

them. At the well our Lord addressed himself to the woman in figurative language only; but as she understood what the figure veiled and believed, explanation of it was unnecessary. On the other hand, Jesus, at Capernaum, when addressing the unbelieving Jews, used figurative language in one form of his discourse, while in another form of it he elucidated the figures. He did so so plainly, that it is difficult to perceive how an intelligent and unprejudiced hearer could fail to understand him. This was true then, and is true now, though superstition has, as well in early post-Apostolic times, as in later days, showed itself blind to the plainness or shrouded it with *mystery*.

Before considering the explanation, some observations are ~~sug-~~
~~gested~~ as regards the natures of the figures used by our Lord at Sychar and at Capernaum. Obviously the figurative language in either case, was suggested by circumstances then or recently existing. At the well he made himself a fount of water. At Capernaum, having just before satisfied the hunger of a multitude, he made his *body* bread, meat and drink. At the well he was a fount of water only in the sense of his being the source of Divine Grace. At Capernaum, his body, his blood, were *bread, meat and drink*, only in the sense that his body and his blood were the appointed offering to put away sin from the soul of the man *who believed in him*, and so received from him spiritual sustenance unto eternal life. This, clear enough in its own Divine simplicity, is made, as we shall see, demonstrably certain by our Lord's words..

Significant as to the meaning of "eating and drinking our Lord's flesh," if that meaning were still an open question, would be His words recorded in Jno. iv. 34, "My *meat* is to do the will of him that sent me." In harmony with this, He, in effect, said to the Jews, "As I *feed* on my Father by "doing his will,—his work,"—so you must *feed* on me (being "one with him") by doing my Father's work." He also said, "This is the work of God, *that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*"

What suggested the figures was evidently the physical fact of the enjoyment by a hungry natural man of material food, they, in that view, forcibly representing intensity of fruition by a hungry and thirsty soul of Him, who by *belief in Him*, becomes soul-satisfying spiritual food. "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." That text is a key to the interpretation of the figures,—it furnishes an answer to the question, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" The light of it thrown on that question dispels the *mystery* which human conceit alone has imported into our Lord's words at Capernaum. What the Great Teacher meant on the Mount, by "hungering and thirsting after righteousness," he meant, when he addressed the Jews in the Synagogue, by "eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man."

Jesus, as is recorded by St. John, in conversing with the Jews at Capernaum, used these phrases, "eating the living bread that came