

the Messiah. Jn 6¹⁷ states that He crossed to Capernaum; Mk 6⁵³, Mt 14³⁴ to the plain of Gennesaret; Mt 15³⁹ that He crossed to the borders of Magadan; Mk 8¹⁰ to the parts of Dalmanutha. Mk 6⁴⁵ states that their real destination was Bethsaida. Gennesaret is a general term of the plain on the border of which Capernaum was situated. Magadan may be another name for Magdala, which is on the south side of the plain, as Capernaum is on the north. Dalmanutha may be a more precise designation of the place, which has not yet been identified. All these places were within a few miles of each other. The calm after the storm compelled them to seek the nearest land. But that the original plan of going to Bethsaida was carried out is evident from the healing of the blind man there (Mk 8²²⁻²⁶) before the journey north to Cæsarea Philippi.

This is the readjustment of the order of events in the life of Jesus which is required by the answer to the question, *Where was Jesus during the absence*

of the Twelve? It solves a number of the most difficult problems of the New Testament, explains the silence of Mark as to the ministry in Peræa and Judæa, and the full report of John as to the Jerusalem ministry, and his implicit agreement with the full report of Luke as to the Peræan ministry. It also fills the gap in time which the absence of ten of the Twelve requires by a sufficient amount of active ministry of Jesus to satisfy all conditions of the problem. It also explains the movements of Jesus in accordance with the perils of His position, and enables us to see how the crisis is brought on which finally removes every reason for caution, and justifies Him in making a distinct announcement of His Messiahship. Thus He secures His definite acceptance as Messiah by His chief disciples, and is enabled to give them a clear warning of His impending death and resurrection just before He makes His last journey to Jerusalem, to the cross and the crown.

Point and Illustration.

He saw the Heavens opened.—Mr. F. B. Meyer took the Temptation for the subject of his address at the Manchester Mission recently. He spoke of Jesus being driven into the wilderness, and he said: ‘There is a difference between a wilderness and a desert. A desert is an ocean of burning sand, where God bakes the winds and makes possible the trade-winds; but a wilderness is used in the Bible perpetually as rather a lonely spot where no blue smoke climbs from the shepherd’s cot, where no boy is heard whistling or calling to his sheep, where only the cry of the grouse, where only the low growl of the beast of prey as he goes forth at night upon his prowls, only the sounds of nature and the sob of the wind over the grass, only such sounds as these are heard.’

He spoke also of the opening of the heavens that came between the Baptism and the Temptation, and he said: ‘Jesus Christ had stood under the open sky, and, as I read the Gospels, He had only stood there for a minute. The open sky was but for a very brief space. If you ask me what the open sky meant, I reply that, in my judgment, it was the revelation to Jesus Christ of new spiritual

forces that lay within His reach. I will not further dwell on that thought; it is an inviting, a wonderfully inviting subject, but I believe the development of Jesus Christ in knowledge and power had been constantly increasing until He had come to a moment when He not only knew exactly who He was, and whence He came, but whence He was going, that in order to move the world He must lay hold upon those heavenly forces that lie within the reach of every faithful touch. It was just as when Newton discovered the law of gravitation and heaven was opened to him, or Watt discovered the law of steam, and a new driving motor force was revealed to him, and as I the other day for the first time saw ether burning in its blue flame and saw the driving force of the next twenty years. So Jesus Christ had seen the heavens opened. But it was only for a moment, and only John and He saw it. It was but a flash, and then the clouds gathered again, and He was “driven.”’

The Carpenter’s Shop.—How far is it lawful to go in the imagination of scenes which the Gospels do not record? Is it lawful to imagine

them at all? In the sermon already referred to, Mr. F. B. Meyer tells how the news of John the Baptist's preaching was carried to a carpenter's shop in Nazareth: 'The news that God's voice had spoken again after four hundred years of silence thrilled the country. The tidings sped up to Jerusalem, and all Jerusalem poured her crowds down until the Jordan valley was blocked with people; and the tidings rolled up the funnel of the long valley of the Jordan to the Lake of Galilee, where men were drying their nets, and they poured down—the youth especially of Galilee—to be the disciples of John; and the news was diverted from that main channel until it reached the place where Nazareth lay, and came one afternoon, as I imagine it, to the open door of the carpenter's shop, when some breathless messenger burst in and said, "The Lord cometh, the Lord cometh! The voice of the forerunner has been heard in the land." He little knew how his message thrilled the young carpenter, who stood there knee-deep in shavings which had curled up from the boards. And that evening Christ was longer away from the village home than usual in meditation on the hills, the great silent hills that lay around the village; and then in the morning, early rising, He took an affectionate farewell of Mary, and Mary knew that the hour had come by a kind of subtle instinct, and the two parted, never to meet quite like that again, save perhaps at the Cross.'

An Unconscious Mystic.—The Rev. Wentworth Webster, M.A., is Corresponding Member of the Royal Academy of History in Madrid, and he has spent his time searching into the byways of Spanish religious history. Article after article has appeared in the *Anglican Church Magazine* or the *Foreign Church Chronicle*, each article separated from ordinary magazine articles by the style of the raconteur (that style which in poetry distinguishes the ballad from other literature). Now he has gathered these out-of-the-way articles into a book, with sundry touches to date. The book is called *Gleanings in Church History* (S.P.C.K.; 4s.). One chapter discusses the meaning of I.P. and the origin of R.I.P.; another Santa Teresa. One describes a Spanish New Year Service, another La Petite Eglise. One is a history of the Spanish Church up to 1000; another is an estimate of Spanish Mysticism. In the chapter on Spanish Mysticism, the mysticism of Valdés and Molinos,

Mr. Webster says: 'True mysticism may be often found among the rude and illiterate, who can hardly express their ideas in speech, still less in writing. "Can you tell me what particular thing led to your conversion?" asked a clergyman of a humble member of his congregation. "Why, sir, it was hearing Mr. — read one morning in church, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand." "Those are striking words; but I do not see how they led to your conversion." "Don't you see, sir? 'before whom I stand,'—*I felt myself standing before God.*" This unlettered man was a far truer mystic than many who have tried to write themselves as such.'

