

## OTHER PEOPLE'S AFFAIRS.

"What makes every one love to be with you!" the sweet, simple and unreflecting Princess Alice once asked her grandmother, the Duchess of Kent. "I am always so sorry to have to leave you, and so are all others who come here. Won't you please tell me, grandma?"

The old lady smiled, and for a moment that was all she did.

The Duchess of Kent knew the secret of her influence over her friends, but how to explain it without vanity or egotism to this most natural and truthful little girl at her side was not altogether an easy task. Alice's sweet directness could never be put off with a pooh-pooh or a disclaimer, as the dear old lady knew from an intimate acquaintance with her character.

"I think, my child, that this is the reason," the Duchess replied at last. "I was early instructed that the way to make people happy was to appear interested in the things which interested them—namely, their own affairs; and this could only be accomplished by burying one's grief, annoyance, satisfaction, or joy completely out of sight.

"Forgetfulness of one's own concerns, my dear, a smiling face, a word of sympathy and unselfish help, where it is possible to give it, will always make others happy, and the giver equally so."

Such counsel as this took deep root in the heart and mind of the Princess, and her brief but exceptional life proves the wonderful power of unselfish regard for others.

Where could a better lesson for all our girls be found than this one, given so many years ago by the aged Duchess?

Other people's affairs? Why, our own affairs are of infinitely more importance to us, and yet, if we take the trouble to look about us, we are sure to find that the most agreeable and helpful persons are those who lend a ready ear to the sorrows of others, and keep a closed mouth concerning their own.—*Youth's Companion.*

## COLD WATER AND CLOUDS.

Did you ever stop to think, when you looked out of the window and saw dull, gray clouds from which the rain was so steadily pouring, and which seemed to shut in the world all around, that, in reality, they extended over a very small part of the country; that somewhere else, perhaps only twenty or a hundred miles away, the sun was shining, and all was bright and beautiful? This is really the case. For storms, however long and dreary, do not extend over many miles; and though it always is raining at some place in the world, yet always and at the same time it is pleasant somewhere else. Now, let us see why this is.

Suppose that on a warm summer afternoon we were to bring a pitcher of clear, cool water, fresh from the well, and to place it on the table in the dining-room. Now, no matter how carefully we may have dried the pitcher before bringing it in, we shall discover, if we watch closely, that the outside soon becomes wet or misty; and that the mist grows heavier and then gathers into drops and perhaps even runs down the pitcher to the table.

Now, where does this water come from? Not through the sides of the pitcher, that is impossible; but from the air. We cannot see it, perhaps, but still it is there, in the state of vapor. How came it there? Did you ever notice, after a rain, how in a short time the puddles became dry, and

how the moisture disappeared from the grass and leaves, as soon as the sun shone out and the wind blew? Or, did you ever notice that if you left a pan of water out-of-doors the water each day grew less and less, until all was gone and the pan was dry?

All the water that was in the puddles, on the grass and leaves (except that which soaked into the ground) and in the pan, was taken up as vapor into the air—has "evaporated," as we say. The same thing happens when water boils, only it then evaporates more rapidly, and we can see the vapor arising as steam. If you live near a river, or in a country where there are brooks, perhaps you can see this evaporation actually taking place. Get up early some morning, before the sun rises, and

## THE WANDERING ALBATROSS AND YOUNG.

Far out to sea, in the southern latitudes of the Indian Ocean, more than a thousand miles from the continent of Africa or Australia, lies an uninhabited island named Desolation or Kerguelen. Ships passing on their way from Europe or the United States to Melbourne sail quite near this lonely land, and sometimes enter Christmas Harbor, at the northern end, for fresh supplies of water. Here, if the sailors visit it at any time between the months of October and January, they will see vast numbers of the wandering albatross describing graceful curves high in the air, or sweeping down on the table-land where their curious nests are placed.

their spades into a solid mound two feet high; at the top is a shallow cavity in which the mother albatross lays only one white egg.

And now begins a long, tedious season of incubation. More than two months is required to hatch out the young, which at first appears a moving white ball of the finest silky down. It grows slowly, remaining in the nest for many weeks, carefully watched and fed by the parents, which take turns in going to sea to capture small tender squids and jelly-fish for the helpless squab. At last, as if urged by some mysterious force, the father and mother suddenly desert their child, and wander for many months over the "trackless ocean," far out of sight of land, but never, except by accident, visiting the Northern Pacific or Atlantic, where other species of this genus are found. It does not like to fly by night. It is a beautiful spectacle to see it stooping with extended wings from the cloudless sky, and touching the waves with almost the lightness of a feather, as it settles down amongst the patches of floating sea-weed or in the wake of ships, to feed upon molluscs and shell-fish, or the offal thrown out to them by sailors.

What keeps the baby albatross from starving during the long absence of its parents is a question that has never been answered. For a long time it is not able to fly, and therefore cannot obtain its food in the usual manner of older birds. It is possible that it derives its sustenance from the surplus fat stored in its body during the first two months of excessive feeding, or rambles over the table-land in search of whatever it yields of worms and snails. It is certain that it manages in some way to thrive, for when found "it is lively and in good condition."

When the old birds again return from their long voyage, the young albatross, that appears to remember its parents, immediately proceeds to caress them by pecking with its hard hooked bill their heads until that portion between the beak and the eyes is bare of feathers, sore and bloody. This rough kind of fondling is endured for a short time, as if they wished to make amends for their negligence, and then the youth is harshly turned away, while these old mariners at once begin to repair the same nest for another season of housekeeping. When they again set sail, the child of the previous year, that has now attained sufficient strength of wing, accompanies them, to be in turn taught the mysteries of the sea; and after a long and stormy voyage over unknown waters and strange coasts it will return to this island of Desolation, there to choose a mate and rear a little one to take its part in the restless life which the albatross seems to love so well.—*Selected.*



"IS LEARNING TO SWIM, MAMMA.

look outward toward the river. You may see a long line of mist or fog, like a big, white cloud, hanging over the water. Now, this mist is only the water evaporating from the river and is just now visible as fog because the air is cool. After the sun has shone, the air becomes warmed and the fog disappears, but the evaporation goes on, nevertheless. Indeed, it is going on continually, and all over the earth; so that if the water were not returned to us as rain, snow, and dew, all the oceans, lakes, and rivers would in time dry up and disappear. All the trees, grass, and plants would then wither, and our beautiful land would become as dry and parched as the great desert of Sahara.—*St. Nicholas.*

The albatross, if it is a great wanderer, is also a lover of home, and has an excellent memory, for after five months' voyaging over many leagues of the dreary ocean's waste it always returns at the end of that time to the land of its birth, and occupies year after year the same abode.

It is an odd nest that this remarkable bird makes. It is in the shape of a half cone, and this is the manner in which it is constructed: after a heavy fall of rain has softened the earth, both the male and the female go to work with a will, digging with their strong bills a circular ditch six feet round, pushing up the mud, mingled with grass, nearer and nearer the centre of the circle, pounding and shaping the mass with

THE HUMBLE CHILD OF GOD cannot successfully maintain an argument with an infidel, perhaps, but he knows something which the wisdom of a thousand infidels cannot refute. In a certain church prayer-meeting, a dear little nine-years-old boy who had just become a Christian arose and stood in his place for a moment, and in trustful, childish treble, simply said, "I know that I love Jesus;" and, even considering the lengthy remarks of the pastor and deacons, that was the wisest and best thing which was said that evening.

WHEN YOU retire to bed, think over what you have been doing during the day.