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the one should prepare for the other; keep that disinterested love for the ideal which has been fostered here; keep that recognition of the necessities which guard belief and thought and action; maintain in all their freshness, purity, and lustre, those high hopes and great ideals which are your possession to-day; descend not to second-rate ideals of life or work, which are absolutely fatal to both. Never let work out of your hands less well done than you can do. Never say to yourself, this is not up to the mark, this is not so well done as I could have done it, had I taken more pains, but it will do, it will pass. Above all, despise not the dreams of your youth, nor the high visions of work for man which you cherished in the past. Joseph's dreams were prophetic of future reality. So are the dreams of every one, and the best work ever done by man was done in the fulfilment of the dreams of youth. Let it never be possible for you, when middle age comes, and when you review your past, to say, I was young and foolish then, I dreamed of great things to be said, thought, and done, but I have learned common sense since then, and have learned to be content with common things. That is the tragedy of human life, that is failure in all the higher issues of life, and, though many have counted it success, yet in the sight of the eternal values it is the greatest failure possible. Truth is great, and to truth it in love is the highest achievement of man.

Nor can I conclude without a reference to Him in whom grace and truth became, whose life was truth in love, who is the way, the truth, and the life, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge, who is the realized ideal of humanity. Nay, He is more: He is set for the making of men, for the help and the strengthening of the weak, for the raising of the fallen, for the quickening of men into the higher life; who can and does pour into our broken lives the fulness of His own gracious life, who can make us men indeed.

# The Great Text Commentary.

## THE GREAT TEXTS OF THE PSALMS.

PSALM CIII. 1, 2.

**'Bless the Lord, O my soul;**
**And all that is within me, bless his holy name.**
**Bless the Lord, O my soul,**
**And forget not all his benefits.'**

THE 103rd Psalm is written in the form of a monologue. It is a meditation. The Psalmist is alone with himself; he is speaking to his own soul. He is laying down a method for each good soul to examine itself. It is a Psalm of thanksgiving and of recollection.

### I.

THANKSGIVING.

**'Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.'**

1. '*Bless the Lord.*' It seems perhaps at first a strange thing that we should call upon our souls to bless the Lord. It is a fitting and natural thing that we should call upon the gracious God to bless us. But what can we give to Him? Herein is a great mystery, even the mystery of love! Love is a great want—God's love is a great want; love can only be satisfied with love. God had finished the earth; He looked upon it all in the freshness of its beauty; He saw it had just come forth from His hands. But He was not satisfied. He looked at it, and said of it all, 'It is very good.' Then He waited, and then He stooped and fashioned man. You see, there was not one creature in the world who could take hold of all its beauty and turn it into praise; there was not one creature in the world who could feel the great throbbing of His love and love Him back again; there was not one who could commune with Him, walk with Him, and enter into the mysteries of wisdom, and feel its power, and find its uses, and turn all these things into blessings to God. So our God stooped again and fashioned out of the earth a man; and then, when the man saw the worth of things, he thanked God for it; he found the uses of things, he blessed

the Lord; he traced love in everything; he loved God for it all. Then the heart of our Father was satisfied; He said, 'It is very good.'

In praising God, we perform one of the highest and purest acts of religion. It is vastly superior to many Christian duties; even to prayer, for in prayer we are in a special sense concerned with ourselves, while in praise we are specially concerned with God. In the sacrifice of praise we largely eliminate the element of self, and are like the angels in performing the unpolluted service of the skies. The sweet reasonableness of worship is patent to all who will think.[1]

It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be never so fair,
But the love, that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with lowly care
In the heart of the deed so fair.[2]

(1) So we are only in the *right attitude towards God* when we are blessing Him, when we see ourselves as poor dependents upon His bounty, when we see that everything that comes to us comes from His great love. We bless Him by being thankful, by extolling Him for the gifts He has bestowed, by loving Him in consequence of His bounty towards us, and by allowing these emotions of our mind to influence our life, so that we speak well of His name, and act so as to glorify Him among our fellow-men.

(2) And we are only in the *right attitude towards all things* when we are blessing Him, when we take hold of the common things of the earth and turn them into praise, when we take hold of these gross things that are fashioned out of the dust and turn them into much better things by finding in them tokens of His love, when our gratitude goes up to thank Him for them all. It is not that we should be always engaged in the definite act of praise, for there are many other duties in which a great part of our time must be occupied; but the frame of our minds, the disposition of our hearts, should be always ready for this duty so as to be prepared for it whenever occasion may call for the performance of it.

We pray for much, but we praise too little. Some one has said that the Christian ought to be like a horse that has bells on his head; so that he cannot go anywhere without ringing them and making music. His whole life should be a psalm. Every step should be in harmony; every thought should constitute a note; every word he utters should be a component part of the joyful strain. Those are the people to recommend Christianity who go about their business like the High Priest of old who, wherever he went, made music with the golden bells.[3]

[1] J. Pearce. [2] C. G. Rossetti. [3] J. Pearce.

