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FIVE THEORIES OF THE CHURCH.

BY LEONARD WOOLSEY BACON.

THE author of the "Thirteen Historical Discourses, on the First Church in New Haven,"* vindicates the authority of that church, organized by mutual agreement in a meeting of the Christian people of the colony, by analogy with the civil government of the colony, organized in like manner, about the same time. After describing the "plantation-covenant," under which as a provisional government the colonists lived for fourteen months, the author records the meeting in Mr. Newman's barn, the framing of the church and of the state, the choosing of the "seven pillars," and finally the election and ordination of the church officers. He then proceeds as follows:—

"The question doubtless arises with some—Could such an ordination have any validity, or confer on the pastor thus ordained any authority? Can men, by a voluntary compact, form themselves into a church? and can the church thus formed impart to its own officers the power of administering ordinances? If Davenport had not been previously ordained in England, would not his administration of ordinances have been sacrilege? Answer me another question: How could the meeting which convened in Mr. Newman's barn, originate a commonwealth? How could the commonwealth thus originated impart the divine authority and dignity of magistrates to officers of its own election? How could a few men coming together here in the wilderness, without commission from king or parliament, by a mere voluntary compact among themselves, give being to a state? How can the state thus instituted have power to make laws that shall bind the minority? What right had they to erect tribunals of justice? What right to wield the sword? What right to inflict punishment, even to death, upon offenders? Is not civil government a divine institution, as really as baptism and the Lord's supper? Is not the 'duly constituted' magistrate as truly the minister of God, as he who presides over the church, and labors in word and doctrine? Whence then came the authority with which that self-constituted state, meeting in Mr. Newman's barn, invested its elected magistrates? It came directly from God, the only fountain of authority. Just as directly from the same God, came the authority with which the equally self-constituted church,

meeting in the same place, invested its elected pastor. Could the one give to its magistrates power to hang a murderer in the name of God—and could not the other give to its elders power to administer baptism."*

The argument thus popularly stated is sharply conclusive *ad hominem* against those who hold the popular statement as to the sanction of civil government. The American idea of the state implies the American idea of the church. The parity of reasoning betwixt the two is perfect.

But the analogy here drawn is good for much more than this. It has only to be cleared of expressions which point its immediate application to a particular class of gainsayers, to furnish a theorem by which, reasoning from sound principles in civil polity, we may discover fallacies, and establish the truth, in ecclesiastical polity. For several reasons, let us take the particular instance quoted above as the text of our whole discussion: first, because the argument will be clearer if stated in relation to a particular instance; secondly, because almost the only cases in which history distinctly discloses, side by side, the origin and earliest processes of civil and of ecclesiastical government, are this and like cases in early American history; thirdly, because the passage quoted has actually been, in the mind of the present writer, the germ out of which his argument has grown.

At the outset, let us guard against one source of misapprehension which will be more effectually obviated as the discussion proceeds. The church and commonwealth of New Haven Colony did not *originate* in the meeting in Mr. Newman's barn. They had existed at least fourteen months already. The "Two Hundred Years from the Beginning of the First Church in New Haven," which are commemorated in these discourses, date from the landing of the colonists, not from the mutual compact. And the civil state was coeval with the church. So that

* Thirteen Historical Discourses on the completion of Two Hundred Years from the Beginning of the First Church in New Haven. By Leonard Bacon. New Haven, 1888.

* Bacon's Historical Discourses, pp. 41, 42.

when it comes to strictness of speech, the question, Can men by voluntary compact form themselves into a church?—and the other question, Could the meeting in Mr. Newman's barn originate a commonwealth? are to be answered (so far as the present instance shows) in the negative. That meeting could not create what was already in existence.* What the meeting did was to *organize* both the church and the State. According to "Congregational usage" this is the same thing with originating them; but according to the exact use of the English language it is something different.

Coming now to the question, What was the origin of the New Haven Colony Commonwealth and Church? and What were the source and channel of their authority, if any they had?—there is room for five different answers, according as the respondent holds one or another of five different theories of polity, civil and ecclesiastical. Let us name them :

- I. THE PAPAL THEORY.
- II. THE BOURBON THEORY.
- III. THE FORMAL THEORY.
- IV. THE JACOBIN THEORY.
- V. THE RATIONAL AND SCRIPTURAL THEORY.

