

plainest language throughout the whole of the Old Testament books. They maintain that the Jews from the earliest period of their history were perfectly familiar with the fact not only that there is a life after death, but that the future state is one of retribution, designed for the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice.

3.—Somewhat intermediate between these two sets of opinions, may be found a third which teaches that a general belief in the reality of a future life prevailed amongst the ancient Hebrews, but that the teachings respecting it in the Old Testament were extremely vague and indefinite, and that the region itself was one of gloom, silence, and darkness, and peopled with shadowy and unsubstantial ghosts. The Hebrew word רפאים *Rephaim*, which is used frequently to describe the *manes* of the dead, denotes, they tell us, mere *Umbra* or shadows, and that etymologically it signifies relaxed and weak. Isaiah, bursting forth in his heart-stirring lyric addressed to the Babylonian monarch, exclaims, "Hell [that is *Sheol*, the land of spirits] from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead [*Rephaim*] for thee, *even* all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?"* Alger, whose work on the *Future Life* cannot be too highly spoken of, and who seems himself to cling to the idea that the spirit-world as recognised by the ancient Hebrews was exceedingly shadowy and unsubstantial, remarks, "These ghosts are described as being nearly as destitute of sensation as they are of strength. They are called 'The inhabitants of the land of stillness.' They exist in an inactive, partially torpid state, with a dreamy consciousness of past and present, neither suffering, nor enjoying, and seldom moving. Herder says of the Hebrews, 'The sad and mournful images of their ghostly realm disturbed them, and were too much for their self-possession.' Respecting these images, he adds, 'Their voluntary force and energy were destroyed. They were feeble as a shade, without distinction of members, as a nerveless breath. They

* *Isaiah* xiv., 9, 10.