

## Guy's Country Friends.

BY AUNT KIMO.

In a Canadian city, lying at the foot of Lake Ontario, lives a little boy, with a queer little name.

The city in which he lives is a quaint old place. It is built along the water's edge. On a high hill, a little to the north of the city, is an old fort, and at its foot is a tower. A deep moat or ditch runs down from the fort to the tower at the water's edge. Opposite the fort, and directly in front of the city, lies an island, with a hump on its back. On the very top of the hump is another tower. There are two other Martello towers quite close to the city, so silent and grim, like sentinels guarding the city from harm, as they did so well, many years ago.

Not long ago, only last summer, an enemy came rushing down upon the city, and called to the brave little tower, standing so lonely on the island, to bow down to him. This it refused to do, and stood straight and staunch. Then the great blustering fellow blew one long, loud blast, swept off the head of the little tower, and sped away over the lake roaring and laughing as only the wind can. So all these hot days the roofless tower tells all who pass that way of the courage and bravery of the guardian who would not bow to an enemy.

But I was to tell you of a little boy who lived in this queer city. He is a nice little chap, with almost always a bright, happy face—not one bit like a guy, and yet as he passes, all the boys and girls call out "Halloo, Guy." This little boy lives in the city all winter, but as soon as the leaves have thrown off their blankets and come out of their beds, and are wide awake, he and all in his home come down to a cottage quite close to the River St. Lawrence.

The cottage is in a clover field, but has on one side a grand old wood. The wood keeps close to the water's edge; and in and out among the roots of the trees, hiding now in a cleft in the rock, now running along a rocky shelf, now peeping down from among the branches, chatter and play the little chipmunks. Sometimes when all is very still, the bravest one will venture out on the rock after some tidbit. Having found it, he will sit up on his little hind legs, with his bushy tail straight up his back, and holding his treasure in his front paws, nibble and bite, keeping his little head first on one side then on the other, looking out of his bright eyes, as if he thought, "surely no one is near; I can't see anyone, oh, I'm quite safe." At the least noise which is not of the winds or the waves or the trees, all the sounds of which he knows very well, away he will scamper, and in a moment you may hear him, from the tree-top scolding and threatening those who have dared to spoil his little fun.

Guy is very fond of the pretty little things, and knows quite well that chipmunks and squirrels are not the same. "Why so," he says, "chipmunks are much smaller, and have little brown stripes running down their back, but a squirrel is all quite brown." As Guy loves the squirrels, the squirrels seem to love Guy and are sometimes very kind to him. One of them helped him to pick hickory nuts last autumn.

It was in that lovely month, September, when the woods put on their bright robes, just as all the boys and girls, on Closing Day, put on their brightest gowns and best suits to say "Good-bye" to their many friends for a little time. The elms wore all a dark brown, the oaks a deep crimson; the maples decked themselves with scarlet and gold, while the hickory trees stood arrayed gorgeously in pure gold, as if they had caught the golden gleams that shot across the corn-fields, and now, when all the fields lay brown and bare, had dressed themselves in their stolen robes. So bright was the sheen of their yellow leaves that the cottage was filled with a golden light. Hidden among the branches were little baby hickory trees, packed so snugly in little boxes, that many people call them nuts, and think they are only something nice for boys and squirrels to eat. Guy learned to know better, for he found that in almost all the nuts which he picked up, the outside brown box was opened a little at the tip. Inside he could see another whiter box. He quickly pulled off the outside and found that the white one was very hard and strong. In order to open it he got a flat stone and a hammer, and striking the nut firmly he got to the inside, in which lay a kernel which is the food for the baby tree which is wrapped about with it. Squirrels and boys must be something like baby trees for they are fond of the baby's food. So fond are boys and girls of these nuts that they come with sticks, and poles, and baskets; and gathering around the trees soon make merry music with the clatter of the sticks, their laughing voices, and the dropping of the nuts on the ground around them.

Guy and his papa went nutting, like the rest, among the hickory trees beside the house. But it was weary work, and Guy was soon as tired of picking up the nuts

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as his papa was of knocking them down. While they were resting, they heard a telegraph wire, which passed through the trees quite close to the house, tinkle, as if struck by a stone; again and again the tinkling rang out on the clear September air. Papa said "'tis the boys nutting. Their sticks are striking the trees." Guy ran out, but no boys could he see. He stood a moment to listen beneath a golden tree; no breeze was stirring the branches, but fast around him fell the nuts. In silent wonder he looked up, and there almost hidden among the branches was a little squirrel, busily throwing them down, one every now and again striking the telegraph wire. On hearing this we all hurried out to watch the little busy fellow. Very quickly and very wisely he worked. He began with each branch near the trunk, and worked out to its tip, knocking down smartly every nut he could see; then he went to another branch, throwing the nuts down as fast as Guy and his papa could pick them up. He worked away steadily for an hour, and Guy soon gathered a lot of nuts. But it would not have been kind or just to have taken away all from the little squirrel, so he left a great many on the ground. Some days after this we saw our little friend scampering up from the trees by the river to the tree from which he had knocked the nuts. Many times we watched him on these little excursions, but could never get near enough to see if his mouth-pockets were filled. We thought he must be storing his nuts for the winter, and when, this summer, we found a great many shells at the foot of a tree, we knew that this had been his work, and that we had found the tree in which he had slept all through the winter.

This year we have been watching for our little friends, but I am afraid Topsy and Trip, our pussy and pug, have frightened them away, for we only hear them in the tree-tops scolding and chattering, and see them now and then on the rocks. But when the nuts come we hope our little friends will come again, and teach us to help others to gather nuts.—Presbyterian.

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## How She Cured Him.

