

in the world? The books of the Old Testament sprung from this insignificant and obscure people,—a fact which utterly defies explanation, except upon the ground taken by Christians in general, that the agency at work in the case has been more than human. To enter at length upon this subject, however, it is not my intention on the present occasion, but I make these introductory remarks to show what interest attaches to the teaching of these inspired records upon every conceivable question.

Whether the doctrine of a future life is taught in the Old Testament is a question upon which much has been written at different times, and to the discussion of which some of the greatest minds have bent their powers. The conclusions arrived at are somewhat diverse, according to the light in which the subject has been viewed, and the tone of the mind which has been brought to bear upon it. Amongst the opinions that have been entertained with regard to this matter, I may name three, as follows:—

1.—A great number of the Rationalists at the present time maintain that the doctrine of a future life is nowhere taught in the Old Testament. I am not aware that any one who believed in the inspiration and divine authority of the book has ever taken this view, but still as it has been held by scholars who profess to judge of the teachings of the Bible as they would of the contents of any other volume, it is certainly worthy of consideration. Bishop Warburton* laboured hard to show that not only did Moses omit the doctrine of a future life entirely from his teaching, but that an argument in favour of the Divine authority of his mission was to be deduced from that fact. The Bishop, however, would have been the first to admit that at a later period of the Jewish history, some glimpse of immortality was obtained by that people, from whatever source it might have come, and that an intimation of the fact is to be found in the books which appeared after Moses's time. And there are persons still living, who, following Dr. Priestly, profess to hold by Christianity, and yet deny the immortality of the soul, believing that the future state is to be realised only after the resurrection of the material body. Such people of

* Divine Legation of Moses.