2. 'O my *soul*.' The Psalmist is anxious that his praise should be *sincere*. It is his *soul* and not his lips he addresses. He wants nothing formal, mechanical, lifeless, spiritless; he is anxious that his truest self, the real Ego, the essential I, should voice the gratitude he feels. Soulless worship is not worship at all. Not without good reason does the Psalmist insist in this song that his soul should take the lead in this delightful minstrelsy, for we are all liable to lapse into God-dishonouring formalities, to become drowsy and lethargic, to offer strange fire instead of the enthusiasms of the soul.

The soul is our active self, our vigour, our intensity. When we speak of a man's throwing his soul into a thing, we mean that he does it with all his might. We say, 'There is no soul in him,' by which we mean that he has no vigour or force of character, no love, no zeal. My intensest nature shall bless the Lord. Not with bated breath and a straitened energy will I lisp forth His praises, but I will pour them forth vehemently and ardently in volumes of impassioned song.

The one want of the world for all things is soul. If I hired a man to do up my bit of garden and I found him dawdling over his work, playing with the hoe, merely tickling the earth as if he expected it to laugh into flower-beds, I would fling him his half-crown, and say to him, 'Take it and go; I would sooner do it myself.' It irritates me to see a man doing work without a soul. Think of the great God who looks down upon all things. If thou put not thy soul into His service it is a dreary mockery. Man, if thou dost sing, sing from thy heart; if thou dost pray, let thy soul waken when thou comest to dwell with thy God; let thy soul be allured with quick ear and quick eye, with wings all spread ready to soar right up into the presence of the King. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul!'[4]

We know what the mood is against which the man in this Psalm is protesting. I do not know any more disheartening condition to be in, or one from which it is a more blessed and delightful thing to escape. It is not that we have fallen into religious doubts—although unless we take care it will come to that. It is not that we wish to be other than religiously-minded people. It is not at all that we envy people who live more carelessly than we can permit ourselves to do. It is not that we have a kind of hankering after things that are wrong or inconsistent with our obedience to Christ. It is not that we do not know the great Christian doctrines concerning God and concerning our duty. No, in a sense we have everything we really need; certainly we have often had much less and yet been better people. We know all those things about God—about His great patience with us, about His great love for us, about Christ, His great happiness in His Father, the glorious peace of His Cross, like the calm of mighty waters. We know also the

[4] Mark Guy Pearse.

great hope and prospects of belief. Indeed, we know everything. But with all these things we are not *alive*. We are asleep under them. We have lost the spirit of praise. We do our duty in a dull, determined kind of way. We would walk miles in obedience to a commandment. Indeed, we are in that strange condition when the Law is easier for us than the Gospel; when we can obey, but when our soul will not, and simply cannot, 'bless the Lord.' We are like people who have taken a drug which covers us with a kind of numbness, and we feel that we shall not be ourselves until this cloud in our blood has passed. We know everything about God, but we rejoice in nothing. Things do not mean for us what they ought to mean, what they at one time did mean—what, unless God forsake us, they will yet again mean. That is the condition of the lonely man who in this Psalm cries out—with the hope of awakening himself, and making himself alive to God—

O thou my soul, bless God the Lord;
And all that in me is,
Be stirred up His holy name
To magnify and bless.[1]

3. 'O *my* soul.' The Psalmist urges himself to *personal* adoration. He begins with himself, and although he goes out from himself and seeks to engage others in singing unto God, he comes back and concludes his exhortation with himself.

Every man for himself can sing unto the Lord a new song, and must sing it. There is ample scope for the play of our individuality, and in this hallowed engagement no man can act our part. We have in our care the keeping of our own soul—a soul unlike any other. We have our own path to tread—a path peculiarly unlike that of our neighbour. We have our own burdens to bear, our own duties to discharge, our own circumstances to mould, our own temptations to encounter, our own character to make, yes, and our own mercies to receive; and all these differentiate our life from others, and make particular paths along which the Great One comes to us. Thus, whatever song others may sing, they cannot sing ours. Singing by proxy there cannot be. 'Bless the Lord, O *my* soul.'

It is said that once when Sir Michael Costa was having a rehearsal with a vast array of performers and hundreds of voices, as the mighty chorus rang out with thunder of the organ and roll of drums and ringing horns and cymbals clashing, one man who played the piccolo far away up in some corner said within himself, 'In all this din it matters not what I do,' and so he ceased to play. Suddenly the great conductor stopped, flung up his hands, and all was still—then he cried aloud, 'Where is the piccolo?' The quick ear missed it, and all was spoiled because it failed to take its part. O my soul, do thy part with all thy might! Little thou mayest be, insignificant and hidden, and yet God seeks thy praise. He listens for it, and all the music of His great universe is made richer and sweeter because I give Him thanks. Bless the Lord, O my soul.[2]

'The angels are present when we assemble for worship,' said the Venerable Bede. 'What will they say if they find me not there? Will they not ask, "Where is Bede? Why comes he not to prayers with his brethren?"'

4. '*All that is within me.*'—David stirs up his soul to praise the Lord. His praise is to be *whole-hearted*. 'All that is within me' means the *whole heart* as opposed to a *divided heart*.

