

COLONIES
GENERAL

of a portion of the clergy and laity of their dioceses, a body which they are pleased to designate as the Church of New Zealand, although in what sense a body of clergy who have severed their connection from the Crown of this kingdom can claim to be the Territorial Church of a dependency of that Crown, I am at a loss to understand. It appears to be the present intention of the Bishops of South Africa and New Zealand to maintain full communion with the Church of England, and, in the case of the Bishops of New Zealand, at least, to adopt the Archbishop of Canterbury as patriarch. But, if I interpret rightly the position which the Archbishop of Canterbury holds, no Spiritual or ecclesiastical superiority appertains to him in regard to those Bishops, except under the Letters Patent of the Crown; for the act of consecration in which he may have taken part under the Royal Mandate did not confer upon him any such superiority. If, therefore, the Letters Patent are ineffectual to give him appellate jurisdiction, and the supremacy of the Crown in matters ecclesiastical does not take effect in those colonial dependencies, there will be no safeguard against the respective Churches declaring themselves to be in communion with the Church of any Foreign Country, and recognizing, by a vote of the ruling majority, the supremacy of a Foreign Bishop or Archbishop. And as there are many to whom the principle of uniformity commends itself more strongly than the duty of protest against error, it may come to pass at no distant time that the wish and aim of such a majority will be to bring about a fusion of widely differing Churches, and to recognize a common supremacy in the Pope of Rome, or in the Patriarch of Constantinople. Indications are not wanting of the existence of this spirit in the present day, as there are those working amongst us who, whilst as yet repudiating what is denominated the "practical quasi-authoritative system of the Church of Rome," would not scruple to acknowledge the primacy of the Bishop of that Church, and to assert that there is "not any supremacy in itself to which the Church of England should object." On the other hand, the Church of Rome is neither an inactive nor unintelligent spectator of these indications; and whilst it contemplates the division of the realm of England into two ecclesiastical provinces under the supreme jurisdiction of the Pope, an Archbishop of that Church has declared in his inaugural address, lately delivered almost within hearing of Westminster Hall, that "Protestantism has nearly run out its appointed course of heresy," and that "in a generation or two the Anglican Religion will be a page of history." I for one cannot (scarcely) blame the members of the Church of Rome for seeking to carry out a system which they believe to be right; neither can I wish that the spirit of toleration, the result of the civil and religious liberty we enjoy, should abate, even whilst it thus permits, or possibly fosters, these very hopes and endeavours. But amidst these varied signs of the times, and in the face of coming difficulties, I value more and more, as priceless, the constitutional recognition of the Crown of this kingdom as "in all causes, both ecclesiastical and civil, within its dominions supreme." That the Bishops of South Africa and New Zealand, instead of striving to uphold this, their indefeasible position, should seek to cast themselves off from their firm anchorage ground, and risk to let their respective Churches drift away from the Church of England, in the vague condition of voluntary associations, regulated from time to time by the vote of the ruling majority, seems to me to imply a departure from the principles which they maintained when they accepted their respective appointments, and to be quite irreconcilable with the common understanding under which the funds for the endowment of additional Bishoprics in the Colonies have been provided. Having supplied specific portions of those funds I cannot witness these occurrences without great misgivings as to the future course of the movement in which I took part; and I am desirous to record my most emphatic protest against my endowments being appropriated to any kind of Bishopric other than such as Her Majesty's Letters Patent were originally intended and believed to have created, and under which Letters Patent the respective Bishops received their consecration. If, indeed, the most formal acts of the Crown and of the Church of England should have failed to secure that which they outwardly professed to accomplish I would earnestly press upon your Lordship to consider if Her Majesty's Government cannot adopt measures to make good the failure, and to give legal effect to those arrangements which Her Majesty's Letters Patent purported to carry into effective execution; and I would solicit your attention more particularly to the legislative measures adopted in the case of the West Indian Bishoprics. On the other hand, if no legal means can be devised for making good the failure, which I cannot, even now, believe to have really occurred, then I must claim, for myself and my heirs, the endowments which I undertook to provide on the faith of the validity of the public acts of the Crown and the Church of England.

Being thus desirous to put my protest and my claim upon record, I have thought it right, pending the information which I am expecting from the Archbishop of Canterbury,