

**ON THE NATURE OF DIVINE AGENCY IN  
REFERENCE TO THE INSPIRATION OF THE  
SCRIPTURES: THE MISSION OF CHRIST:  
THE FORMATION OF CHRISTIAN  
VIRTUES: AND ITS PRACTICAL BEARINGS**

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On the Nature of Divine Agency in Reference to the Inspiration of the Scriptures: The Mission of Christ: The Formation of Christian Virtues: And Its Practical Bearings by Stephen Davies

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**STEPHEN DAVIES**

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REFERENCE TO THE INSPIRATION OF THE  
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ON  
THE NATURE OF  
DIVINE AGENCY.

ON  
THE NATURE  
OF  
DIVINE AGENCY,

IN REFERENCE TO

THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES; THE MISSION OF  
CHRIST; THE FORMATION OF CHRISTIAN VIRTUES;  
AND ITS PRACTICAL BEARING.

BY THE

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## P R E F A C E.

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IN presenting the following remarks on a subject confessedly mysterious, and therefore difficult, and which has engaged the attention of such minds as Owen and Howe; Barrow and Tillotson; Edwards and Warburton; Tomline, Scott, Heber, and indeed, not to mention living authors, most theological writers from St. Augustine, downwards, the author by no means supposes that he can offer anything either entirely *new*, or can even elucidate that which to them was involved in obscurity.

The *mode* in which the Holy Spirit operates upon the human mind, as well as



the *point* where human agency ceases, and the Divine begins, have ever been, and probably ever will remain, in this world, beyond the range of our faculties. The *facts* of the case are, however, far from being exhausted, as the following pages evince.

The first chapter is not intended as a disquisition on the terms translated Spirit, but as a brief outline of the principal senses in which they actually occur. Much, therefore, remains to be done under that head. And the same remark applies to other topics touched upon in that, and in the subsequent chapters.

But he may, perhaps, be permitted to state that his desire has been to follow the all-important advice, or maxim, of Bengelius, "*Qui bene distinguet, bene docet,*" he who distinguishes well, teaches well, and, on that principle, to show what,

upon the *whole*, appears to him the Scripture-view of Divine Agency, apart from all extraneous subjects ;—that it coincides with the constitution of man, is borne out by analogy, and, like all other operations of the Deity, is inseparably connected with means.

How far he has succeeded is not for him to determine ; but if, by bringing the subject before the public in a condensed, and somewhat definite form, the writer shall be the means of drawing the attention of his younger brethren to the investigation of it, much ore of intrinsic value may, by their separate, though, in the result, united labours, be collected and deposited in the common treasury of the church for the benefit of all.

Of its importance none even but slightly acquainted with the Scriptures can doubt. It is the fire upon our Christian altars.

It is that which alone can render our ministrations *efficient*. It is the light, and beauty, and glory of the sanctuary. It is, in short, the legacy bequeathed by our Divine Master to his church till that period shall arrive, when the angel of the Apocalypse, setting "his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and lifting up his hand to heaven, shall swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there shall be time no longer." Rev. x. 2—6.