

FOR THE JUNIORS

The Loon's Nest.

By F. Edwin Coster (aged 12).

Dear Aunt Helen,—Last summer I spent a pleasant vacation on an island on Lake Magadavic. We arrived all safe and made our camp. The next day we visited another island and there we found a loon's nest with two eggs in it. We went over the next day and found one of the eggs hatched and the little loon in a small pool of water. My brother and I picked it up and patted it, much to the dislike of the mother who was swimming just off the island. Two days later the little loon was gone and we saw it later with its mother. The mother carries its young on its back when it is frightened. The other egg was kicked almost into the water and the nest was all torn up. We took the egg back with us. About a week later we discovered a squirrel on the island and we fed it. After awhile it became so tame that it would eat the crumbs from under the table. It then began to steal our provisions, nibbled the top and sides of brown bread which had been left to cool. It afterwards disappeared as mysteriously as it had come.

The next week we sailed down the lake on a pleasure trip and stopped for dinner on a point where there was an old shack. After dinner we were taking a rest when we heard a rustling noise. We looked about and saw a rabbit trying to get at our lunch. We watched it and then put a biscuit out for it, and the rabbit ate it and then went away again. I hope to go there next year with the family.

(Certified by his mother, Georgia A. Coster.)

Birth Stones.

AWAY back in the seventeenth century there was a very strong superstition among the Jews regarding precious stones, and it was believed by them that each gem had a special influence of its own. The breastplate of the High Priest contained twelve jewels, one for each of the tribes of Israel, and it was, perhaps, in this way that they came to be associated with the twelve months of the year. From a very good authority comes the following two lists of birthstones, both thought to be correct:

The Polish—January, garnet; February, amethyst; March, bloodstone; April, diamond; May, emerald; June, chalcidony or agate; July, ruby; August and September, sardonyx; October, aquamarine or beryl; November, topaz; December, turquoise.

The Jewish—January, garnet; February, amethyst; March, jasper; April, sapphire; May, chalcidony; June, emerald; July, onyx; August, carnelian; September, chrysolite; October, aqua-

marine or beryl; November, topaz; December, ruby.

Miss Cherry Blossom and Mr. Sun.

ONE warm spring morning a wee bud on a spray of cherry blossom opened its eyes to the world. First it peeped out, a tiny little bud wrapped in green, and sniffed the sweet air.

Was this the world? How nice to be in it! A sweet-briar bush growing near nodded, and said, "Good morning, Little Blossom," and a scarlet japonica stretched out one of its sprays and touched the baby bud.

"Glad to see you," it said. "I thought you would be born to-day."

The little cherry bud was grateful for the notice the flowers took of her.

"I think I was asleep before," she said. "I don't remember much until this morning, when I woke, and saw the beautiful world, and all of you smiling. I do hope I shall last a long time."

Then the japonica looked sad, and so did some of the other flowers, but the sweet briar rustled its branches, making such a sweet perfume, and said in a cheery voice, "Of course you will last a long time, and when your petals fly away there will be a little cherry where they grew. That will still be you, you know."

So Little Blossom loved Sweet Briar the best of all her friends.

As the day wore on the sun rose higher and higher, and Cherry Blossom's petals opened wider and wider. She enjoyed every moment of her sweet little life, and she loved to look at the sun looking down upon her all the time.

"He really seems to be looking at me," she said to herself. "But I must be mistaken; he would never notice such a little creature as I am."

But Mr. Sun had seen her from the moment she peeped out into the world, for he, too, was just rising after a night's rest, and all the morning he had been looking at her, thinking of her pretty petals. "I should like her for my own," he said, as he wore a golden crown for her. Then, as he bent to place it on her brow, he whispered, "Little Blossom, be my own."

Cherry Blossom trembled and turned pale, for the sun's rays were burning, and the crown made her feel faint.

But Little Blossom was more beautiful still in her golden crown, and she wore it day by day till the wind came into the garden and shook her till she trembled, and her golden crown was blown away. Then she knew Sweet Briar was right, for as her crown sailed far off on the breeze a tiny cherry hung at the end of a tiny stalk.

A Jingle.

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In the happy summer time,
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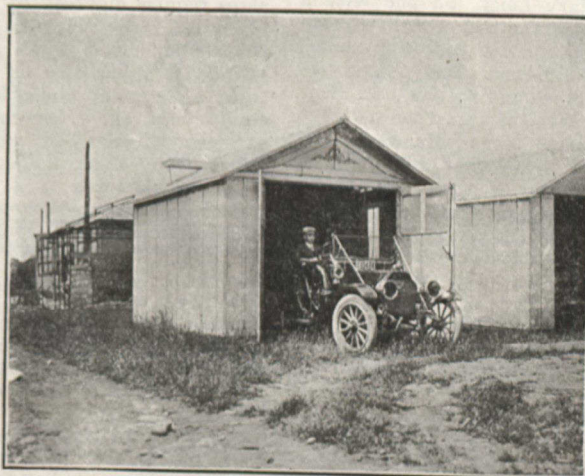
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