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## Boys and Girls

My Dear Cousins,—I've had six letters already this week from my old cousins, and you've no idea how glad I was to get them, and see the familiar names again. I was especially glad to hear from some cousins who wrote and said their competition answers were coming later. I always like letters, but letters written because somebody wanted to write, and not simply because they were sending answers and thought they might enclose a note. Why, I can't tell you how glad they make me. You all seem to have been very energetic during the summer. You'll see from Gordon Bland's letter how busy he was in the barn. I can imagine something of what it would be like when "the neighbours helped with the mousing." It made me smile when I remembered my fun in the barn this summer. Three times a day I used to go to a certain grain sack for chick feed, and three times a day, just as I put out my hand to loosen the top of the sack, Mr. Mouse used to jump out like a flash, run up the wall so fast I couldn't see his feet and wait on a cross-beam or somewhere till I'd gone. Then, I suppose he came down. I got very interested one day in trying to find out where he *did* hide, and became so absorbed in this that I didn't notice the barn door blow softly open, or those Ply-

mouth Rocks come stalking in behind me. By the time I *did* catch sight of them they had explored one or two forbidden sacks and had a lovely time, but I wish you could have seen them run when I got after them!

I suppose the one great thing that we have all been thinking about this week is the wonderful news that came last Monday. In the middle of all the rush and business of the day's work it was hard sometimes to realize that it was the first week for four years when no fighting was going on in France and Flanders. I thought that directly I got a chance I must get away to somewhere quiet to try and think what Peace means, so as soon as I could on Saturday, off I went to a place I know by a lake, and I had a beautiful time. I saw some queer things, too. To begin with, while I was waiting for a street car, of all things in the world, a big, fat bee came and sat down on my coat sleeve and refused to budge. I blew him away once, but he came again, so I let him stay till he decided to go himself. But a bee in the middle of November is very strange, don't you think? I expect really it was *his* day off from the office, too, and he was out celebrating. All the same, I can't help thinking it was a bit risky—he ought to have been in a cosy hive somewhere. Then when I got to where I was going to (this sounds a bit like a letter from France, doesn't it?) I saw a wild strawberry plant with one white

blossom on it—also out celebrating, I suppose, but it looked very queer all among the old dried grasses and leaves, peeping out, watching the lake all day. So I got to my little place on the cliff, and had a berry hunt all to myself. I didn't find many. They say there aren't many this year, so some people think the winter isn't going to be very bad, as if it were. Mother Nature would have made plenty of nuts and berries for the squirrels and chipmunks to put away for hard, cold days. And I had a big think all to myself as well. I couldn't tell you what I thought about—all kinds of things, from how I was going to tell my cousins all about it when I wrote to wondering what kind of men and women cousins they were going to be in a few years. Do you ever go away to a nice, quiet place for your big thinks? They make you feel ever so much better when you get back to your office, or wherever your day's work takes you. All this week now I shall have that lovely afternoon to think about, and I don't know that the best part of it wasn't that dog I met. I had to wait half an hour for a street car, but it only seemed like ten minutes, because I found an Airedale at the crossroads—or he found me. Anyway, in two minutes he brought me a stone to throw for him, and we had a grand time. Sometimes I just covered the stone with my foot, and it was a great game for him to try to dig it out and burrow for it—just like my old Airedale in England. I must tell you about him some other day. His name's John, and he was twelve years old last Monday—Victory Day.

Now I must stop and leave room for a letter or two. I haven't had any tales or poems yet!

Your affectionate  
Cousin Mike.

### Gordon Bland's Letter.

Malton, Ont.,  
R. R. No. 3.

Dear Cousin Mike,—I was glad to hear from you again. I had the "Flu," too, but am better now. I was picking potatoes, and I took sick the day after we finished. I finished Public School, and I passed my Entrance in the summer and am going to High School now. I built all the loads of grain this summer except the oats, and our neighbours helped with these and I helped to do the mousing.

I think I will close now. Hoping you and Mrs. Cousin Mike are well,

From your Cousin,  
J. Gordon Bland.

### Joy Belt's Letter.

St. John's Rectory,  
Stamford, Ont.

Dear Cousin Mike,—It seemed so nice to see a letter from you again, after weeks and weeks with no letter from you at all. In your letter you asked us to write to you and tell you what we thought of your idea. I think myself it is a very nice idea, and it certainly would be nice to have a page of our own. Hasn't this epidemic been awful? I am very glad to say that none of us in our family have had it, but I had better not brag.

Hoping this will find you quite recovered from the "Flu" and feeling quite yourself again,

I am, your loving Cousin,  
Joy Belt.

P.S.—I am enclosing my competition and I hope you will find it all right.

### Katie Bland's Letter.

Malton, Ont.,  
Nov. 10th, 1918.

Dear Cousin Mike,—I am one of the cousins that the influenza caught, but I am now better. I tried raising ducks this year—at least, I fed them,



put them away at night and let them out of their pen each morning until a few weeks ago, when we let them go with the old ducks.

I will be glad when winter comes so as to be able to get lots of sleigh rides. It is great fun, especially when there are lots of hills to ride on. I have been looking up texts for the competition, but have not found enough suitable ones yet.

Your Cousin,  
Katie C. Bland.

### St. Simon's, North Bay.

An English artist, a lady of much talent, has painted some beautiful pictures of devotional subjects, which she has donated for use in some of our Algoma churches. The Archbishop has apportioned one of them to St. Simon's Church. As the church did not possess a reredos in which the painting could be placed the Rev. E. H. C. Stephenson, of Sault Ste. Marie, very kindly made one, and this has now been placed in St. Simon's with the painting as its centre panel. The subject treated by the artist is that of the Resurrection, and is very grand in its conception and execution. The reredos is of rich oak and forms a splendid frame and background for the picture.

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