I. THE PAPAL THEORY.

It is a "fundamental principle of the papal canon law, that the Roman pontiff is the sovereign lord of the whole world; and that all other rulers in church and state have so much power as he sees fit to allow them to have." Under this principle, the popes have claimed the power "not only of conferring benefices, but also of giving away empires, and likewise of divesting kings and princes of their crowns and authority." †

The theory thus set forth is a very simple and intelligible one, and its application to the case in hand is nowise doubtful. The heathen territory of New England had been disposed of long before the Puritan migration by the gift of a pope to a Catholic prince, ‡ and therefore whatever claim of jurisdiction should be set up within that territory by any body of colonists, whether in the name of a charter from a heretic power, or under color of a purchase from the barbarous tribes in possession, or under pretense of a so-called inherent right of self-government, must be simply an intrusion and a usurpation. It would be not only de-

void of right in itself, but a violation of the divine right of the pope's grantee.

In like manner, any assumption of the functions of the church or ministry in this colony, otherwise than through the ways appointed by the head of the church, would be void and invalid, and therefore sacrilegious. Furthermore, it would be schismatic, as intruding a separate church authority within a territory and population already placed under the special spiritual jurisdiction of some bishop, or if not so placed, then remaining under the immediate pastoral care of the bishop of Rome.

Obviously, according to this theory, the first step for the colonists to take to secure a regular and valid government, in church and state, is to become reconciled to the Catholic church.

II. THE BOURBON THEORY. This theory agrees with the first mentioned in declaring all lawful authority, civil and ecclesiastical, to be derived from God through a continuous succession of men. It differs from it in this: that whereas the former holds that there is but one line of this succession—the line of the popes—and that to all rightful secular and spiritual rulers, in any generation, their authority flows through the pope for the time being;—the present theory holds that the lines of succession are not one, but several; that from the original conferment, authority and "validity" descend along these lines, in secular matters through an hereditary succession, in spiritual matters through a tactual succession; that the power of the sceptre and sword, or the power of the keys, as it is not derivable from the subjects thereof, so is not defeasible by them; and that the question of title to authority, civil or ecclesiastical, is a simple question of pedigree.* According to this theory, the powers of the state centre in the sovereign. The king, not the pope, is "the fountain of honor." "*L'état, c'est moi,*" says the Bourbon; "*Ecclesia in Episcopo,*" responds the high-churchman.

In its two applications, to church and to state, the lines of argument by which this theory is sustained are very nearly equal and parallel. The state is a divine institution, and so is the Church. The ministers of the one are divinely commissioned, and so of the other. There are difficulties objected in either case to any other external credentials of the divine commission than the credentials of succession from former ministers. Those whose claims to authority

* That this is the view accepted by the author of the "Discourses" is sufficiently implied both in the title-page and in the preface of the volume.

† Murdock's Mosheim, vol. ii., p. 340.

‡ Bancroft's U. S., vol. i., p. 10

* See Macaulay's History of England, Chap. I.

have been founded, exclusively or mainly, on hereditary or tactual relation to their predecessors, have been in a multitude of cases, and for many centuries almost universally, approved as lawful rulers and bishops. The two applications of the theory are analogous, not only by parity of reasoning, but by parity of unreasonableness: for in either case it is easier to show the several links of the succession than it is to demonstrate any law of cohesion by which they become a chain, or, the chain being completed, to hitch it fast to the original divine commission. It may fairly enough be admitted that the warrant for ecclesiastical power in Apostolic succession, is as well accredited, on the whole, as the warrant of the hereditary divine right of kings.

Applying this theory to the case in hand, we find that the only right for the exercise of government which the settlers of New England generally possessed, was such as was conferred on them by charter from the king of England. Under such charter, if it was broad enough, all the functions of government might be exercised by the local magistrates in the name of the king. For lack of such authority, the legislative and judicial acts of the New Haven colonists were null and void. The only way in which regular and valid *independent* government could be set up in the little province of Quinipiac, would be for the colonists to import the regularly descended heir of some Lord's Anointed,—an Otho, or a grand duke Maximilian—and graft their wild olive with a slip of a Stuart or a Bourbon.

