

itself into two main parts, viz: The principles and the practice of Ritual. Of these two, the former will occupy most of our attention, as they being settled, it will be comparatively easy for every one by applying them to discern between true and false Ritual.

There can be but little hesitation as to what text of Holy Scripture will be most suitable for a discourse on the principles of Ritual. One immediately suggests itself as giving us the key to the whole matter—

“THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH.”—*St. John i. 14.*

That is, rightly to understand the meaning of Ritual, we must consider the doctrine of the Incarnation. Let us do so in humble dependence upon that Holy Spirit by Whose operation that great mystery was wrought, and Who is promised to us by the Incarnate, to be our guide into all truth. Let us endeavour to see what the Incarnation really was, what were its effects.

“In the beginning, God created the Heavens and the Earth,” and when He did so, “the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” But we let our minds run back, before this time, or rather before all time, when we believe that “there was only God,”—when He, “in the bliss of Majesty, did live and love alone.” True, then, in the perfection of His adorable nature, He was perfectly self-sufficient, and in the mystery of the Eternal Trinity, there was ample scope for the exercise of all the divine attributes. Ample scope too for the exercise of that great attribute of love, in the mutual love of the Three Persons of the Adorable Trinity; and so from all Eternity, God was perfect in Himself, blissful, then too He was Love.

But, we believe, in order that His infinite love might have some objects outside of Himself on which it might rest, He called, by His Word, creation into being. “He spake and