strikes?—Cousin KATE.]

Candid Critics at Court.

PRETENDERS SEARCH FOR A BRIDE.

STORIES FROM THE KING'S MANUSCRIPTS.

Another fascinating volume of history has been issued by the Historical Manuscripts Commission (says the London "Daily News"). It deals with the Stuart Papers belonging to the King, and preserved at Windsor Castle, and tells, inter alia, of the plots of the OH Pretender, otherwise known as James III., and the Earl of Mar and other adherents.

In 1771, when James, then 29 years of age, was in exile on the Continent after his defeat in Scotland, his adherents began to urge the importance of his speedy marriage, and that a Protestant wife should be found. Courtiers thereupon began a series of visits to various Continental Courts, and their outspoken descriptions of the eligible ladies they—so put it plainly—had been sent to inspect for a delightful reading.

Why a Princess Would Not Do.

The Princess of Hesse was one of the earliest princesses on the list. But we find the Earl of Mar reporting to the Bishop of Rochester that he has sent "one whom he can trust" to see the lady, and that "they tell us that she is not at all that agreeable person we were told by some; that she is fat, and appears likely to grow very much so; that she has had teeth . . ." and so on. Besides, the King of Sweden had designs on the lady. My lord of Mar comments that "this thing is very unlucky, and the more that it is hard to tell where the King can set on next."

A Bride of Thirteen.

But other ladies were offered. One de Wilda suggested a niece of the Emperor of Austria, and was straightway asked to see the lady, while later a spontaneous offer came from the Czar of one of his daughters, probably the eldest, Anna, afterwards Duchess of Holstein, who was not then grown up. She was said to be 13, and her sister, afterwards the Empress Elizabeth, 11.

Queen Mary was much in favour of the union with the Czar's family, and suggested that two trusty persons should be sent to see the little lady. "The main point," wrote the Queen, "is to know exactly her age, temper, and constitution, if it be possible, and if she is healthy and good humoured."

Two months later the Duke of Ormonde, to whom the Queen had written, replied that the Czar's eldest daughter was said to have been born before the marriage of her parents, and in the next month the Czar withdrew the offer.

A Candid Connoisseur.

In the meantime, Charles Wogan had been instructed by the Earl of Mar to go to Germany "to look out for eligible princesses, and particularly to report upon the daughter of Prince Lewis of Baden and a princess of Saxony, cousin to the King of Poland." The former had been recommended by the King of Sicily.

Wogan travelled under the name of Germain, giving out that his journey was one of diversion or curiosity. His report was scathingly outspoken. Of neither of the two ladies suggested did he speak in favour. Of Prince Lewis's daughter he declared that she was "about thirteen . . . but of the size we generally find in seven or at most eight." She danced "but indifferently, which with her extreme littleness and womanly crabbedness at the same time, would make one imagine she is or has been ricketty." There is more of the same kind in this amazing letter.

Pimples a Bar to Marriage.

But Wogan recommended the two daughters of the Countess of Furstenburg, whom he saw at Rastadt. Of these ladies he wrote:—

"The elder . . . is about 23, tall, well shaped and graceful, with fine eyes and no disagreeable features, but as I observed some redness about her nose and the upper part of her cheeks, proceeding from some small pimples, my attention was drawn upon the other.

"This young lady is of a very advantageous size, about 18, straight, finely shaped, but a little lank about the hips which I reckon to be owing to the disposition she still seems to be in of growing taller . . ."

Further letters on the subject of the Pretender's search for a wife, and much interesting comment on the history of the time, are to be found in this entrancing volume.

FISHERMAN'S LUCK.



"Look what's here!"



"A fine specimen of the fish of the sea."



"Come on in, the water's hot!"

—Frederic Hatter.