



A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE.

DITCHLEY Saint Mary's, which, in old days, had been served by the Carthusians from Witham Friary — the home of Great Saint Hugh, of Lincoln — was the most "Catholic" church and parish in the diocese of Sherborne, now that "Ditchley chapel," belonging to the manor of the "main village" had been "taken over to Rome," by the "perversion" of the squire. The squire, by the way, was patron of Ditchley Saint Mary's, Ditchley Saint Vedast's, Morton-on-Mendip, and, I fancy, of other parishes besides, into all of which he — or his father before him — had put men of views akin to their own, and, Ditchley Saint Mary's rectory happening to fall vacant about a year before the patron's "lapse," the Rev. Sidney Butler had been appointed to the living. It is true that his relations with his former bishop — his lordship, to wit, of Middlehampton — had been, as diplomatists say, "somewhat strained;" but the bishop of Sherborne, as more "Catholic" than his brother of Middlehampton, and anxious to humor the "great man" of his diocese, graciously gave his sanction to the "translation." When, however, the "great man," in spite of "humoring," went over to "an alien Communion," and the "gospellers," foiled in their attempt to "purify" Ditchley chapel of its "illegal ornaments," turned their attention to Ditchley Saint Mary's — with better hopes of success, seeing there was no doubt as to its being a parish church — William Sherborne began to wish that he had left "Father" Butler to "settle ac-