There were certain local 'characters,' leaders among their fellows, whose friendship he thought it would be advisable for him to cultivate. George Reckers, who could send a bullet through the heart of a bounding deer at 500 yards; Patsy Mulligan, who could always get the 'limit,' whether of fish or game; Tom Lanahan, 'the market hunter,' who was never yet caught by the game-warden despite the latter's vigilance. Tom's method of hunting was against the law; he used a trained cow. Working his way gradually by the side of the cow up to a flock of geese, he had been known to bring down close on 200 birds with his automatic gun before the flock got out of range. And Mickey Mulligan, whose prowess on the 'diamond' often won victory for the Maywell 'Giants.' These were celebrities; they were somewhat akin to heroes in the popular estimation; they set up the standards which others tried to follow.

One morning Father Haynes met George Reckers and a few of his chums with their guns slung over their shoulders marching toward the hills.

'Well, boys, I see you are prepared for a killing; going to get some fresh meat?'

'Yes, Father, I expect we'll get some.'

'What are you out for to-day—quail or deer?'

'Deer, Father. A little vension tastes good these days. We'll bring you a mess for your dinner to-morrow.'

'Thank you, George. I'd like to go with you, but I have some important matters to attend to to-day.'

'Would you, really, Father?' asked George, fairly surprised.

'Yes, indeed; I think a tramp through the hills would be delightful.'

'Ah, come on, Father; let the business wait,' urged Patsy Mulligan; 'we'll give you a grand day's sport.'

'Not to-day. Some other time, if you will permit me, I hope to make one of your party.'

'Are you a good shot, Father?' asked George.

'Well, I can shoot, but I would not claim to be a good shot.'

'Here, try this rifle, Father,' placing the gun into the priest's hands. 'You'll find it shoots true.'

'There goes a hawk!' cried Patsy. 'Watch him, Father. There—he 'lights—one, two, four—see him, on the ninth telegraph pole from here. Knock the stuffin' out of him—excuse me, Father.'

The Father put up his gun, took steady aim, fired, and the hawk fell.

'Well, I'll be darned!' exploded Patsy. 'George, I don't believe you could ha' done it yourself. Father, that was a great shot; you're a crackerjack! You must come with us sometime. Wait till the rest of the boys hear of this; they'll think you're a wonder.'

'Well, boys, I must be going. I wish you luck. I hope to see you at Mass on Sunday.' To which there was no response beyond a cheery 'Good-bye, Father.'

Father Haynes woke up next morning to find himself famous. George Reckers, the crack shot, would have to look to his laurels.

Christmas was drawing near. Father Haynes had been delivering a series of sermons on the ordinary duties of a Christian. He saw that the people lacked instruction, and so he adapted his preaching to their needs. He was gratified to see that the congregation was growing; that some who seemed to have little faith or devotion had become regular attendants. If he could only induce them to receive the sacraments at Christmas he knew that God's grace would do the rest. As it was, he could see an awakening of their dormant spiritual faculties; they were, at least, becoming interested.

About two weeks before the great festival, he called on George Reckers and proposed organising a hunting party. He would like to go out with the boys for a day's sport.

'Do you mean it, Father?' asked George, his eyes opening wide in astonishment.

'Mean it! Of course I do. And I want you to invite all the boys. Charley Myers will come with his auto; it will seat seven comfortably; three or four more can hang onto the running-boards. Wilson's stable will send out the "carry-all," and that will accommodate quite a few.'

'Well, Father, this is the best ever! The boys will be tickled to death. You know that us fellers would rather hunt than eat. And to think that your Reverence is going to lead us. We'll all have a bully time.'

The goose hunt was a success from every point of view. The boys vowed that they had 'the time of their lives,' and that Father Haynes seemed to enjoy it as much as they did. They felt highly honored and flattered at their pastor's unbending and condescending to take a leading part in their favorite sport. From that day they were like clay in his hands; he could mould them as he willed; they were his boys.

'I tell you, boys, we ain't doing right,' said George Reckers some days afterward, when they were assembled in the blacksmith's shop, discussing current events. 'We ain't doing right, I say. I haven't been to my duty in a long, long time, and I guess you fellers are in the same boat. There's Father Haynes worrying his heart out over no-account fellers like us, that don't deserve any sympathy or consideration. You heard him last Sunday pleading with us to do something for our immortal souls, his voice so soft and tender—like that it would have touched any heart that wasn't as hard as flint. You may say what you like, but I'm going to my duty on Christmas morning, with the help of God——'

'Me, too,' broke in Patsy Mulligan. 'Do you mind the day he knocked the stuffin' out of that darned hawk? Ever since that day I'd ha' done anything he asked me.'

Father Haynes was unable to control his emotion on Christmas morning as person after person approached the altar rails to receive the Lord of Life; men who were thought to be hardened, who for years and years had been estranged from God, knelt with the simplicity and devotion of little children to partake of the Bread of Life. No wonder his heart was singing Te Deums.

Having won their hearts and gained their souls for God, he turned his attention to the material needs of the parish. There was a debt of 1700 dollars. There were no wealthy people in the congregation, neither were there very poor; the majority were in fairly comfortable circumstances. He would make a direct appeal to them. He called a meeting on the first Sunday of the new year. His boys responded nobly; 700 dollars was subscribed immediately. Later on he proposed a concert, and they were all enthusiastically in favor of it. He made a trip to the big city lying down in the valley on the other side of the range, and secured the services of some musicians, together with the celebrated 'Lyric quartet.' His boys sold tickets, decorated the town hall, set up the improvised stage, acted as ushers and doorkeepers and made themselves useful generally. All Maywell turned out to the concert, and it was voted the best ever given in the valley. Still later a bazaar was held for three evenings, under the auspiecs of the newly organised Altar Society, and here, too, the boys shouldered the principal part of the work. In less than nine months something over 2000 dollars was raised, the debt paid, and Maywell was regenerated.—*Extension.*

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