

yet another election by "the Church of England Council in Natal."

Summary of statistics of the diocese of Mississippi:—Whole number of clergy, 32; candidates for Holy Orders, 2; parishes in union with council, 33; organized missions, 17; unorganized missions, 27; churches and chapels, 56; parish buildings, 4; rectories, 21; baptisms during the year, infants, 228, adults, 39; confirmed during the year, 232; confirmed persons reported, 3,446; communicants up to date, 3,066; marriages reported, 85; burials reported, 165; Sunday school teachers, 270; scholars, 5,027; total contributions reported, \$45,028.94; value of church property reported, \$328,155.

The Rev. Canon Grainger, D.D. (M. R. I. A.), of Broughshane, has just made a munificent gift to the Belfast Corporation for the Public Museum in the Free Library. It consists of his splendid collection of British and Foreign antiquities. The collection is one of the largest and most valuable in the country, and was inspected a few years ago by the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland, on the occasion of their visit to Ballymena and neighbourhood. Unfortunately the generous donor is suffering from an illness which must eventually prove fatal, and has decided to part with his museum during his lifetime. It is said that it will be necessary to build an addition to the Free Library buildings in order to properly accommodate the antiquities.

PERSIA.—Writing to the *Daily News* Canon MacColl expresses himself incredulous as to Miss Greenfield's conversion to Islam:—"The Turkish Government puts a premium on the abduction and forcible conversion of Christian maidens. Any Mussulman who does this meritorious service is rewarded by perpetual exemption from military service. The *modus operandi* is as follows:—The abducted girl is jealously guarded from the opportunity of declaring her mind freely. If persuasion does not make her yield, she is threatened with death. If that proves ineffectual she is sentenced to be deflowered. Miss Greenfield made her profession of faith in Islam under the terror of either of these dreadful alternatives. She was still practically in the power of her captors, and evidently repeated the formula dictated to her on pain of death or dishonour."

THE VATICAN DECREE OF INFALLIBILITY.—It is twenty-one years since the Vatican Council first voted (July 13, 1870) on the dogma of infallibility. Of 671 members of the council, 451 voted in the affirmative; 88 voted in the negative; 62 voted *Placet, juxta modum*, that is, that they would vote for it if it were seriously modified; 70, who were irreconcilably opposed to it, abstained, for different reasons, from voting. Thus the vote stood 451 to 220—a two-thirds majority. But the numerical majority was deceptive, since the weight of intellectual and spiritual authority was largely with the minority: and besides, it was the minority which really represented the great body of the Church. Thus, the five archbishops of Paris, Breslau, Cologne, Vienna and Cambrai, whose flocks together aggregated 7,800,000 Roman Catholics, were outvoted more than 12 to 1 by the 62 bishops of the Papal States, whose people numbered only 700,000, and more than 20 to 1 by the hundred and odd titular bishops who had no people at all! Altogether the Roman Catholics represented by the majority of the council numbered only about 64,000,000, among whom many were opposed to the dogma and few cared anything about it; while the minority represented more than 108,000,000, of whom very few indeed believed the dogma, and fewer still desired its promulgation by the council. Moreover it is admitted that no council can be regarded as ecumenical in which the Eastern Churches are not represented; and no decree of a council can be of ecumenical authority in which the Eastern Churches do not concur. Some Roman Catholic theologians may maintain that the East was sufficiently represented at the Vatican by the uniat bishops of various rites who were present; but if that assumption were to be admitted—as indeed it cannot, unless great Churches can be properly represented by a few schismatics—still, even so, the East did not concur in the vote described, since a majority of the uniat bishops voted with the minority of the council. By every rule of ecclesiastical antiquity the nominal two-thirds vote on the dogma of infallibility, which was cast on July 13, 1870, was completely destitute of authority.—*Churchman*.

