

## THE COLONIAL CHURCH AND THE SUPREMACY.

The *Guardian* thus ends an able article on "The Colonial Church and the Supremacy":—"We do not well know what to make of the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy, metamorphosed, as it has come to be from the course of events, from what it was in the days of the Tudors and Stuarts to what it is in a constitutional monarchy with Parliamentary government, even in England. Still, in England, tradition and history give it an intelligible place in our complex system. But in the Colonies the anomaly is extravagant. In a voluntary and unestablished body, which, except in some trifling matters of honour and precedence,—much better, as they probably soon will be, given up,—is absolutely undistinguished by the State from any other religious denomination, the connection with the Imperial Crown is unmeaning; and not only unmeaning, but, whenever difficulties arise, an additional and needless element of embarrassment. It is equally unjust to the Crown and to the Colonial Church to wish to prolong the equivocal and unsatisfactory relations between them, which perhaps were necessary or natural at starting, now that these relations have been so clearly shown by the progress of events to be as inconvenient in practice as they are manifestly indefensible in theory. The Colonial Church, in most of the Colonies, owes no more to the Crown than any other of her Majesty's colonial subjects. There is no reason why, under pain of being disavowed by the Church at home, it should be fettered in its internal organization; be compelled to receive its Bishops from the Crown, and to refer its disputes to the decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. We have history before us; and if we found colonies, and Churches in colonies, we must be prepared to let them run their natural course. In due time, if we are wise, we shall be prepared for their claim, more or less full, to independence. In the case of the Colonial Church, what we have a right to do is to provide against inconvenience to ourselves, should they depart from our standard. But it is neither generous or politic to exact from them a conformity to our rules, where their circumstances are in the broadest way different from ours. The Supremacy is part of our constitution. To them it is a mere empty and unprofitable shadow; a restraint without any compensation. If we fear that Independent Churches may break away into extravagance, and if we distrust the power of those varied and manifold influences which will naturally act to keep them still at one with their mother Church, the history of the American Church may perhaps reassure us."

## SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED TO JUNE 30.

TO END OF VOLUME 3. S. W. H., Newmarket.

TO END OF VOLUME 4. T. T., Chester; Major E., W. R., and S. W. H., Newmarket.

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June 4, 1866.