

first manner; that is the "seed-leaf" becomes a real leaf, and the "seedling" is nursed by the supply of food amongst which it lies. The drawing marked (31) shows the sprouting of one of our marsh plants. The single "seed-leaf" is represented coming out of a slit in the side of the stem. The next (32) is a kernel of wheat beginning to grow. The one "seed-leaf" is lifting itself upwards; and beside the first root, which comes from the end of the seed, there are two smaller roots on each side.

It is very strange that if one, or even both, of the "leaves" of the "seed-plant" of a kidney-bean be cut off before it begins to grow, it will sprout when sown, although it has lost

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its proper supply of food; but the plant is not strong; and the root or bud of other seeds has been cut off as soon as it came, and the "seed-plant" has put forth another, and gone on growing. You will find it very amusing and instructive to watch the sprouting of seeds for your-elves. You need not dig up those planted for the sake of their flowers to do this; but if you have a little garden of your own, you can put a few of different kinds into the earth for the purpose. And if you have not a garden, you may make mustard and cress grow on a piece of flannel laid in a saucer of water, and see all that goes on, just as you could watch bees at work in a glass hive. Or you could make an acorn sprout and grow into an oak plant of some

size, by tying a piece of thin string round it, and hanging it over some water in a bottle with an open neck.

When I told you about the provision made for the young plant whilst it was yet in the seed, I said that it showed us God's wisdom, and love, and might. And now we have seen the "seed-plant," as soon as it was waked to life, send out, first, a little white fibre, *downwards*, as if it knew where the things that the root could make use of were, and afterwards as delicate a little stem *upwards*, as if it knew that there the air and light, which its leaves would need, were. *And it is always so.* If you turn the acorn round in the loop of string, so that the root-fibre should be upwards, and the leaf-stem downwards, each will bend round and grow in its old direction. Is this because the seed, or its root or stem, can see, or because the plant knows what it is doing? No; it has only *life*: it knows nothing. It is God's doing. In ways too wonderful for us to think, He enables each little plant to do exactly what is necessary for its growth and thriving. And we may learn, by noticing them, that God is always near, and always ready to help and guide us to all that is good for us; for He watches over them, and we are "much better than they."

