

CORRESPONDENCE.

Errors and Heresies, in "Pictorial New Testament," by the Abbotts.

(Continued).

To the Editor of the Church Guardian:

SIR,—We can afford to pass over the silly note of John vi., 9. *There is a lad here who has five loaves and two fishes.* "Perhaps an attendant employed to carry provisions." Any one can be a commentator with the liberal use of "perhaps" and "probably." But on St. Matt. xiv., 19, where Jesus blessed the loaves and fishes, we read, "It seems to have been the custom of the Saviour to implore the Divine blessing upon food, etc." In the text it is written that *He* blessed and brake, being the Maker he could bless the creature, and did not need to *implore* the Divine blessing; but straws show how the wind blows.

On St. Matt 3, 2, we learn that our Lord did not fast 40 days; it was "only an abstinence from all except such casual and uncertain sustenance as the wilderness afforded," *i. e.*, He ate all that the wilderness afforded; but another Evangelist says, "He ate nothing."

On St. Matt., 13, 55, the Commentator has "no doubt"—"that Jesus had both brothers and sisters."

On Acts 8, 15, the writer displays an ignorance of Catholic usage, and its scriptural proof; when he says "it is regarded by the Episcopal Church as giving Scriptural authority for their rite of Confirmation." (The italics are mine.)

On Acts 11, 3, we learn that the Apostles were only baptized *as authors*.

"It is only the Scriptures, as writings which have any claim to be considered as inspired."

On Rom. 6, 3, we have believers baptism only taught.

On Acts 6, 6, the diaconate is declared not to be a permanent order

On St. Luke 10, 21,—*He rejoiced in the Holy Spirit*; "probably . . . the result of a special inspiration from His Heavenly Father.

This is another straw.

On St. Jno. v. 19, *The Son can do nothing of Himself*, the note says, "All that he does, he does as a manifestation of the Father, and by the power which the Father imparts to Him." This is Sabellianism pure and simple. But we have the worst in reserve, touching the *very nature* of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. On the Temptation of Christ, St. Luke iv. 13, he writes: "In order to appreciate the nature and severity of this trial, we must remember that Jesus was strictly a man, and that He partook of all the natural feelings of the human heart." (This is all right; but mark what follows): "And now, He was about to enter upon a very public career as a man, He found Himself mysteriously partaking of the Divine nature, and clothed with Divine authority, &c."

Here it is implied that our Lord was not conscious of His Divinity until He was thirty years old. Certainly, on such a supposition, He was not God.

Again, on St. Jno. xiv. 28, *The Father is greater than I*, he asserts, "Jesus Christ, as speaking and acting upon earth, in the execution of His Mediatorial office, was in no sense equal to the Father. It was *the Word* which was God. But Jesus Christ, in whom this Word was mysteriously conjoined with human nature, always assumed a position of obedience and submission, which is plainly recognized in all His allusions to the Father, and is here distinctly declared. It is true that in one passage (x. 30) he says, 'I and My Father are one'; but the sense in which He intended it to be understood is made clear in Ch. xvii. 11-22, when He prays that the same oneness which joins Him, as Mediator with the Father, may unite His disciples with Him."

Now, it appears to me, to be most dangerous language to assert, without qualification, that

"Christ, in the execution of His Mediatorial office, was in *no sense* (the italics are mine) equal to the Father."

Catholic theologians have admitted that there is a sense in which, as Mediator, the Son is not equal to the Father. "For the office of a Mediator is itself dependent, relative, and accidental;" and "the Mediatorial office of Christ will one day have an end." (Wordsworth's notes on New Testament.) And Christ, in His Mediatorial office, *as Man*, is "inferior to the Father."

But there is a sense, nevertheless, in which "Christ, in the execution of His Mediatorial office," is equal to the Father.

The Mediatorship of our Lord is of value, in that He who mediates is perfect God as well as perfect Man. There is but *one* personality in the Mediator, which is that of His Godhead. We know that there is a perfect human nature in our Lord; but there are not *two* persons in the Divine Son. Christ is one Person, and that Person is the Eternal Son, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God,—of one substance with the Father. This Person is "Jesus the Mediator." Therefore it is not true that in no sense was Christ in His Mediatorial office equal to the Father.

Again,—*I and my Father are one*; is explained away, thus: "The oneness which joins him as mediator with the Father," is "that same oneness, which he prays may unite the disciples with him." Now, Catholics hold, that Christ is '*homoousios*,' of one substance with the Father: but how is it possible that the disciples can ever be of one substance with the Son? "It is pretty to observe" that this text, (St. John, 17: 11-12) is used, just as it was used by the Socinians, to support their denial of the Eternal Godhead of the Son.