Peter Doldrum was inclined to be shiftless. He was not a man of extended business capacity, nor had he, by inheritance, been blessed with great intellect or much worldly goods. Peter Doldrum was a day laborer in a small country village, owning a poor cottage and a poor piece of land; but both cot and land might have been made much better had Peter Doldrum so willed and determined; in fact, his cot, that came from the parents of his wife, was pleasantly situated, and the land had been of the very best quality. But Peter was satisfied to work for others who would pay him, but taking little heed of the capacities and possibilities of his own place. And yet Peter had not lived unhappily. His wife was a thrifty, hard-working, good-natured woman, very seldom speaking otherwise than kindly to her husband, though often sorely tried; for at heart Peter was kindness and docility personified.

But, alas! there was danger of his going to the bad. The symptoms were strong in that direction. Could Mrs. Doldrum correct him? She had resolved that she would try.

It was a cold, drizzling day in mid-November. Peter had eaten his breakfast, and sat brooding over the kitchen stove. His wife said to him:

"Peter, can't you put some kind of a weather-strip on the bottom of the back door to-day? The wind and the rain beat in there dreadfully."

"No," answered Peter with a shudder. "It's a cold job, and I don't feel like it."

"Well, can't you fix the pump? The handle is loose, and the lower box leaks."

"Can't do it, Susan, I ain't a pump-maker."

"But you can do something toward it, if you try."

"I don't want to try. Ten to one I should spile it."

"Then won't you fix my mop and water-pail?"

"Not to-day. They'll wriggle through if you're keefer."

"You can at least fix the windows so that they won't rattle so and let in so much wind."

"Don't bother me, Susan. I ain't in the mood for work. Just you wash your dishes and let me alone."

Having thus spoken, Peter rose and prepared for going out. His wife knew very well his intended destination. He was going to the tavern, where he would be sure to meet some of his wet-day cronies, and where he would drink more or less. Thus far Peter had not been in the habit of drinking to inebriation, but the habit was growing upon him.

"Stop a minute, Peter," she said.

"What for?"

"Wait and see."

Peter had curiosity and he waited. Susan left the kit-

chen, and when she returned she had on a hood and a shawl, with an umbrella in her hand.

"Susan, where're ye goin'?"

"I am going with you, Peter; you are going to the tavern, and I shall keep you company."

Peter stared.

"Susan! what're ye thinking of?"

"It is lonesome here without you, Peter, and if there is comfort to be found at the tavern, why mayn't I go and enjoy it with you? At all events, I am going."

"Susan!"

"Don't worry, Peter; I won't say a word in the presence of your cronies to hurt your feelings. We'll only enjoy ourselves together."

"Do you really mean it, Susan?"

Peter was not entirely oblivious. He felt the reproach. He took off his hat and hung it upon a peg. Then he scratched his head, and finally said:

"I declare, Susan, this is a pooty consider'ble smart lectur' delivered at short notice. Don't let's say no more. Just you take off your hood and I'll stay at home."

Susan went away and removed her outer garments, and Peter got his hammer and nails and went to work, and before noon he had fixed a weather strip upon the door; and fixed the pump and the mop; had tightened the chamber-windows, besides having done various other little things that were needful. And in the afternoon spurred up by the accomplishments of the morning, he sought work on his own account.

And when night came he felt better and happier than he had felt for a long time. And the good influence did not fade with the day. That proved the turning-point of a life. Thenceforward Peter Doldrum went on improving until he became a thrifty and self-reliant man.—Ex.

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## A Sailor's Pledge.

Returning recently from Hong-Kong, an old sailor had an accident, and was badly scalded; he was very ill. When he began to recover the doctor said, "You must take some port wine." "No," said the old sailor; "I am a teetotaler." "But," said the doctor, "you need it to strengthen you." "Doctor," said the old man, "do you think I shall die if I don't take the wine?" "Yes," said the doctor. "Then," said the sailor, "when you get into the St. Katherine's Docks, go round to the little temperance room and tell them that the old man died sober." But he did not die!

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## Interesting Items.

It is always hard times with a man who drinks up his wages.

The reason why so many break the pledge is that their grandfathers never took it.

If a boy were to get drunk, would he make a man of himself?

The man who can afford to get drunk is too rich.—New York Voice.

An inscription discovered in the ruins of Babylon has been translated by Mr. Boscawen. It tells of the murder of Sennacherib by his son, the coronation of Nabonidus and many interesting things about his reign.

The University of Chicago proposes to erect the finest gymnasium in the world, and the architects are now at work on the plans. The building will be about 300 feet by 100 feet, the athletic field 600 feet by 400 feet, and will be covered by a building unique in architecture and especially adapted for this purpose. From a framework of iron and steel will spring immense arches supporting a removable glass roof. In the summer months during pleasant weather, the room will be open to such an extent that the field will be practically an open one. In the winter it will be closed and properly heated and ventilated. Ranging around this immense inclosure will be an amphitheatre, with a seating capacity for 25,000 people. The total cost will not be more than \$600,000.

It is a curious circumstance that Queen Victoria has never seen her "faithful Commons" in session. She is denied a spectacle that may be witnessed by the humblest of her subjects. It can hardly be said with truth in these times that the presence of the sovereign in the House of Commons would influence debate. Neither does the other old constitutional theory that the presence of the sovereign would be a violation of the freedom and the secrecy of the debates hold good in these days of verbatim newspaper Parliamentary reports. Her Majesty could indeed be an unobserved spectator of the House of Commons at work if she sat behind the grill of the ladies' gallery, but this would not be consistent with the dignity of Victoria, and the fact remains that she has never been in the House of Commons.—New York Herald.

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