INDIA.—An American clergyman who is travelling in Ceylon, makes the following remarks in a letter to our contemporary, the *Living Church*, in regard to the craftiness of the Buddhists in making visitors to their temples appear to worship heathen relics: "There were too many stories floating about of how travellers' curiosity and thoughtlessness had brought them to 'pay their devotions to Buddha's tooth,' to

encourage a Christian to enter the temple. There were some rumors, too, of tricks played by the yellow-robed, mild-mannered, guileless-looking monks, whereby some who would shrink from honouring even a genuine relic of Buddha, were beguiled into what Buddhists deem the worship of the doubtful tooth. One told me of how he had been handed a flower, as if to admire it. Of course he took it. On returning it to his guide, the man laid it on the silver table before the tooth's shrine; and as the visitor's name was known, that flower was preserved as being 'the offering to Buddha's tooth made by' So-and-So. Whether or not that is exceptional, I don't know. But certain is it that the work of our missionaries in Ceylon is harder now than it was a few years ago. This is not the only reason why the work of Christianising the people becomes increasingly difficult. Exaggerated echoes are heard in the east of the operations of the Theosophical Society, and such strange rumors reach the ears of the natives of the views of Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott, Mrs. Besant, Sir Edwin Arnold, and others, that they are ready to believe that the Western world is about to abandon Christianity for Buddhism! So deeply have these impressions sunk into the minds of the credulous natives that they are ready to believe any ridiculous tales. The clergyman to whom we have already referred says: "There are many poor Cingalese who are sure that Queen Victoria is now a Buddhist at heart, but without 'courage of her convictions!' They argue thus: "Did she not send her son, the Prince of Wales, half round the world in order that he might pay his devotions to Buddha's tooth? Did she not send the heir-presumptive, the Duke of Clarence, and others of the Royal family, to say their prayers and make their offering at the shrine? Did she not send out a recent Governor to encourage us Buddhists in every way he could, having our holy days observed by all, so far as he could? Ah, there can be no doubt as to what she is at heart!"

IRELAND.—The Girl's Friendly Society is making vigorous efforts to extend its work in Ireland. A series of meetings in connection with the Society is being held in the united diocese of Dublin, Glendalough, and Kildare. Miss Hawksley, president of the Rochester Diocesan Council of the G.F.S., has come over to act as a special deputation. This lady is an extremely able and valuable advocate. She has been actively engaged in the work of the Society from its foundation in 1875, and is well qualified to speak of its past brilliant record, and what it is capable of doing as a factor in parochial organization. In the diocese of Ossory, Ferns, and Leighlin very successful meetings have just been held. The importance of this Society as a means of promoting the moral and spiritual welfare of its members and associates cannot be over-estimated. The Archbishop of Dublin takes a great interest in its work. The work of the Church of Ireland Spiritual Aid Society deserves to be better known than it is. Although it is small, it is doing an excellent work in enabling incumbents to get additional help, which is often much needed. Last year the grants made amounted to 291l., which was an increase of 61l. on the previous year. The religious troubles at Arklow are not yet ended. On Sunday week last there was much excitement in the town. The police are alleged to be acting more harshly than hitherto in their method of harrasing Mr. Hallows and his brother clergy. Whether or not this be the case, the clergy took a stand against the way in which they were being treated. One of them, Mr. Harrison, seized one of the lamp-posts on the thoroughfare, and although as many as sixteen policemen gathered around him to make him abandon his hold, they failed to effect their object. The Bible was, however, torn out of his hands, and the leaves fell in showers around one of the squares. His congregation were hustled about the streets, their umbrellas broken, their brooches torn out, and one of them received a black eye in the scuffle that took place. During the evening service in the church Mr. Harrison broke down several times. In the absence of the incumbent (Mr. Hallows) he was obliged to preach, but the violence he had undergone rendered him almost unable for the task. The dedication and unveiling of the splendid memorial windows which have been erected in the Cathedral, Lisburn, in memory of the late Sir Richard Wallace, Bart., took place on Monday last week in presence of a large congregation. The windows are a most brilliant addition to the Cathedral. The Bishop of Down and Connor and Dromore was unable to be present owing to an engagement. There was, however, a large attendance of the clergy. The sermon was preached by the Dean of Armagh.

Mission Notes.