Likewise in spiritual matters, Davenport and Hooke might exercise such spiritual functions as their ordination to the priesthood by English bishops would authorize, but could acquire no new prerogative from any act of a self-constituted church. The way of maintaining the functions of the church from generation to generation, was to obtain other priests and deacons from the ordaining hands of the Bishop of London (whose modest diocese was understood by a mild fiction of law to include a large part of the Western hemisphere); or to secure, either from the lords spiritual of England, or from the cracked succession of the Scotch episcopate, the gift of a bishop with a pedigree sixteen hundred years long, whose should be all the rights of ecclesiastical sovereignty, to have and to hold, and to transmit to his assigns forever. Both these methods were practised successively by a few dissidents in the subsequent days of New Haven; by virtue of which they became

the real church of the colony, having the only "valid" and authorized ministry. For neglect of these, the body of Christian people in the commonwealth became schismatics and aliens from the church, and their so-called ministers became guilty (so we are assured) of the sin of Korah and of Dathan and Abiram.

III. THE FORMAL THEORY.—This theory appears under very different phases of development, and is held by very different parties of civil and ecclesiastical politicians. It is that the legitimacy, validity, or authority of a church or of a state are determined by the form of its structure. There are *jure-divino* monarchists, *jure-divino* republicans, and *jure-divino* democrats. So also, there are *jure-divino* tri-ordinary episcopalians, *jure-divino* presbyterians, and *jure-divino* congregationalists.

According to the first classes in these two lists, the state government in the Colony of New Haven was hopelessly vitiated because it did not constitute Mr. Eaton ruler during his life, and the head of an hereditary dynasty: the church polity was ruined, because the pastor, the teacher, and the ruling elder, instead of being in three ranks in a line of promotion, were all in one rank. And so, to the other classes, the colonial church and state must stand or fall, in respect to their divine sanction, according as they agree with or vary from a supposed "pattern showed to Moses in the mount." They came into being, as divine institutions, in the act of conforming themselves to the Scriptural model; or if not so conformed, they never did come into existence at all.*

IV. THE JACOBIN THEORY.—This theory represents the body politic or ecclesiastic as originating out of the unorganized and unassociated materials of human society, by a "social compact" or "covenant," in which all the individuals agree, for the common advantage, to surrender to the new organization—the state, or the church—sundry of their individual rights and powers, to form the common stock of authority for the corporation. "The whole body is supposed, in the first place, to have unani- mously consented to be bound by the resolutions of the majority; that majority, in the next place, to have fixed certain funda-

* For some severe animadversions against this test of churchhood—against "the whims of theoretic Bi'list;" and their "text-made churches," see Isaac Taylor's *Wesley and Methodism*, pp. 199-202.

mental regulations; and then to have constituted, either in one person, or in an assembly, a standing legislature.*

According to this theory, the colonists of New Haven, from the time when they came out from under the authority of the ship's captain, at least until the close of their first day of fasting and prayer, when they formed their provisional "plantation covenant," were "in a state of nature." They were not a community, but only the individuals who might become a community whenever they should agree to act in common. They were not society, but only the raw materials of society. There was neither a commonwealth nor a church among them, but only the possibility of these. By-and-by they concluded to have a state and a church, and so they got together in a barn and created them, appointing officers with divine authority for administering the functions of the two institutions—authority which up to that time had not existed in the colony. Before that, the execution of a malefactor would have been an act of murder,—either of private revenge or of mob-violence. Defensive hostilities against the Indians would have been simply the fighting of every man *proprio Marte*, except so far as individuals might have chosen to club together according to their preference for leaders. But any exercise of command on the part of him to whom the instincts of the people should turn as their natural military leader, or any attempt to coerce the shirks and the cowards into the common defence, would have been an act of tyranny and usurpation, there having been no unanimous mutual agreement of the colonists to concede their individual rights to this extent. And when, after experiencing the inconveniences of the "state of nature," the colonists began to frame their covenant, there was no right among them to compel into the arrangement any individual who preferred, at his own risk, to live among them but not of them, as a quiet and peaceable outlaw. The uncovenanted citizen might be derelict of a moral duty in thus standing aloof from the mutual engagements of the rest, but the powers arising out of these mutual agreements of ninety-nine of the population could not extend over the one-hundredth man who had declined to be a party to the compact.

