

dred miles for the pleasure of being with us to-day. As a mark of the city's appreciation, I ask that you give three cheers for Mr. Tiller—our guest of honor!

Thereupon a mighty cheer swelled and thundered from a thousand throats—a joyous welcome to the guest of honor!

Mr. Tiller's hosts sent him back in a Pullman car, with particular instructions to the conductor to take good care of him on the road. The governor's wife bought a beautiful doll to go into the knapsack for Mary Ellen, along with various other gifts that Mr. Tiller had bought with the remaining dollars, and that he intended as peace-offerings to the family at home.

'You ought to have told me how much you wanted to go, father,' his son said reproachfully. 'I'd have tried to raise the money some way. It was a mighty rash thing in a man of your years, undertaking to walk that distance.'

'Shucks! Didn't I march with the infantry for four years? What's a trifle like two hundred for a man that's got all his faculties?' replied old Mr. Tiller.

But to Mary Ellen, nursing her doll in the contentment of fulfilled desire, he confided. 'It was mighty lucky for me, honey, that one of those pesky things knocked me down. For it's a fine thing to be a "guest of honor"; and I was just a little grain dreading the walk back. I have my faculties, thanks be, but—I don't mind telling you, Mary Ellen—I'm not capable of holding out as long as I used to when I was young.'—*Youth's Companion*.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A CONVERT

Eminent converts, as a rule (writes Mr. J. F. Hogan, the London correspondent of the *Melbourne Advocate*) are reserved and reticent as to the circumstances under which they were led from the Anglican communion into the Catholic Church. And the feeling is a very proper and natural one, for the grace of conversion is so private and intimate, and is preceded by so many spiritual struggles known only to the person concerned and his God, that there is a quite intelligible shrinking, a deep-seated reluctance to unbosoming such inmost secrets to the general reading public. Two of the most exalted converts of our time, the late Marquis of Ripon and the late Lord Brampton (better known and remembered as Mr. Justice Hawkins), always refused to make any statement in answer to persistent inquiries on this sacred subject. And a still more eminent convert, Cardinal Newman, would doubtless have been equally reticent to his dying day if he had not been stung into writing his famous *Apologia* by the brutal taunts and accusations of the bigoted writer, Charles Kingsley. But Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson is an exception to the general rule in this respect. In his new book, *The Confessions of a Convert*, he tells the story of his life in the Church of England, his gradual loss of confidence in that go-as-you-please institution, and the circumstances that led up to his full and frank acceptance of the claims of the Catholic Church upon his allegiance. And he tells it in the most

Candid, Breezy, and Attractive Fashion.

Monsignor Benson is a remarkably interesting and gifted convert. He is a son of a late Archbishop of Canterbury, and some 300 years have passed since a son of an English Protestant Archbishop became a Catholic. Ever since his reception into the Catholic fold Monsignor Benson has industriously plied a facile and powerful pen, pouring forth a stream of books that have not only placed him in the front rank of contemporary story-tellers, but have also served the higher purpose of presenting Catholic historical truths in the most attractive and readable guise, thereby dissipating no small amount of inherited prejudice and ignorance. His latest novel, *Come Rack, Come Rope*, is a wonderfully vivid reconstruction of Catholic England under the penal laws, and it is in large demand at all the circulating libraries. Monsignor Benson was educated at Eton and the University of Cambridge. At the former—England's most celebrated public school—he

says he 'did not receive any deep religious impressions, nor did any other boy so far as I am aware.' Before proceeding to Cambridge he 'became absorbed and fascinated by the music and dignity of worship at St. Paul's Cathedral, London.' He went to Holy Communion there regularly every week. At Cambridge, while an undergraduate, he received the first impulses towards the Catholic Church. He went occasionally to High Mass, but his reasons for doing so were not exactly religious or doctrinal, but rather musical and artistic. Still, he had arrived at the stage of regarding Protestantism as 'noisy, extravagant, and vulgar.' At the close of his University career he studied for Anglican orders under Dean Vaughan, who belonged to the Evangelical, or Low Church, section of the Church of England. In due course he was ordained by his father, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who thus recorded the fact in his diary:—'I had the wonderful happiness of laying hands on my Hugh. God keep him stable and strong in His Son Christ.' His first work after ordination was as a missionary in the East End of London. While so engaged he attended a retreat given by Father Maturin, then the most eloquent preacher of the High Church party, now a well-known and popular pulpit orator in the London Catholic churches. This retreat was a turning-point in Monsignor Benson's spiritual life. Father Maturin's eloquence and persuasiveness 'took him completely by storm,' and he allied himself with the High Churchmen as one of the results of this retreat. He joined the Anglican monastic community of the 'Resurrection' at Mirfield, commonly known as the 'Mirfield monks.' There he gradually came to realise the 'gulf that separated me from Catholic Christendom,' and finally he found himself 'holding all the doctrines of the Catholic Church with the exception of Papal Infallibility.' That last remaining doubt was removed.

After a Diligent Study of the Bible, where he found the doctrine of the Papal supremacy either asserted or implied in no less than 29 passages. It was this close and systematic study of the Scripture that, he says, 'finally and supremely satisfied him as to the positive claims of Rome,' but he also derived help and enlightenment from Cardinal Newman's *Apologia and Development of Christian Doctrine*, Mallock's *Doctrine and Doctrinal Disruption*, and Mr. Spencer Jones' book on *England and the Holy See*. The late Dr. Littledale's *Plain Reasons for Not Joining the Church of Rome* is a book that has had in many cases the exactly opposite effect upon the minds of honest inquirers that its author intended. Its transparent insincerities, malicious insinuations, and utterly unhistorical statements have frequently defeated the direct object of its publication and struck the word 'not' out of its title. Monsignor Benson, like many other converts, was very unfavorably impressed by its perusal, and he labels it 'a collection of sneers.' It was Cardinal Newman's *Development of Christian Doctrine* that brought Monsignor Benson's mental and spiritual struggles to a happy and triumphant issue, 'clearing away the last floating mists and letting me see the city of God in all her beauty and strength.' Naturally, Monsignor Benson's reception into the true fold created a considerable sensation in England, and he was the recipient of many letters of welcome and congratulation, also some angry and abusive ones, in which he was called 'a deliberate traitor,' 'an infatuated fool,' 'an ungrateful bigot,' and various other choice epithets. The descriptions of life in High Anglican 'monasteries' and 'convents' constitute some of the most interesting and illuminating chapters in the book. They are written in the most friendly and sympathetic spirit, and he expresses his deep sense of gratitude to his old companions in the 'Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield,' a body that

Has Supplied Several Other Notable Converts

in addition to Monsignor Benson. The London papers have given a very cordial reception to the book. The *Record*, the organ of the Low Church, or Protestant party in the Established Church, reviews it in three columns of fair and impartial comment. It concludes by congratulating Monsignor Benson on the fact that,

Leslie McMinn

MONUMENTAL SCULPTOR, 70 RANGITIKEI STREET (Opp. Holbein & Kirks)
PALMERSTON NORTH. Cemetery work executed any part of District.