

Church. If, then, it can be clearly shown, what religious system the Bible does positively teach, it may then be admitted that there is some real force in the argument drawn from the silence of Scripture. We fully admit, indeed, that the Bible does not contain a systematic Exposition of Catholic Doctrine, and we maintain that it was never intended for such a purpose, as it consists, chiefly, of various occasional pieces, written for the direction of Christians who were already instructed in the truths of the Gospel, to which there are frequent incidental allusions, though very few of a formal or dogmatical character, as the sacred writers invariably suppose their readers to be well acquainted with these subjects from other sources of information. In fact, the evidence on this point is precisely similar to that relating to other important points of Christian practice, as received by the Church of England. Such, for instance, is the example of Infant Baptism. Your own remarks on the Veneration of the Blessed Virgin may be fully applied to this subject. There is certainly no direct authority for it in Scripture, and scarcely any historical evidence in its favor during the first four Centuries. It is not till the 5th Century, that we have a full recognition of the practice, as well as of the doctrine of Original Sin, on which it is founded, in the Writings of St. Augustine. The two cases are precisely analogous to each other, and it is certain that the objections of the Baptists against this practice of the Church of England, are quite as strong as the objections of the Protestants against the practice of the Catholic Church. The truth is that these objections are generally connected with unsound views of the doctrine of the Incarnation; and accordingly we find that it was in this connexion that