Just so the Christian people of the colony were not a church, but only Christian individuals. The administration of baptism or

the Lord's Supper, before the covenant, would have been, if not sacrilegious, at least a grave irregularity, and an infraction of Congregational order. The endeavor of them that were spiritual to restore by remonstrance and admonition a wandering brother, would have been the meddling of individuals in that which they had nothing to do with. The individual would not have been bound to submit to it; for "the obligation to submit arises from the bond of the covenant,"* and he had never made any such contract with his Christian neighbors. Any attempt to report the recusant in the weekly meeting of believers would have been both impertinent and futile; for the man never agreed to suffer any such use of his name, and the stated meeting of Christians is not a church, to "tell it to," because the members of it have not formed a social compact. The exclusion of an obstinate offender from the communion of saints is a sheer impossibility, because the saints do not have any communion. They are men of grace in a "state of nature." If, at length, the colonists hold a meeting in Mr. Newman's barn to arrange the terms of an association for mutual care, and contrive a covenant which should confer on the members and officers of the institution the divine right of enforcing a contract, it is optional with those who find themselves incommoded by too much "watch-care," whether they will enter into this covenant, or whether they will remain as lookers on, or whether they will form a little separate mutual covenant among themselves.

V. THE RATIONAL AND SCRIPTURAL THEORY.—This theory, as applied to the civil state, avoids encountering the hypothetical difficulties suggested in what we have called the Jacobin theory, by simply recognizing the facts of human nature. The questions whether an aggregation of human beings living together without any mutual interests or intercourse is a community or commonwealth;—whether "individuals are a civil society before they have formed themselves into one,"—whether "unconnected individuals, before they have laid themselves under a mutual engagement"† are the subjects of any common authority—are futile questions: as if one should ask whether a pile of quicksilver globules would constitute a pool of quicksilver before being flattened down; knowing that it is the nature of globules of quick-

* Paley's *Moral and Political Philosophy*, Book VI., chapter 3. See also Emmons's *Scriptural Platform of Church Government*.

* See Emmons, who is beautifully explicit on this point. *Scr. Platform*, pp. 5, 7.

† Emmons, *Script. Platform*, p. 4.

silver, not to stand in a pile like cannon balls, but to flow together upon contact. A battue of lions in an inclosure is not a herd of lions, no matter what discipline you may put them under, for the lion is not a gregarious animal. But a collection of horses or of sheep is a herd, or a flock, at once, without waiting to adjust the terms of an agreement, or to secure the valid investiture or ascertain the pedigree of the bellwether, because horses and sheep are gregarious. You do not have to constitute them a herd,—they are a herd. Just so, if you gather human beings together in a separate population, you do not have to make society out of them. They *are* society, because man is a social animal. And wherever human society is, there are to be found, either potentially or in actual exercise, all the divine power and authority of the State.

And all the questions that are raised among the other conflicting theories of the State, as to the conditions, channel and credentials of divine authority residing in the rulers of the State, are shortly disposed of, according to the rational and Scriptural view, by recurring to that fundamental maxim, "The powers THAT BE are ordained of God." The government *de facto*, by virtue of its being *the power*, is charged by the Divine ruler with the responsibility of administering justice in the land, and is entitled to be respected and obeyed accordingly. This is the sole condition on which divine authority is conferred on the government of any country—that it *be* the government. With this agrees the maxim, in its only true meaning, that "all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed;" since if this consent, whether voluntary or coerced, active or passive, is withdrawn, the power that was is no longer the power, and God does not ordain the impotencies. Without the actual possession of the power, no degree of *de jure* "validity" amounts to a divine commission;—not bulls from a pope, nor pedigrees running back to King David himself, nor any degree of ideal perfection in the structure of constitution, nor any certificates of a social compact in a mass-meeting. But, the power being present, not the absence of any or all of these conditions can discharge the *de facto* government of its responsibility, nor release the individual from his duty of subjection and obedience. Of course this statement is not to be interpreted to mean that all methods of acquiring civil power are right, nor that there is no preference among forms of government; neither is it to be applied to the exclusion of the duty of

disobedience to laws requiring sin, or of the right of revolution. But properly interpreted and applied, this view of civil duty and authority is the settled result of Christian ethics.

Moreover, there always *is* an "existing power," residing in every community of men, latent if not active, which, whenever on any emergency it is called into exercise for the punishment of crime or the protection of innocence, carries with it the sanction of God.

