

LETTERS TO A FRIEND
ON THE
HUMAN SOUL;
ITS
IMMATERIALITY AND IMMORTALITY;
AND MORE ESPECIALLY ON
ITS PECULIAR CHARACTERISTIC,
AS BEING
A FORM AND SUBSTANCE
DERIVING ITS LIFE CONTINUALLY FROM GOD.

BY
THE REV. J. CLOWES, M.A.

LATE RECTOR OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, MANCHESTER, AND FELLOW OF TRINITY
COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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ADDRESS TO THE READER.

DEAR READER,

The *soul* of man, which is at once both his nearest and dearest *property* or *possession*, is perhaps less considered and understood, as to its real essence, qualities, and character, than any other property or possession belonging to him. Indeed, it appears questionable (if we are to be guided by the authority of strict and accurate definition respecting the precise meaning of words) whether it can be asserted, with any degree of truth, that any other property does *belong to him*. For, can that, with any show of reason, be called man's *property* which he is to quit for ever, immediately on his removal from this world to another? Is not the soul, therefore, his *single exclusive* possession, as being that alone which he can carry with him beyond the grave? Of consequence, is not the soul a possession which merits his attention, his concern, and his daily investigation of its astonishing powers and capacities, infinitely above every other?

It has been my design, in the following Letters, to give a satisfactory answer to these questions, by attempting to prove, so far as the subject will admit of proof, that the human soul is not a mere vapour, ether, or fire—as some writers suppose—which is destitute of form and substance, and in possession of an independent life of its own; but that, on the contrary, it is both a substance and form, created to receive life continually from its GREAT CREATOR, who is, and ever must be, the sole Fountain of all Life, whether it be angelic, human, animal, or vegetative.

From this view of the living principle by which man is animated, as being not *in itself a fountain*, but only a *perpetual stream from a Divine source above and within itself*, an entirely new light is thrown on the philosophy of the parentage, birth, and growth of the human soul; whilst at the same time a satisfactory solution is given of the riddle (otherwise inexplicable), of its astonishing capacities and operations; and especially of that preëminent and distinguished faculty by which it is enabled, through the power of evangelical faith and love, to ascend to and conjoin itself with its MAKER in an eternal bond of the nearest and most endearing relationship! From the same consideration, too, is pointed out the high reasonableness of some of the most important duties inculcated in the Gospel, such as humility, self-denial, repentance, and faith in the internal operation of a DIVINE SPIRIT in the soul of man, for the double purpose of purification and regeneration; since these duties are evidently calculated