

## Aunt Julia's True Stories

### MORE COMMON HERB FLOWERS



**E**VEN with little care cosmos grows in almost any soil. With a patch of cosmos in your garden, you will not lack fresh flowers every morning. There are different varieties of cosmos. The flowers are white, pink, or pale purple. On each head, which looks like a single flower, are many little flowers. This kind of flower is called a composite flower. The sunflower and the amarillo are composite flowers. Can you name others?

### ZINNIA

If you have been to the horticultural show in the carnival city, you would not fail to notice and marvel at the giant zinnias that seemed to smile broadly at the passers-by. With flowerets arranged close together, each head presents a very attractive sight whether it is very deep red, yellow, orange, or pink.

Seeds of cosmos, zinnias and marigolds are imported. But once they are grown here, it is easy to obtain seeds for planting. The tiny seeds are hidden in the base of the flowerets. Since these plants are grown in most school gardens, it is easy for pupils to obtain seeds and keep a narrow patch of flowering plants around the house no matter how small the lot may be.

### THE COCKSCOMB

A bed of showy cockscomb or *palung-palungan* makes a garden very attractive. Its bright color and peculiar shape make up for its lack of fragrance. The plant holds up its large velvet comb of scarlet, crimson, or yellow for many days. The tiny seeds

are hidden in the comb and are scattered around when the comb dries. When the next rainy season begins little cockscomb plants appear all about the place of the old one. They thrive with little care, bear blossoms and die. Such a plant that completes its growth in a single season is called an annual.

### THE BUTTERFLY

A garden of beautiful and fragrant flowers is made more attractive by the brightly colored butterflies that flit here and there. The butterfly owes its color to the hues of the tiny scales that cover its wings. When it is held in the hand, the scales come off like colored dust.

Have you watched a butterfly visiting flowers? Didn't you think it was just playing? Watch carefully. You will notice that it goes right into the heart of the flower. With its long "tongue" it sucks the sweet liquid in the flower called nectar. It visits hundreds of flowers to get nectar. So you will see that the butterfly is a very busy insect.



Do you notice what flowers have many visitors? Are they brightly colored? Or do they have a sweet smell?

The butterfly is so beautiful that you would never think it develops from such an ugly thing as a caterpillar. After working for a long time, a butterfly finds a good place among leaves where it could lay its eggs. After about five or six days, a caterpillar crawls out of each egg. Caterpillars are of different colors. Some are entirely green. Others are yellow and green. The caterpillar feeds upon the leaves of

the plant where it finds itself. Is it useful or harmful? Why?

The caterpillar changes its skin several times before it becomes full grown. At this stage the animal is known as larva. Its life as a larva or caterpillar lasts a few weeks. Then it stops eating and weaves a little mat of silk on a leaf or a stem. It attaches itself to the mat with its hind legs. It thus hangs itself until its skin breaks open. In this stage the animal is known as a chrysalis or pupa. After "sleeping" for about a week, the skin on the back of the chrysalis breaks open and a butterfly comes out. At first the wings are soft and small. After about half an hour, they grow strong and big and the butterfly flies away.

Can you remember in brief the life story of a butterfly? The butterfly lays the egg. From the egg comes the caterpillar. The caterpillar changes to a chrysalis. The chrysalis changes into a butterfly.