Applying these principles to the case of the New Haven Colony, we find that before the "constituent assembly" in the barn, before the "plantation-covenant," the colony was already a state;* and so malefactor who should have presumed upon prevalent social theories to violate public or private rights or religious duties at that early period, would summarily have found it to be. His judgment would not a long time have lingered, nor his condemnation have slumbered, waiting for a social compact to confer the authority of a magistrate.

The divine right of government residing in the little commonwealth, might have come into exercise and manifestation, in various ways. Successive emergencies might have occasioned successive acts of authority, *nemine obstante*, which might have become precedents for others, and so a body of common law, and a sort of British Constitution, have grown up, without one act of deliberate legislation or foundation. The deference toward Eaton might, either explicitly or by the general acquiescence, have committed to him the supreme government of the colony, and at his death have transferred it to his son. Or the long-continued pressure of military exigencies might have habituated the people to martial law and settled their military leader into the seat of general authority. All these modes of the origin of governmental institutions in the colony are imaginable; and in any of them might have been inaugurated the power ordained of God. The method of sitting down consciously and deliberately to contrive the

* "If a ship at sea should lose all its officers, or a shipwrecked crew be cast upon a desert island, this little community would then stand in the condition of a State. The whole would have the right to restrain and constrain each one for the freedom of all."—Hickok's *Moral Science*, p. 219.

It is necessary to guard against confusion between a *State* and a *State government*. The State government is the outgrowth or ordinance of the State. But, by a natural metonymy, the word *State* is often used to mean the government.

The students of "the judicious Hooker" will remember a passage in the "Ecclesiastical Polity" strikingly parallel to the above from President Hooker. It may seriously be doubted whether Hooker, if he had found himself in New England, would have felt that his principles allowed of the course of nonconformity and schism, which has sometimes been pursued by those who call themselves his disciples and justify their practices by quoting his book.

institutions under which the inherent authority of the state should express itself, is doubtless a nobler way; a way worthier of such matured and reflective minds as set up the pillars of the New Haven Colony—a way which has since become so exclusively the typical American way of organizing government that we are tempted to think it the only way; but it is not one whit more valid in conferring divine authority than the way practised in the insurrection on the slaver *Amistad*, when the tallest, nimblest and smartest negro in the lot elected himself captain and king, and exacted and received the obedience of the rest.

Now bringing the force of this extended analogy to bear on our main subject of the origin and authority of the church, we see at once the futility of those questions whether a neighborhood of "visible saints" "living members of Christ," while "separate and unconnected," constitute a church of Christ; * whether "a number of Christians merely living in the same city, town or parish," † but having no common interests, no mutual affections, no stated meetings, and holding themselves aloof from mutual intercourse, are a church. The questions are predicated on an unassailable hypothesis. That is not the way in which "visible saints" live. When they try to live so, their sanctity becomes invisible at once. They are no more, "visible saints," but visibly unsanctified. "By this we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." The problem in theology that begins with supposing a neighborhood of Christians without mutual love and intercourse under the law of Christ, is as rational as a problem in magnetism which should be founded on the supposition of a collection of steel magnets having attraction toward the pole, but no attraction for each other. If, under the laws of human nature, human neighborhood implies human society, and human society implies the state; then *a fortiori*, under the laws of the regenerated nature, Christian neighborhood implies Christian society, and Christian society implies the church. The law of Christ concerning common and mutual Christian duties is already in force, and the authority of administering its earthly sanctions resides with the community of Christians. ‡

* Ser. Platform, p. 3.

† Idem. p. 5, and *passim*.

‡ It is amazing to see Dr. Emmons walking straight forward, with his eyes open, into the absurdity that the law of Christ begins to be binding on Christian disciples only when they have mutually agreed to be bound by it; and, by implication, that it is binding then only within the bodies that may be formed by "elective affinity," pp. 4, 5.

As touching the credentials of government in the church, it is hard to see where in the principle to be applied differs from that which obtains respecting civil government. Under the latter, the individual is required to "submit himself to the powers that be." Under the former, he is required to "obey them that have the rule over him." In either case, the wide generality of the command, interpreted by the inspired absence of express instruction as to the method of appointing and inducing valid officers, points to a like conclusion:—that, under the necessary and obvious limitations, a *de facto* government, in church as in state, is entitled to the allegiance of its subjects.

