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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

A Holiday Lesson

Mrs. William Starr Dana

But I am in hopes that some of the children who read this book will say, "I do not think it fair to call children half blind and only half alive. I know I am not half blind. I saw all those things that Mrs. Dana saw along that country road, and" (perhaps some of them may add) "a good deal more too. I know all the different flowers by sight, and the sunny hollows where the first ones come. I know where ever so many of the birds build their nests, and how their different eggs are marked and colored. Often I go down to the little pool in the woods where they come for their bath. I know how the caterpillars wrap themselves in leaves and come out beautiful butterflies. I have peeped into the hollow of the tree where the red squirrel is bringing up its family; and I have seen how the pretty green katydid scrapes his wings along his sides, and makes the sound, 'Katy did, Katy didn't,' and oh, so many more things that I have not time to tell them all."

Ah! that is just it. The child that knows how to use his eyes can see so much, so many wonderful things!

That is why I am so anxious that he or she should not miss through carelessness the revelations that come to the child alone.

It seems as though the woods and fields were more ready to tell their stories, to whisper their secrets, to children than to grown people. If people learn to use their eyes and ears only after they are grown, I hardly think that they will ever read quite the same stories, ever listen to quite such wonderful secrets, as if they had begun to look and to listen when they were little children.

If fairy godmothers came now, as the stories tell us they did once upon a time, to the christenings of our little ones, offering whatever gifts the parents should choose, it seems to me one of the wisest selections would be the power to see.

And so when I ask you children, now that you are putting by your lesson books for many weeks, to learn one lesson this holiday time,—to learn to see,—I am asking you to do something that will make your lives far happier than they could be were this lesson left unlearned.





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