

of titled and privileged personages who still held the lands and the wealth, which, in the days of the Reformation, they had plundered, not from churchmen and monks only, but from the English people, and to protect whose ill-gotten gains the whole fabric of distorted "history" had been invented.

The book produced an immediate and momentous effect. Cobbett was broadcasting Lingard's historical results, bringing them to the knowledge of the multitude, and adding to them elements of his own. Mr. G. D. H. Cole (whose recently published *Life of William Cobbett* must supersede the works of all his earlier biographers) goes so far as to say that he, with his *History of the Reformation*, rendered services to the cause of Catholic Emancipation only second to those of O'Connell. Mr. Cole tells us that: "Appearing in numbers in 1824 and 1825, the book achieved an enormous circulation. Apart from pirated editions and partial reprints, which were numerous, the numbers rapidly sold about 40,000 copies each. The work was republished at once in Ireland and in America, and translated into French and other languages."

Its Many Editions.

In the hundred years since its appearance, it has gone through many editions, and no work of Cobbett's has had so many readers. It was met, as it appeared, by attempts to refute or discredit it; and there was a hostile outburst of virulent abuse that only helped to advertise it widely. A bulky pamphlet was issued in London under the title of *Cobbett's Book of the Roman Catholic Church*. This was really only an opponent's collection of passages reflecting on the Papacy and on Catholics, gleaned from Cobbett's earlier writings—quotations sometimes garbled, often separated from a qualifying context, and always representing some phases of the author's views before his eyes were opened to the historical facts by reading Lingard. Cobbett himself protested that he did not write as an advocate of the Catholic religion. Thus in the issue of the work for January, 1825, he said:—

"I have made no converts to the Catholic faith; but I have made thousands of converts to the truth respecting the cause of the Catholics. It is *truth* that I have in view to implant in the minds of my countrymen; and not only from an abstract love of truth, but also because a knowledge of that truth is particularly useful at this time. I can not have any desire to make converts to the Catholic faith. I believe it to be a very good faith, because, as far as my experience goes, it produces very good moral effects; but my object has been to show that it has been vilified unjustly, and that we ought not on account of it to be aiding and abetting in the ill-treatment of our fellow-subjects."

Cobbett's work was described by the hostile critics of his day as mere reckless pamphleteering disguised as history. Even Mr. Cole, his most competent biographer, rather depreciates its claim to rank as serious history. But the best testimony to its value is that of one of the most eminent of living historical experts—Cardinal Gasquet. While

he was still simply Abbot of Ampleforth, he produced an edition of the *History of the Protestant Reformation*, in preparing which he compared Cobbett's statements with the original authorities and documents, verified his references and added notes, making corrections in points of detail where needful. He wrote that he was surprised to find how few such notes and emendations were necessary, and what a correct impression Cobbett gave of the course of events taken as a whole. The *History* has thus still its solid value, and with the lapse of a century, it has lost nothing of its popular appeal.

A New Era of Truth and Goodness.

He said that he did not want to make converts to the Catholic Church, but his book has helped to make many, by clearing away from the minds of readers the obstacle created by that false tradition, which represented the English Reformation as a national movement against a hateful, soul-destroying tyranny and the beginning of a new era of truth and goodness. Cobbett's protest against that strange travesty of the facts is all the more convincing for the non-Catholic reader, because its writer was himself a "loyal member of the Church of England." He clung to it chiefly because it was "English" and one of the institutions of his country, even though he was fully alive to its existing abuses and the evil aspects of its origin. But this traditional conservatism did not prevent him from realising that the social results of the Reformation had been disastrous to the English people. Thus he wrote of it:

"Nothing has ever yet come to supply the place of what was then destroyed. This is the view for us to take of the matter. It is not a mere matter of religion, but a matter of rights, liberties, real wealth, happiness and national greatness. If all these have been strengthened or augmented by the Reformation, even then we must not approve of the horrible means; but if they have all been weakened or lessened by that Reformation, what an outrageous abuse of words it is to call the event by that name!"

It is to William Cobbett's great honor that his active political life was devoted to efforts towards repairing some of the social evils and injustices which the Reformation of the sixteenth century had left as an evil legacy to the nineteenth.

MOTOR CAR OWNERS.

A professional man in Wellington who cleans his own Motor says that since he started to use Q-tol he dispenses with gloves and is able to keep the dirt from getting ingrained. His hands are now smoother than ever they were. A large 2/- bottle of Q-tol lasts two months.

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Diocesan News

Archdiocese of Wellington

(From our own correspondent.)

September 11.

The schools have opened again after the vacation, and teachers and pupils are preparing for a strenuous term. The long Christmas spell enforced by the Health authorities has made this a hard year for both.

His Grace Archbishop O'Shea left Wellington on Monday night for Blenheim on an episcopal visitation. He is now in Nelson, whence he will proceed to the Coast.

Wanganui

(From a correspondent.)

September 11.

On Sunday, 16th ult., Rev. Father Kimbell received 16 aspirants into the ranks of the Aramoho Children of Mary. This ceremony was followed by a procession of Our Lady in which the Children of Mary, school children, and altar boys took part. Father Kimbell preached on devotion to the Mother of God and Benediction brought the evening's devotions to a close.

In one respect only is Aramoho church behind the times. Electric light has been the fashion in city and suburbs for some time past, but the Catholics of Aramoho, on Sunday evenings, still peer into their hymn books 'neath the fitful glimmer of gas. With the object of turning night into day at St. Joseph's, the Aramoho Children of Mary put their heads together and decided upon a fancy dress ball for the adults and a fancy dress party for the children. The first-named function took place on Tuesday, the 1st inst., in the Aramoho Convent School. The men, for some unknown reason, fought shy of fancy costumes, only two being brave enough to face the music; so that the prizes were carried off by the ladies. Miss M. Luxford's was the most original dress. "N.Z. Products," and Miss Hazel Henry's was the prettiest. "Carnival." The hall was tastefully decorated with greenery, paper butterflies, and streamers, and a very dainty supper was provided. The "Dixieland" orchestra was in attendance and added much to the success of the dance.

The children's party, which took place on Thursday, the 3rd inst., was also crowned with success. Over 200 children were there in fancy costumes, and of course many fond parents came along to see and admire their darlings. It was decided that the people should vote for the best fancy dresses, and it was indeed a difficult task, for so many children deserved mention. The ballot results were—Girls: Margaret Robinson 1 ("Chicken"); Ellwyn George, 2 ("Bride"). Special prizes: Nellie Beuchar ("Black Cat") and Cathie Ahern ("Rainbow"). Boys—Bernard Locke ("Bridegroom") and Eric George ("Swagger") tied for first place. Paddy Ahern ("Golliwog") 2. Special prize, Ashley Healey ("Jazz Band"). Dancing was kept up until eleven o'clock, which is quite late enough for little ones. The final figures are not yet made up, but sufficient has been