The illustration of this view by the instance of the New Haven Colony is so obvious that it is needful only to hint the main points of it. The church which, according to the uniform laws of the Christian life, had crystallized out of the ship's company during the voyage, having only such slight, informal organization as the circumstances of that temporary mode of life required, was not dissolved when the colonists landed. It was the church authority subsisting among them already, which was expressed in the "plantation-covenant." When, afterward, the town was "cast into several private meetings wherein they that dwelt most together gave their accounts one to another of God's gracious work upon them, and prayed together, and conferred to mutual edification," and thus "had knowledge, one of another," and of the fitness of individuals for their several places, in the foundation-work, or in the superstructure*—it is possible that they supposed they were preparing to *originate* the church; but it is plain to the looker-on that the very act of "casting the town into meetings" was an act of the church. And the action of the "constituent assembly" in the barn was, like the adoption of our present national constitution, not the founding of a new church or state, but the peaceful revolution of one already in being. The Constitution does not make the state; the state makes the Constitution.

If, within the territory occupied by the colony, a knot of theorizers on politics had conspired to form a separate mutual compact for civil government among them-

* Quite in accordance with the Doctor's exegesis of Matthew xviii. 15-17, is the common construction of the same passage, which holds it to be a sin to report an offending brother in the lecture-room of the church until after the "first and second steps," but holds it permissible to advertise him "at sight" in the religious newspapers.

* Bacon's Historical Discourses, p. 19.

selves, to use a different code of laws upon their members, and to secure a purer democracy or a legitimately descended ruler, the proper name for the act would have been *sedition*. Precisely so, when dissenters from the colonial church *did*, for no grievance put upon their conscience, but simply in the prosecution of their church theories or prejudices, split themselves from the congregation, and refuse obedience to the existing government—"to them that had the rule"—and insist on importing for their special use a hierarch in the regular succession, the proper name for their act was *schism*.

But, on the other hand, let it be confessed that if the colonial Church had undertaken to exclude from its fellowship Christian disciples, for causes not demanding the censure of the Church nor discrediting the profession of a Christian faith—if they had reversed the gospel principle, and proceeded on the notion that it is better that ten weak disciples should be excluded than that one deceiver should be admitted—if thus they had created outside of their communion a party of Christians whose only opportunity of fellowship was in a separate organization; then the sin of schism would have rested on the heads not of the few, but of the many. The Church itself would have become schismatic. But it is fair to say that this does not seem to have been the sin of the churches of the first nor of the second generation. The general prevalence of it in New England is comparatively modern.

OBJECTIONS TO THIS THEORY OF THE CHURCH.—The objections to be levied against what we have called the Rational and Scriptural Theory of the Church will exactly correspond with those which have been raised, to no effect, against the analogous theory of civil polity. They may be treated with great brevity.

Objection 1. The principle proposed, of the duty of deference to the *de facto* government of the Christian community, cannot be accompanied with any distinct and definite limitation, by which the occasional exceptions in favor of disobedience or revolution can be determined.

The answer to this is to be found, not only in the parallel doctrine and objection in civil polity, but "in almost every part of ethical science." So rarely is the exact boundary between right and wrong to be distinctly defined in a formula—so generally are the final questions on the application of moral rules left open for the deci-

sion of the individual conscience—that there is a *prima facie* presumption against any attempt to fix the course of right action on a point of morals by a formula of permanent and universal application.* The objection is a clear argument in our favor.

Objection 2. Under the doctrine here laid down, it will be impossible to justify the Puritan separations from the Church of England.

The first answer which we would make to this is that it is a small matter to answer it at all. The second, that a true judgment on those acts of separation must depend on the circumstances surrounding each act; on the character of the parish church from which the separatists withdrew—whether it was Christian or unchristian; on the nature of the grievances under which they labored, whether mere annoyances or actual burdens on the conscience; on the probability of bringing the body of the Christian disciples in that community into union under a purer rule. The third answer is that if it does condemn the secession of dissenters from the Church of England, it thereby honors and confirms the judgment of our Puritan forefathers of the best and earliest age, almost all of whom, except the Pilgrims of Plymouth, abhorred the schism of the separatists with a holy horror. The fourth answer will be conclusive in many minds,—that the doubt which it throws over the Puritan separations in England is more than compensated by the discredit which it puts upon many of the Baptist, Episcopalian, and Methodist schisms in New England.

Objection 3. This view discredits many of the local efforts for the propagation of Congregational institutions at the West and elsewhere, as schismatic.

