

The most important item of English Church news of the last month is the judgment of the Court of Chancery in the suit of Dr. Colenso against the trustees of the Colonial Bishops' Fund, for the recovery of his salary as Bishop of Natal. This the trustees had withheld, on the ground that their trust was founded for the establishment of Bishops with legal sees and effective jurisdiction, neither of which the Bishop of Natal was declared, by Lord Westbury's judgment, to possess. The court awarded Dr. Colenso his salary, as was expected, the law of England ignoring the Bishop of Capetown's deposition of the heretical Bishop. But Lord Romilly, the Master of the Rolls, announces his decision in a judgment filling ten columns of the *London Guardian*, in which he proposes an entirely new theory of the relations of the Colonial Church—not to the English Church, but to the English state. He declares that all the world has quite mistaken the effect of Lord Westbury's judgment in the Colenso case. That judgment was supposed by every one (including such obscure persons as all the members of the late Russell-Gladstone ministry, as witness their Colonial Bishops' Bill, confessedly introduced to carry out that view) to have completely severed the *legal* connection between the Church in the Colonies and the mother Church, leaving the Colonial Bishops without legal dioceses or jurisdiction. Lord Westbury said that "the crown could command consecration of a Bishop, but had no power to assign him any diocese or give him any sphere of action within any Colony that has received legislative institutions." This dictum Lord Romilly now says "is incorrect"—that the crown has power to assign to a Bishop in such a Colony a sphere within which to exercise his functions, which would be a proper diocese. And after reciting the powers given in the letters patent of the Bishop of Natal, he declares that he "fails to discover any one of them which a Colonial Bishop is unable to exercise"; and he lays it down broadly that all Colonial Bishops have, by virtue of their letters-patent, jurisdiction over all persons within their dioceses professing to be members of the Church of England quite as effectually as the Bishops in England have. The only kind of jurisdiction which they have not is *coercive* jurisdiction—that is to say, the Bishop may erect his court, try all causes and persons, and punish all that are criminous; only, to enforce obedience to his orders, and to remove obstructions interposed to prevent him performing his functions, he must have recourse to the civil tribunals of the Colony, which tribunals are bound to enforce obedience to the Bishop's decisions upon all professing members of the Church of England in the Colony, provided those decisions are according to the rules of justice and the principles of the Church of England. Every thoughtful person will at once see how grave a matter this new judgment is. It makes the Colonial dioceses a part and parcel of the Church of England, as by law established." It binds upon them all the decisions of the Privy Council in doctrinal matters. For example, according to the judgment of the Privy Council in the *Essays and Review* cases, it makes it lawful for a clergyman in Canada to deny eternal punishment, the inspiration of Holy Scripture, the atonement. Of course, we may have Privy