

DR. C. D. GINSBURG was the life-long friend of Mr. Gladstone and one of the greatest of oriental scholars. His greatest work is "The Massorah," and thereby hangs a tale. "You cannot imagine," he said on one occasion, "how I was chaffed by my friends when first I began to work at the Massorah. I remember one occasion when two very eminent men of letters said to me, 'Now, Ginsburg, why waste your time on Biblical research? Why not take up the Greek and Latin instead of the Hebrew classics?' I said to them, 'Let us make a bargain. If you will show me a single passage in the Greek or Roman classics, or, indeed, in any oriental classics whatever, which can beat the twenty-third or the one hundred and ninth Psalm, I promise you to leave the Bible alone, and turn to Sophocles and Aeschylus.' This was agreed, and they were honest enough to confess, after a while, that they had not found such a passage. Since then they have chaffed no more, and I went on with my Massorah."

Many people may not know what "The Massorah" is, says the Westminster Gazette (London). It is a marginal directory, indicating on almost every line in the margin of the MS. Bibles how the letters, words, forms and phrases are to be written, according to the most ancient rules laid down by those who compiled, preserved, and transmitted the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures. This invaluable key to the text of the Old Testament is called Massorah (tradition) because it was traditionally handed down by the authorized and professional scribes, who afterwards committed it to writing. It was necessary, in order to be quite certain that the text was correct, Dr. Ginsburg said on one occasion, that the words and the very letters of the Old Testament should be counted. "You can

imagine what a piece of work it would be. However, it had to be done, and I meant to do it. A Hebrew Bible was prepared with a system of lines to facilitate the counting. . . . Then there was an auction of old books at Sotheby's. I . . . went from curiosity, thinking that perhaps I might by chance

pick up something interesting. A Hebrew Bible was among the books. I was not anxious to get it, but as no other bids were made for it, I got it. And what do you think I found? The very thing I had commenced doing, for there before me was a MS. Hebrew Bible, beautifully clear, and with every letter counted and tabulated."