Answer. Very likely.

Objection 4. This view brings in practical difficulty and confusion, by making it often a matter of doubt what is the Church of Christ in any community, and where its government resides.

Answer. This difficulty is not peculiar to the ecclesiastical application of the theory. It is of frequent occurrence in civil politics. Hardly ever is there a revolution or a considerable attempt at revolution, in which it does not become a very important and very perplexing question to some consciences—Which *are* "the powers that be?" It is a question not only for the passive and indifferent, but for the active leaders of revolu-

* See the ample illustration of this matter, in its political bearing, in Macaulay's History of England, Vol. ii., pp. 108-5, Harper's 12mo edition.

tion—first whether there is ground and need for revolution, and then whether the dissatisfaction of the people, the incapacity of the administration, and the combination of favoring circumstances have or have not charged them with *the power*, and with a trust for the redress of intolerable grievances, to the discharge of which they are ordained of God. Not to allude to questions which often arose to perplex honest consciences during our own civil war, the history of the mission of Dudley Mann to Hungary, in quest of a government to recognize, is one case in point. Another is the amusing story of Mr. John L. Stephens, whose *Travel* was never so full of incidents as when, with a diplomatic commission in his pocket, he explored the various factions of a Spanish American republic, in search of the right government to which to present it.*

It cannot invalidate the principle which we have enunciated, that such difficulties are more frequent in ecclesiastical politics than in civil. In secular matters, the necessities of society are such that the rival pretensions of different claimants to the supreme government within the same territory become a nuisance so odious as not to be tolerable for an indefinitely protracted period; and as for the settlement of these claims by allowing each claimant to govern its own partisans according to its own laws, the plan is so unnatural, so inimical to the peace of the community, that history has shown no disposition to repeat the solitary instance of it which is found in the present constitution of the Turkish empire, tempered though it is, in that instance, by the beneficent rigors of a supervising despotism.

But the union and communion of all the Christian disciples of any community, instead of being, like political union, a necessity, is only a duty. Consequently when once factions have established themselves in the Christian commonwealth, there is no necessary limit to their continuance from year to year, and from generation to generation. In the course of time the Christian mind becomes so wonted, and the Christian conscience so seared, to the wrong and evil of schism, that the doctrine of the perpetuity of schism is accepted as an integral part of the "evangelical scheme," and the sacred name of *the Church* loses its proper meaning, of the commonwealth of God's people, and becomes synonymous with

its old opposite, a *alpeous* or sect. The "problem of Christian union," which in the beginning no one ever thought of calling a problem, is held to be soluble only by diplomatic dealings between these churches (which are not churches), or else by setting up in the vacant place formerly held by the church, a new institution—a Young Men's Christian Association, or a Catholic Basis City Tract Society—that shall be the centre of Catholic affection and the means of the communion of saints.

In this state of a Christian neighborhood, doubtless the question, Where is the church? is a difficult one. One thing about it is plain, that it is not to be settled by applying worn-out tests, such as papal authority, apostolic succession, structural perfection, or democratic origin to any fragment of the schism, and determining that to be the Church. In some cases, it will appear that there is a Catholic church in the place, from which seditious spirits have torn themselves away in wanton schism. Sometimes, that the different churches, separate in name and form, are united in substance and spirit, that their several pastors, cooperating in every good word and work, are really a presbytery or college of ministers for the one Church of Christ in the town. Sometimes it will appear that the Catholic Tract Society has become a sort of church without ordinances, and that the president of the Society is actual bishop of the town. But more commonly the most that can be said is that the church in such a community is existing in a state of schism; as, in the Rome of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the authority of the state might properly be described as dispersed among a number of families and factions. And the best that any one can do in such a case, is, while joining himself in special fellowship where he will lend himself least to the encouragement of faction, always to hold his supreme allegiance to be due to the interests and authority of the *whole* family that is named of Christ.

It is much in favor of any theory on such a subject as the one which we have in hand, that its chief difficulties lie in matters of application and detail. In these matters we would not speak with too much confidence. We may have wrought unsuccessfully in developing and applying the analogy which is the theme of our article. But we reach the close of the discussion with increased confidence that in the just treatment of this analogy lies the only hope of solving the problems of ecclesiastical polity.

* Incidents of *Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan.* By John L. Stephens.