

Aunt Julia's True Stories

This Earth of Ours



(Recall what you learned last month about the earth or read the article in this same column before reading this one.)

At the beginning, the earth was not exactly as it is now. Perhaps the mountains were not so high nor the valleys so deep. At present the surface of the earth is very irregular. There are mountains that are so high that their tops are always covered with snow. Some parts of the sea are called deeps because of their great depth.

The most important cause of the changes on the surface is the shrinking of the earth. It is believed that the center of the earth is very hot. This center is surrounded by a thick layer of very hard rock. During the thousands of years of its life, this hot center, has been cooling off. As it cools off, the outer layer of rock shrinks. Have you baked or roasted an apple? Did you notice how the skin became wrinkled? In the same way although in a very large scale, the skin of the earth has shrunk.

Mountains and depressions may be formed also by volcanoes. For some reasons we cannot very well understand, some parts of the earth rise while other parts sink. The appearance of the surface of the earth can not remain the same. The wind, water, and the sun cause the rocks to break. The water flowing down the highlands carry the fine rock to the low places. After many years the highlands become lower and the deep places become higher.

Changes within the earth cause land to rise and

More Beautiful Flowers

The Achuete

On the roadside, in the open field, and on neglected lots many trees grow without human care, yet they bear beautiful flowers of which we should be proud. Because they are common and cost nothing, we do not appreciate them.

An achuete tree in bloom presents a beautiful sight. The flowers that grow in clusters are of a delicate lavender-pink color. There are seven narrow petals around a heart composed of more than a hundred fine stamens. The lower portion of the filament is light gold while the upper part including the pollen cup is lavender. The buds are almost



Fruit of Achuete

perfectly round and are of a deep red color. A cluster of achuete flowers composed of open blossoms and buds is a treat to the eye that recognizes beauty. It must be more beautiful than apple blossoms.

The Cacawate

The cacawate grows wild. It does not attract attention when not in bloom. But in January and February there is no lovelier sight than a cacawate that has shed its leaves but whose branches are covered with the long spikes of little blossoms of white, pink and light lilac.

The Makahiya

Along the roadside among grass and lowly weeds grows the tiny sensitive plant, whose leaves close and droop at the slightest touch of the human hand. The flower that looks like a fairy's ball is soft to the touch and a delight to the eye. It is light lilac in color.

sink. Men have found seashells on the tops of mountains. This means that the mountains must have been at the bottom of the ocean long ago.

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