The Rev. Canon Widdicombe, from the Diocese of Bloemfontein, says that the Missions in that diocese owed their very existence to the S. P. Society. He began Missionary work in Basutoland in 1876, having previously been stationed at Thaba 'Nchu. Basutoland is about five or six thousand feet above the

sea, between Natal and the Orange Free State. It became attached to the diocese of Bloemfontein in consequence of a promise made many years before to the Chief Moshesh by Bishop Gray. In 1876 the Society provided means for two Missionaries, and the Bishop of Bloemfontein sent Mr. Widdicombe to the northern part of the country and Mr. Stenson to the south. There were no Christians at all in Basutoland except those connected with the French Protestant and French Roman Catholic Missions, and they were chiefly in the central districts of the country. In Mr. Widdicombe's neighbourhood all were heathen. He was accompanied by Mr. Lacy, and asked permission of the chief, the son of Moshesh, to establish the Mission. This chief (who was a stout man, 6 feet 3 inches high, with sixty wives) received him well, reproached him for not having come before, allowed him to settle where he chose, and gave orders that all care and respect should be shown to the Missionaries. The spot chosen was between the Thlotse and Caledon rivers; all around it on the mountain slopes were innumerable heathen villages, for there are no large towns in Basutoland. Mr. Widdicombe, after having fetched his goods from his former home, returned and waited for huts to be erected for him. During three months he and Mr. Lacy lived in the open air, as they had no tents. They were interviewed by the Basutos all day long. At length six huts were erected, a school was started, and by degrees converts were gathered in. Then the Mission suffered the great loss of Mr. Lacy's death by drowning. The Rev. R. K. Champenowne and Mr. Reading were sent, and in the next year another Mission was opened at Sekubu. In 1880 the Basuto rebellion broke out. It was a terrible conflict, which cost the Colonial Government four million pounds. The Christian Basutos were on the side of law and order, and were marked for destruction. The Mission buildings too were destroyed. The rebellion was followed by an inter-tribal war. It was not until the end of 1885 that the Mission was properly re-organized, and was then practically a new one. Thlotse Heights became the centre for the loyal people. All through the troubles no Sunday had passed without a celebration of the Holy Communion and an afternoon service. Canon Widdicombe described a visit to the Mission of General Gordon, who came as a peace-maker. When he was leaving, after telling of his sympathy with the Mission, they went together into the ruined chapel and prayed. Years afterwards, when the news of Gordon's death reached Basutoland, the chief wept. When quiet returned permanent buildings were erected, and the Mission prospered. But it suffered by the death of Mr. Champenowne. Within ten years four of the Missionaries died. Yet there has been great progress, and there are now large congregations, numerous catechumens, and on all sides fresh outstations being planted. In the whole of Basutoland there are only about 300 whites among 250,000 blacks.

Correspondence.

All Letters containing personal allusions will appear over the signature of the writer.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our correspondents.

N. B.—If any one has a good thought, or a Christian sentiment, or has facts, or deductions from facts, useful to the Church, and to Churchmen, we would solicit their statement in brief and concise letters in this department.

Church Membership.

SIR,—Your correspondent "H" is curiously illogical; he does not seem to be able to grasp the difference between self-excommunication (which is excommunication *de facto*, as long as the disability is allowed to continue) and formal excommunication by the Church, where the disability is controlled from outside and continues as long as the Church's sentence holds. The Church has put no bar as to burial rites against the self-excommunicated; she assumes their repentance in *articulo mortis*.

He further makes an unreasonable parallel between communicating and voting, whereas the only true parallel possible would be between communicating and *qualifying* for the franchise, or between exercising the rights of Church membership and voting. What is done in the case of voters, *i. e.*, those who exercise the privileges of qualified citizens, responsible members of the body politic? They are entered on the roll as they become qualified; they are excluded from or left off the roll when they neglect or cease to be qualified. They may be on this year, they may be off next year, and then on again the year after; according as the proper officers record their franchise condition. So the Church has her roll of communicants; those who are on it are in good standing, others are disqualified, or at least unqualified—at first by age, afterwards (when of age) by disobedience. See Canon 112. In Brice's "Law