

SUNDAY SCHOOL ADVOCATE

LITTLE
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For the S. S. Advocate.

THE CHRISTMAS SHEAF.

WHAT is that queer old fellow doing? He has a kindly face, and the birds don't mind him a bit. They act more like home pets than free birds of the air. They seem quite bold in their attacks upon that sheaf of wheat which the old man is tying to a pole. What does the picture mean?

The old man is a native of Norway. (Get your map and find where Norway is situated.) It is the custom in that country every Christmas to tie a sheaf of wheat to a pole over the barn that the birds may have a merry Christmas.

What a beautiful custom! How different it is here. Instead of feeding the poor birds in the cold weather we shoot them. Instead of trying to keep the little flying beauties alive until spring, when they would cheer us with their songs and work for us by eating the worms from our fruit-trees, we kill them. Shame, shame on every boy who goes round with a gun on his shoulder popping at every little bird he happens to meet. Boys, the picture says to you, Spare the little birds! Spare the little birds!
U. U.

For the S. S. Advocate.

CARRYING THE BASKET.

SOME forty years ago a party of half a dozen school-boys set off on a pleasant morning for an excursion. Their destination was an Indian mound about three miles distant. Their path lay through an unbroken forest. Their accoutrements consisted of a rifle, a shotgun, and a luncheon-basket, and we may well believe that they anticipated a delightful day. And this they would have had, but—there is almost always a "but" coming in to mar the best laid schemes for pleasure—in this party were a very haughty, pretentious boy, known as Pryor, and a new-comer, a plain,



awkward, but intelligent and manly boy from New England, whose name was Salmon. The latter was carrying the luncheon-basket, and with a companion called Edgar brought up the rear, so that Pryor, who was some distance in advance, did not see him at first. After a while he happened to spy him, and he called out, "I say, Ned, is that Yankee coming along?"

go hungry than eat the best dinner in the world and be imposed upon."

"Well," said Pryor haughtily, "right or wrong, I sha'n't go back. The basket may rot there for all I care. My mother taught me never to give up to anybody but her."

"My mother taught me," said Salmon quietly,

"Yeth, I thuppothe tho," replied Ned, trying to imitate Salmon's defective speech.

"Well," resumed Pryor, "we'll make him carry the basket; that's all he's fit for."

Salmon heard this coarse speech, and perceiving that he had already carried the basket his share of the way, he soon made a remark to that effect, and his companion offered to take it, who in due time passed it to the third. Ned with the other huntsman had gone on, so the basket was next offered to Pryor. He refused to take it, however, and after a few words the one who had carried it set it down in the path, calling out to Salmon that it was his turn. Salmon manfully replied that it was not his turn, and he should not take it. Edgar added that it was Pryor's turn to carry it, but the reply was made that Salmon must take it for Pryor would not. Hereupon Edgar proposed to carry it himself, but Salmon would not consent to that. He said that if the rest would be as firm as he, Pryor would be obliged to carry the basket. So they all went on and left it there in the path.

But when they overtook the hunters the basket was wanted, and then Pryor tried to bully Salmon. "You must go back for the basket," said he; "we shall have no dinner if you don't."

"Well," was the reply, "I shall not go back for the basket if we never have any dinner. If it belonged to me to do it, or if you had treated me decently and asked it as a favor, I'd go back twenty times if necessary, but I'd rather have my rights and