

1877.

Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1877.

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We wish you to be kind enough to remit at once any arrears due, together with the subscription for 1878. If you desire our excellent photograph of the House of Bishops, a reference to the advertisement will show the terms on which it can be secured.

We wish also to state that the key to the photograph of the House of Bishops will be found in this issue of the DOMINION CHURCHMAN, in the advertising columns. It can be cut out and pasted on the back of the picture.

THE WEEK.

HONORARY Degrees are conferred in English Universities, as well as in those of Canada; although the fact does not appear to be known to all those who write letters to newspapers in this country. Such degrees are, of course, conferred on eminent men, scientific or literary, sometimes on remarkable travellers, or men appointed to important offices in the Church, or sometimes, also, in the State, whether such men are eminent or not, and whether or not they would be able to pass any examination—in fact, they are conferred upon any persons the authorities of a University may think proper, and sometimes for reasons best known to themselves. But, however that may be, honorary degrees, however multiplied, never detract one iota from the value of those obtained in the usual way, by passing the usual examinations; because, when a man has such a distinction, every one knows how he obtained it. A remarkable instance has just occurred at Cambridge, of the honorary degree of D. C. L. being conferred on Charles Darwin, the celebrated evolutionist. The religious opinions of this scientist very naturally and very properly stood in the way of any distinction being conferred upon him by the Church Universities. The opposite party however prevailed, and the degree was conferred. When Darwin and Huxley appeared in the Hall, tremendous cheering and hooting took place. The usual chaffing of the students was observable, only that it is said to have been far worse than the uproar heard at Oxford, when General Grant received a similar degree. In the course of the proceedings, an effigy of a monkey, robed in an undergraduate's gown, was lowered into the middle of the Hall from the most prominent

part of the gallery. The image bore the inscription, in large letters: "The missing link." Dr. Darwin's friends, as might be expected, manifested a great amount of enthusiasm on the occasion.

The question of Halifax as a winter port for the Dominion is one of great importance to the community; and it appears to be still agitated in the maritime provinces. A deputation waited on Sir Hugh Allan on the 28th ult. in Halifax, stating that they represented the City Council, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Importers' Association. They were anxious to learn in what way the object of making Halifax the winter port of call and departure for his steamers could be accomplished. Sir Hugh Allan is reported to have said that he also was desirous of making Halifax a winter port, but there were several difficulties in the way; among these he mentioned that the terminus of the Intercolonial Railway was too far from the harbor, that for a portion of the year the landing place at Richmond was unapproachable on account of ice, one of his steamers having been frozen up there during a great part of one winter. Produce having to be carted from Richmond would increase the cost of carriage, while the expenses of steamers in the port of Halifax were much larger than in Portland, Quebec, or Montreal, provisions alone costing at least fifty per cent. more. He also mentioned another difficulty that might arise from the Intercolonial being snowed up during the winter. The Mayor suggested that the loading ground might be kept free from ice; whereupon Sir Hugh stated that if cargoes were provided there he would guarantee they should be carried at the same cost from Chicago to Liverpool as if they were shipped from Portland; and he recommended that persons should be sent to Chicago to work up the trade.

The accounts from France are scarcely more satisfactory than they have been for some time past. The latest items of news are indeed contradictory. French accounts state that Mac Mahon is disposed to recede from his former position and become more conciliatory, and that Dufaure has been entrusted with the formation of a Ministry of the Left, and has consented to act as intermediary between them and Mac Mahon, who has agreed to make reasonable concessions. But the Paris correspondent of an English paper states there is no ground for supposing any change in the aspect of affairs. It is said that a deputation of business men who went to the Elysee to present an address to the Marshal, was very cavalierly treated, not being allowed to see him, and that when they retired, they sent word to the Marshal that they were the vanguard of an imposing demonstration, and that they would not be trifled with. In fact the longer the crisis continues, the more probable will it be that the natural excitability of the French temper

will be aroused in such a way that it may be difficult or impossible to allay it.

The principal feature of the Church in England recently has been the utterances from the Episcopal bench in the form of Visitation charges. The Bishops of Ely, Gloucester and Bristol, Chester, and St David's, have delivered their sentiments on the leading Church questions of the day. The subject of Confession has, very naturally, been referred to by all of them; and while they all agree that while private confession and absolution are clearly recognized by the Church as practices to be adopted as occasion may require, they also agree that the Church of England has made no provision for their regular and systematic use, but that rather their enforced observance is discountenanced; although some would contend that the admission of the principle is all that need be required, and that if they are good at one time they are good at another: which might indeed be true enough, had not so great abuses resulted from the unrestrained use of them. The Bishop of Chester points out that the introduction of the General Confession and the Public Absolution in the Prayer book of 1552 shows that, for a time at least, it was proposed that the exercise of the Power of the Keys should usually take place in public. What was intended to be done with regard to Confession when the restoration of primitive discipline, said in the Communion service to be much wished, should take place, or what part it should occupy in connection with such discipline, it is not definitely known, nor can it be easily conjectured. The Primitive Discipline has not been restored; in fact, for the lay members of the Church we have none at all; and in the meantime, confession and absolution, as provided by the Church, are mainly public in their nature.

The subject of the Public Worship Regulation Act has been freely handled by the Bishop of Ely and by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. Their opinions thereupon vary considerably. Bishop Woodford deems the Bill a clear invasion of the personal jurisdiction of the Bishops, and also of the right of the Archbishops to appoint their own Provincial Judge. In his estimation, the Final Court of Appeal should be a spiritual tribunal. He holds that its spiritual character, which the statutes establishing the Reformation intended to secure, has been gradually impaired by the encroachments of the civil power, and has now vanished away. It is now no longer necessary that its members should be churchmen, and every ecclesiastic has disappeared from its bench. It is the same tribunal which advises the Crown on all kinds of Colonial appeals. He therefore advocates an amendment of the Public Worship Act. Bishop Ellicott deals with Church questions in a narrow and pedantic spirit, which cannot be wondered at, as, in all he says or writes he is uniformly crude.

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