But take the note on St. John i: 1, 2, on the word where he says, "This language *unquivocally* establishes in one clause, an identity between the existence called the Word and the supreme Jehovah; and in another, as clearly marks a contradistinction between them."

This throws the writer upon the horns of a dilemma. A Catholic would see at once, an *identity of substance*, and a *distinction of person*; but the writer, does not seem to care to admit this, which he would readily do, if he believed it.

"We are forced," he says, "upon the alternative of either admitting some incomprehensible distinction in the oneness of the Godhead, or else peremptorily rejecting this testimony."

But he seems afraid to "take the responsibility of rejecting the testimony, as it relates to the natural and to the personal identity, of the Supreme Being."

Surely, I have quoted enough to prove that the book is heretical upon the Holy Trinity, and upon the nature and person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Strange, indeed, to the ears of orthodox believers are such terms as these:—"Jesus *implores* the Divine blessing" upon food; "*the existence called the Word*," in antithesis with "*the Supreme Jehovah*." "*Some incomprehensible distinction* in the oneness of the Godhead." The Son when He shall have ended His work is to be "*merged in the Father*," &c. This is not He to whom the Christians of old sang hymns of praise, as God; not the Saviour and God whom we adore. It is Mr. Editor, I believe, imperatively necessary that our Synods should take most decided steps without delay, to give our people free access to the wholesome books of the S. P. C. K. There should be a *depot* in every Parish. The people will buy, and if we, their spiritual guardians, do not take active measures to provide suitable and safe religious literature, they will get the pernicious and heretical unconsciously before we know it and will be poisoned in the very springs of their spiritual life,—their faith in their Saviour and their God.

A. B.

We begin this week a new serial story written for this paper, which will be found full of interest to those who are readers of fiction.

BOOK NOTICES, REVIEWS, &c.

"The American Church Review" for July is filled with articles of great value, bearing upon the most important subjects of theological inquiry and discussion. "The modern conception of the development of the religion of Israel as the claimed result of the new criticism of the Old Testament," by the Rev. A. Saeger, D. D. "The Man Moses," by John Dunlop, M. A. "The Theology of to-day as it centres in the doctrine of the Incarnation," by the Rev. William Wilberforce, Newton, M. A. "Greek Lexicography" by the Rev. Jesse Amos Spencer, D. D. Several Reviews of Recent Literature, complete a particularly valuable number of this really important Magazine. Address American Church Review Association. \$3.00 a year.

The "American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal" for July, contains among other articles of great interest, one on "Indian Mythology," by Washington Matthews. "The Religion of the Dakotas"—the Omahas and Ponkas, by J. O. Dorsey. "Village Defences," by the Editor, the Rev. Stephen D. Peet. "Ancient Mexican Civilization" by L. P. Gratacap, and a number of other historical articles, which, with the other contents, help to make this Magazine a necessity to every member of our historical societies, and to all others interested in Antiquarian studies. The Editor promises many valuable articles for the next volume soon to begin. Jameson & Morse, Chicago, \$3.00 a year.

The "Siderial Messenger" for August cannot fail to be interesting to the student of Astronomy and to all who value this study we commend it. W. W. Payne, Northfield Minn., \$2 a year.

A new monthly by the well known veteran, Dr. Dio Lewis, will be received with favor by all who have been acquainted with his previous writings and work. To Dr. Lewis more than to any other man is due an improved knowledge of the laws of life and physical culture, and many thousands in health and strength to-day in all parts of the world owe him their gratitude for advice and stimulus to secure and maintain a good constitution. Such a Magazine as this now before us will, indeed, we believe, prove the crowning success of a long and successful life, and we warmly welcome it, and in the strongest terms recommend it to heads of families and others. Address Clarke Bros., Bible House, New York, \$2.50 a year.

"The Wheelman" for August increases our respect for the bicycle and bicyclers, and of these last we trust, in the interest of good health, we have very many among our readers. The Wheelman Co., 608 Washington St., Boston. \$2.00 a year.

"The Dominion Alliance Year Book" for 1883 has been received from Mr. Monaghan, the faithful and devoted Secretary for Nova Scotia. We endorse the work of the Alliance, and refer our readers to the book for much valuable information upon the temperance question in Canada.

"Our Little Ones" for August. Charming and fresh as ever, growing upon one's affection as it grows older, and making one wish to be back to the days of childhood again to enjoy, with childish delight, its pictures and stories. Russell Publishing Co., Boston. \$1.50 a year.

"Mastery" for July 26—a weekly magazine of useful pastimes for young people, illustrated. Full of pleasant and healthy stories, and interesting games and other pastimes, this magazine is worthy a place in every household, and will do good wherever it goes. We can warmly recommend it. Address "Mastery," 842 Broadway, New York. \$3 a year.