The Soul's Leap to God.—'I read in the newspaper the other day of a wonderful invention to be used in war. It was a *bomb*, with such materials inside the shell, and so contrived as to explode at the touch of a ray of light! The bomb might be placed anywhere and do no harm; but let a ray of light fall upon it in particular, and on the instant, at the summons of the light, the thing would awake and burst. Well, that is a very exact summary of Robert Browning's teaching on the conversion of the soul, or the soul's discovery of God.'

Thus Mr. John A. Hutton, M.A., who has dared to publish another book on Browning, begins his second chapter. He afterwards says: 'I regard Browning's teaching on conversion as his supreme message to our time. It is that teaching, as it seems to me, which ranks him with the prophets. Valuable as is the light which he sheds upon those problems of life and experience which are as old as man, or at least, as old as the days of reflexion; splendid as is the courage with which he girds his loins, and faces the darkness and the doubt; yet more solitary and distinguished is his teaching on the soul of man, his impassioned confidence that the soul may, in one grand moment, leap sheer out of any depth of shame or subtle homage, and leap to the breast of God.'

That shows that Mr. Hutton owes much to Browning. When the book has done its work Browning will owe something to Mr. Hutton. It is published by Messrs. Oliphant of Edinburgh. Its title is *Guidance from Robert Browning in Matters of Faith* (2s. 6d. net).

The Instinct of Peril.—There may be less

prayer, as the pessimist tells us, than formerly, but there is more writing about it. A volume on prayer is nearly as sure among the month's publications as a volume of sermons. This month it comes from America, through the Fleming H. Revell Company, whose publishing office for this country is at 30 St. Mary Street, Edinburgh. Its author is Dr. David Gregg of Brooklyn.

The point of insistence in this book is the place of prayer among the forces that move the machinery of the world, and he calls it *Individual Prayer as a Working-Force* (2s. net). In the last chapter his subject is Christ at prayer on our behalf, the text being, 'I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil' (Jn 17¹⁵). How is that prayer answered? How does Christ's prayer keep us from the evil that is in the world? Following Mr. W. L. Watkinson, Dr. Gregg says in two ways. The one way is by putting in us *the instinct of peril*; the other by granting us *a hidden life filled with Himself*.

What is this instinct of peril? 'In India butterflies migrate to escape the monsoon. They have a meteorological sense, which gives them an intimation of low-pressure and warns them to haste away. It like manner God gives to all sincere men a similiar instinct for moral peril—a sensibility of sin, a pain to feel it near. Goethe sets this forth in his tragedy of Faust. In that tragedy Margaret, who represents virgin-purity, cannot bear the sight of Mephistopheles. Though he is disguised as an honourable knight and she has no idea who he is, she shrinks from him. She has a keen instinct of moral peril—

In all my life not anything
Has given my heart so sharp a sting
As that man's loathsome visage.

You begin to read a certain book, as Mr. Watkin-

son says, and you do not like it, you suspect it morally. It is certainly not high in its tone. You cannot put your objection into words, but the shrinking from it is there. That is the action of the instinct of peril. Drop the book at once. Your separation to God in this case lies in following the instinct. Guard the bloom on the peach. It is essential; for just where the bloom is rubbed off, at that precise point decay sets in. Honour the instinct of peril, and remember this: In a life of holiness there is no place for presumption.'

Turning over a New Leaf.—The Rev. L. Maclean Watt, B.D., of Alloa, who has published a volume of Communion addresses, through Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton (*The Communion Table*; 3s. 6d.), will not murmur nor complain if we say that the best of it is its poetry. The poetry is often the best thing in a sermon, and the remark is hard upon the sermon. But here the poetry is the preacher's own. Nor does it mean that he is a better poet than a preacher, for he preaches by his poetry. Opposite each sermon's opening words are found a line or two. This is the finest of them all we think—

Carry me over the long, last mile,
Man of Nazareth, Christ for me!
Weary I wait by Death's dark style,
In the wild and the waste where the wind blows free:
And the shadows and sorrows, come out of my past
Look keen through my heart,
And will not depart,
Now that my poor world has come to its last.

Lord, is it long that my spirit must wait,
Man of Nazareth, Christ for me!
Deep is the stream, and the night is late,
And grief blinds my soul that I cannot see . . .
Speak to me, out of the silences, Lord,
That my spirit may know,
As forward I go,
That Thy pierced hands are lifting me over the ford!

Christianity a Prophetic Religion.

BY THE REV. W. F. COBB, D.D., RECTOR OF ST. ETHELBURGA'S, LONDON.

THE days of Jesus were days of great expectations. The Messianic hope had been suggested by the prophets, and nurtured among the quiet in the land. It had mastered the populace, been accepted by the Pharisees, and was tolerated by the Saddu-

cean aristocracy. The further Jehovah had retired in the highest heaven, the lower the national and religious condition of Israel, the more fiercely burned the hope of the coming of the Anointed One. But that hope was of many colours. For