

Stop, Look, and Remember

(*an impromptu*)

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In our every day life we miss seeing many things that would prove of interest to us. An example of how little we are aware of what happens about us until we find things brought into sharper focus is the sudden discovery that a new house or building exists where only an empty lot full of weeds and trash had been.

The nature lover is noted for keen observation, never letting a flower or weed go undetected and naming each bird with incomparable and never failing accuracy. This is really a very wonderful ability toward which every writer should strive in order to give vividness to his descriptions of locale, but do not rush headlong into an intense study of nature, for our nature lover often fails in his observation of his fellow man.

In observing one's neighbors, associates, friends and strangers, look at them closely. For instance, look at the lady on the seat opposite you as you ride the bus. Those wrinkles about the corners of her eyes tell you that she must be at least thirty-five; that bitter downward turn of her mouth cries out against the sorrow she

has had to bear. Her wide nostrils give indications of a passionate nature, but the thin line of her lips shows a powerful will controlling and fighting her emotions, and this is confirmed by the out-jutting of her jaw. If one wishes to be a writer, these are things which he can not afford to neglect.

When one has mastered the art of using one's eyes to see the world, life takes on clearness and the mist is wiped from the glass enabling one to see details. The question arises as to how to remember all of these things. The most truly convenient way to make sure one does not forget is to write down all of the things which one sees. Many people carry a small notebook with them and write down their descriptions of scenes or people immediately. This is probably the most accurate method, but another means would be each evening to attempt to recall the people you saw during the day — what they looked like, how they dressed and all of the other minute facts which go to make up a whole character. Observation and good writing are closely linked together — observation making good writing possible and good writing stimulating the desire to be observant.