

LITTLE FOLKS

Mud Gods.

A lady missionary tells of a journey she made with her husband in India. They visited a great many heathen villages, and in these they preached the Gospel and healed the sick, for both herself and her husband are doctors as well as missionaries. Here is one story she tells:



'One morning we visited a Hindu village near our camping ground. The people, as usual, were most friendly, and invited us into house after house. On entering one courtyard I saw a funny little mud erection in one corner, with three little heaps of mud in a row. My little boy was going up to it and touching it. I was thinking how wonderfully alike children were all

the world over, and was telling Ronald that he could make little mountains like that with his pail, when I saw by the shocked look on the women's faces that there was something wrong.

'On inspecting the mud pies more closely, I saw they had a little red paint (the sacred color) on them, and it flashed across me that this

was the household god' I asked the women, and they said it was.

'Any child could have made things like that in an hour's play, and yet these poor people worshipped it as a god! Think of it—worshipping little heaps of mud! How good it is to be able to tell these people, dwelling in darkness, of the true God and of the eternal life!' —'Friendly Greetings.'

What Changed Neal's Mind.

(Elizabeth Preston Allan, in the 'Presbyterian Banner.')

'There he comes, Joe—hear him?' Now keep as still as a mouse, don't even wink hard, and we'll catch him for sure.'

Joe tried to follow this advice, and, though he was promptly seized with a nervous desire to sneeze, and then to cough, he managed to do neither; and meantime the one whom he and Neil were trying to 'catch' came on almost as noiselessly to meet his fate.

There had been trouble for several weeks in the fourth grade,

about lunch baskets being robbed; Miss Dysart had tried in various ways to catch the thief, but had failed, and the boys and girls were a good deal excited over it.

That morning Neal Bender, one of the oldest and most reliable boys in the fourth grade, had a private chat with his teacher and told her he was sure he had a clue to the theft.

'If you will give me permission to stay out of school for one morning, Miss Dysart,' he said, 'I believe I can clear this thing up; but the others must all think I am at home.'

'All right, Neal?' said his teacher, 'take your books and go home, clear home, mind you, so that I can say I let you go home. That is all you need to tell me beforehand. But stop, my boy, you must have a witness; it won't do to put one boy's word against another's, even when that other is Neal Bender!'

Neal's honest face flushed a little at the implied praise.

'That's so, Miss Dysart,' he said, 'I didn't think of that; I'd like to have Joe Carroll.'

'Joe will do very well,' answered Miss Dysart, 'and as his home is on the road to yours, see that you both go fairly home; I don't ask what you expect to do after that.'

But it was not necessary for the teacher to give any explanation; in full view of the whole grade, just before the bell-ringing, Neal and Joe were seen to shoulder their book-straps and set out for home.

It was now about eleven o'clock; an hour before the mid-day recess; one of the busiest hours at school; one of the times when a scholar rarely could be excused from class room. Neal and Joe had clambered up to the unfloored, unceiled loft, above the upper hall, from which—thanks to a broken bit in the hall ceiling—they could look right down on the shelf that held the lunch baskets.

It was then and there that our story began, with an order from Neal not to wink an eyelash.

It had suddenly dawned on Neal the day before that Otto Youell, a little second grade boy, had the job of refilling all the water buckets about that time in the morning; and there were some circumstances that made it seem likely he was the thief. Otto was very poor, and the lunch baskets would certainly be tempting to him. He came from a disreputable set of people, and stealing would 'come easy' to him, poor little vagabond.

And so, sure enough, as our two policemen lay in perfect stillness on the dusty rafters above the hall, with eyes peering down upon the row of baskets, they heard Otto set his empty bucket on the top step, at the other end of the hall, and