

precede, we expect prediction ; if it follow, command, prayer, or wish. I do not, as yet, venture to say this rule is quite universal. There may occasionally be circumstances to modify it. That most important principle, correspondence, may be one such. But generally I find the rule holds, and the consequences are highly valuable. Another is that ellipses, in which Hebrew abounds, are not to be filled up at random. The context will commonly teach, or suggest, the right complement. As to this matter of ellipses, Bernard's edition of Job (with that keen scholar Chance's notes, so far as they are available) is very useful. Bernard's tendency, indeed, is to carry the doctrine of ellipsis to excess ; but, for all that, he is of great service.

Here I pause. Some of the points to which I have alluded well deserve ample treatment. Notably, the whole subject of correspondence is itself of an importance which it is difficult to overestimate. Its witness to inspiration is such that the neglect of it deprives such as do neglect it of a most powerful weapon. But this at present I only hint at. Enough, however, I hope, has been said to stimulate study, and *prayerful* study ; for, let us never forget, " the secret of the Lord *is with them that fear Him.*"



#### ART. VIII.—THE MONTH.

THE past month has brought into singular prominence and juxtaposition the varied problems with which the Church is at present confronted. They are illustrated by some striking observations made the other day in the *Guardian* (June 22) : " It is difficult to define the exact point at which comprehension ends and incoherence begins, but hostile critics of the Church of England have not been slow to take advantage of the strange contrasts presented by the various meetings which were being held simultaneously at the Church House last Thursday afternoon. In a room on the ground-floor there was a sitting of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline ; overhead was assembled the annual meeting of the English Church Union, listening to Lord Halifax's strongly-worded criticisms of the genesis of the Commission, and his denunciations of a timid and invertebrate episcopal bench ; in another room Dr. Cheyne was exhorting the members of the Churchmen's Union to pin their faith to Jerahmeel and the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, and was casting fresh doubt upon doctrines which Christians have always felt to form a vital part of the central truth of the Incarna-

tion. We have to reckon with facts as they are, and, however much we may deplore, we are unable to deny the existence of profound divergences of faith and practice which these gatherings indicate."

In point of fact, the characteristic comprehension of the Church of England is being strained to bursting-point in at least two directions. On the one side, as was painfully illustrated in Lord Halifax's speech, the party led by him are not only repudiating all State control, but all Episcopal control. In a manner which would have shocked the old High Churchmen, they declare, like Lord Halifax, that "it is impossible to look with any confidence to the natural rulers of the Church," and are forcing the services and the teaching of the Church of England into closer and closer unison with those of Rome. The evidence now being received by the Royal Commission will, we apprehend, leave no doubt on this point. On the other hand, the demands of the rationalistic section of the clergy are similarly being strained to bursting-point when we have a Canon of Rochester and a Professor of the Exegesis of Holy Scripture announcing that it is possible that the belief in the Virgin birth may be an echo of Babylonian mythologies, referred to in the Book of the Revelation, and when men like Canon Henson and Dr. Rashdall are claiming the right to repudiate what is, undoubtedly, the settled belief of the ancient Church respecting the Resurrection. At the same moment, honoured Churchmen like Canon Newbolt are combining to resist even such a concession to modern scruples as the disuse of the public recitation of the Athanasian Creed. The danger of a similar strain on the side of the evangelical section is, at present, happily, not serious. The men who would overstrain the Articles and formularies in a Puritan sense are probably few, and are certainly without material influence.

But it must be apparent that such a state of things as is thus exhibited cannot possibly last, and that if the Church is to remain an organized and authoritative institution some limits must be determined beyond which individual or party license will not be tolerated. Can any such limits be suggested? We hope and believe they might be found in a reversion to the characteristic principle of the English Reformation, the appeal to the Primitive Church, and in accepting the liberal acceptance of "Primitive" suggested by Jewel—the Church of the first six centuries. The Church of England was founded at the end of the sixth century, and she might well assert her continuity with the authorized faith and practices of the six hundred years preceding her foundation. The cardinal doctrines of the faith,

a simple but dignified form of worship, and great freedom of private belief on points not authoritatively defined, ought to be sufficient for the legitimate demands of the parties now struggling like centrifugal forces. It would mean, no doubt, some sacrifice of private preferences on all sides; but it would afford a broad and settled basis for definite comprehension, it would involve no party triumph, and, above all, it would be a simple reversion to the position of the Church of England as asserted by all her most authoritative divines. Romanism is impossible; Rationalism is impossible; Puritanism is impossible. But Anglicanism, the historic Anglicanism of the Reformation, is, at least, a possible system for English clergymen and laymen, and it is to be hoped that its reassertion may be the outcome of the present confusion.



## Notices of Books.

*A Protestant Dictionary, containing Articles on the History, Doctrines, and Practices of the Christian Church.* Edited by the Rev. CHARLES H. H. WRIGHT, D.D., M.A., Ph.D., Donnellan Lecturer (1880-1881) in the University of Dublin, and the Rev. CHARLES NEIL, M.A., Vicar of St. Mary's, Stamford Brook, London. London: Hodder and Stoughton. Pp. xv + 832. 15s.

The publication of this Dictionary is distinctly a step in the right direction, though a very thorough revision is needed to render it complete as a work of reference. It contains a considerable number of valuable articles, together with others which can hardly be called satisfactory, and the omission of various subjects that might naturally be expected to have a place in the contents seems inexplicable. One object of such a work should be to provide writers in the Press with the facts they are most likely to require. At the present moment, for instance, a determined effort is being made to abolish the few remaining disabilities imposed by law upon Roman Catholics. A journalist under the necessity of discussing so important a question ought to be able to find here some information about it, including the history of the Test Acts, the extent of their repeal in 1829, and the legislation affecting the succession to the Crown. With the exception of a brief reference to the Coronation Oath under the heading "Occasional Services," there is nothing upon any one of these matters. Neither is there any account of the circumstances connected with the establishment of the Roman hierarchy in England in 1850. In other cases, where a subject of general interest does receive notice in an article, it occasionally happens that the subject is treated in a rhetorical way, instead of historically, and the facts which an untrained person needs are not given. Even the author of the article on "Reservation" has forgotten to explain why and on what grounds the practice is illegal in the English