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# What Few Children Know About Plants

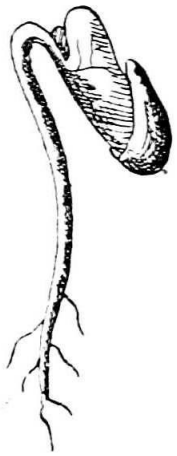
*Mrs. William Starr Dana*

Today we must take another look at the plants in the schoolroom garden.

By this time some of them have grown quite tall. Others are just appearing above the earth.

Here is a young morning-glory. We see that its stem, like that of the bean, was the first thing to come out of the seed. This stem has turned downward into the earth. From its lower end grows the root, which buries itself deeper and deeper.

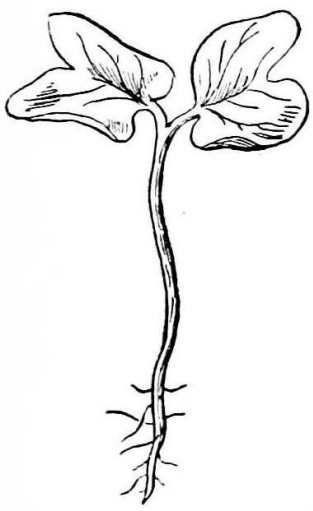
An older plant shows us that the upper part of the stem straightens itself out and grows upward, bearing with it a pair of leaves.



From between these starts a tiny bud, that soon unfolds into a fresh leaf, which is carried upward by a new piece of stem.

On the tip of this new piece of stem grows another bud, which also enlarges into a leaf, and in the same way as before is borne upward.

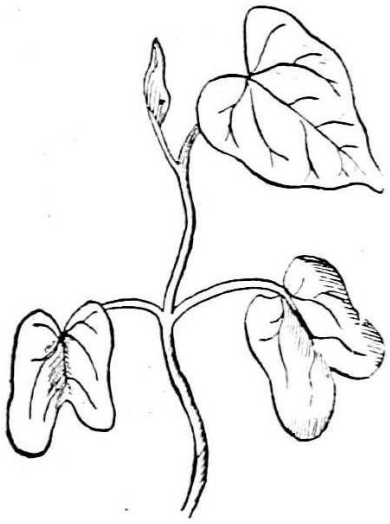
In this fashion the plant keeps growing bigger and bigger. Soon branches start from the sides of the stem, and later flowers and fruits.



So we see that it is the stem which bears all the other parts of the plant.

Most people think that the plant springs from the root; but you children know better. With your own eyes, here in the schoolroom, you have seen that instead of the stem growing from the root, the root grows from the stem.

That more people have not found this out, is because they do not use their eyes rightly.



Every spring hundreds and thousands of baby plants make their way out of the seed shell into the world, just as you saw the baby bean plant do, sending out first its little stem, which pointed downward into the earth and started a root. And every spring there are hundreds of thousands of men and women, and boys and girls, who go through the woods and fields, and across the parks and along the streets, as though they were blind, taking no notice of the wonders all about them.



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