

SATURDAY. MARCH 14 1914

DEATH OF DR. GINSBURG, LL.D.

A FRIEND OF GLADSTONE.

Dr. Ginsburg, the grand old man of Palmers Green, passed away on Saturday last, at his house in Oakthorpe-road, opposite the Southgate Council offices.

Dr. Ginsburg was 83 on Christmas Day, and was a native of Warsaw. He came to England as a young man, but had not lived at Palmers Green for many years. The first we knew of him was when he was made a J.P. At one time he used to sit fairly regularly on the local Bench, and he was very particular about the spelling of his name, because, as he smilingly told our reporter, a notorious criminal was named "Ginsberg." Unfortunately that was the way the worthy doctor's name was usually spelt by the uninitiated, and at last he became resigned to his fate.

Dr. Ginsburg had two claims to immortal fame. First, he was a distinguished Biblical scholar, and next that he was a close friend and confidant of Mr. Gladstone, who was also a great Bibliologist. It was this taste for learning which brought the strangely matched pair together, as told by the doctor himself at an annual dinner in memory of Gladstone some years back.

Dr. Ginsburg was educated as a Jew, but he adopted Christianity at the age of 15. His early training, however, really started him on his career of Biblical research, in which he attained international renown. His "Commentaries on Ecclesiastes," published in 1857, heralded the dawn of a new Hebrew scholar, and several others of his efforts are now recognised as Classics. He had the heart of a child, and was of an extremely gentle and mild disposition, but his intellect was that of a giant, and his capacity for research work has never been equalled. To explore a

library was often sufficient to take him across continents. He found rare documents in the Archives of the Inquisition, and his huge volumes published in the eighties, were the largest addition to knowledge of the Old Testament ever made by any one man. Mr. Gladstone valued the work so highly that he obtained a public grant towards the enormous expense.

Dr. Ginsburg was also a friend of Tennyson, and the latter drew on the doctor's matchless historical library for "Queen Mary."

A remarkable incident in the doctor's career was the detection of the famous Shapira forgeries in 1887. Shapira was a Polish Jew, with a shop in Palestine, and he sold to the Prussian Government some so-called Moabite potteries, which proved to be forgeries. Dr. Ginsburg was called in by the British Government to report on some leather strips, said to have been discovered in a cave. A million sterling was asked for these, as they purported to contain the speeches of Moses. Dr. Ginsburg exposed the swindler, and Shapira committed suicide.

As President of the Palmers Green Liberal Association, Dr. Ginsburg was a familiar figure to many, and before his infirmities increased he was an active head of the branch. Many will remember the garden party held a few years ago at Oak Lodge, and attended by many notables. The house was formerly occupied by Mr. Dallas Ross, who now lives at Alexandra Park, and it is one of the most secluded in the district, standing, as it does, far back in a lane but little used.