(1) We are to praise God with the *unity* of our nature. Single-mindedness is held to be of such value that a man who possesses it is counted perfect. The perfect man in the Bible is not the man without fault, but the man of single-hearted devotion who loves and serves God. Faults in conduct, errors of judgment, infirmities of temper there may be in abundance. The one quality that redeems, ennobles, inspires character, is self-devotion, without reserve, to the divine kingdom of the gospel, to the cause that is worth living for. So if we are to worship at all we should do it with all that is in us. Worship means recognition of worth, doing homage to goodness. And even when the worth is limited, as in the case of a good man, the homage, the recognition, should be cordial. When the homage is offered to Infinite Goodness, all the gifts of mind and heart should be brought into play, so as to yield the maximum of worship and recognition. The Lord our God ought to be loved and served with all the heart, and soul, and strength, and mind.

(2) We are to praise Him with the *diversity* of our nature. Our nature is a many-stringed instrument, and every string is to contribute its quota to the symphony. If the soul is to be the leading singer, then every faculty of our mental, moral, and spiritual being, like a united and harmonious choir, is to render the chorus. No power is to be latent, no voice to be mute. There are notes for all to strike, and all are necessary to an exquisite rendering of the melody.

*All* that is within me, says the text,—then let it be all. Some of us have a vein of humour, and though we try to keep it under restraint it will peep out. What then? Why, let us make it bear the Lord's yoke. This faculty is not necessarily common or unclean; let it be made a hewer of wood and a drawer of water for the Lord. On the other hand, some of you have a touch of despondency in your nature;

[1] J. A. Hutton, *The Soul's Triumphant Way*, 33.

[2] M. G. Pearse, *Come, Break your Fast*, 130.

take care to subdue it to the Lord's praise. You are the men to sing those grave melodies which in some respects are the pearls of song. A little pensiveness is good flavouring. The muse is at her best when she is pleasingly melancholy.[1]

You heap up coals upon a dying fire and leave it. For a few minutes little flames curl round the outside of the coals, and for a short time there is a lively stir. But soon those little flames die out. The fire becomes quiet and still. The only sound is one for which you have to listen, and even then it is heard only at intervals. It is the sound of a general sinking—the heavy and unkindled coals weighing down and crushing the inner heart of fire. When you come back, if you have not been absent too long, you find your fire dozing, as it were, in sleep. If you have been absent a very long time, when you come back you find your fire gone out. Sometimes you think it quite out when it is only sleeping; sometimes you think it is only sleeping when it is quite gone out. And that is true both of the fire on our hearths and of the fire of God in human hearts. You cannot say whether there is yet life at the centre, or whether the sleep has been 'unto death,' until you pierce to the *centre* and appeal to it to give some sign. But if you return in time to catch your drowsy fire still in life, though giving merely the evidence of smoke, what will you do to bring it back to life? You will do what the Psalmist appeals to his soul to do for itself; you will stir up all that is within it. You will thrust the iron into the heart of it and break up the crust which was slowly crushing it to death. It seems an extraordinary thing that a fire can die not for want of fuel, but through its abundance of fuel. It may seem extraordinary that a man's religion may die out, not because he has not sufficient religious knowledge and religious facts, and even religious practices, but because he has too much or too many of them; or rather, because they are *unkindled*, because the central fire, the man's true need of God, is not penetrating and kindling all his religious knowledge and all his religious practices.[2]

5. '*His holy name.*'—If we are to worship and praise God aright, we must believe in a God whose name is a veritable gospel of gladness to our souls. We must believe in a God whose character is fitted to inspire devout thought and excite religious feelings of reverence, trust, gratitude, and admiration. How great and glorious is the God this Psalmist worships; how easy it is to be enthusiastic in His praise. He is a beneficent Being. He delights to bestow penitence, forgive sin, heal disease, to save life, to crown His worshippers with garlands of love and mercy, and make their hearts young with gladness. He is a righteous God, who espouses the cause of the oppressed and shields them from wrong; a magnanimous God, who bears patiently with our shortcomings; a God with a father's heart, full of pity towards frail man subject to infirmity and pain. He is mighty as well as merciful, sitting in majesty on a heavenly throne and ruling as King over all, receiving perfect obedience from the manifold powers of the universe which do His will and show forth His glory. How can the worshippers of such a God help blessing Him! They must needs serve this God 'with gladness and come before His presence with singing; for He is good, His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endureth to all generations.'

And He is *holy*. A babe in grace can bless God for His goodness, but only a grown believer will bless God for His holiness. We bless God for His mercy, but do we equally bless Him for His holiness? we praise Him for His bounty, but do we feel that we could not praise Him thus unless we knew also that He is perfectly righteous?

[1] C. H. Spurgeon. [2] J. A. Hutton.

## II.

### Recollection.

**'And forget not all his benefits.'**

1. One of the most frequent causes of our failure to have the spirit of praise is forgetfulness of past benefits. When we come to the end of a day's journey and sit down to enter into its experiences, how readily do we record the disagreeable things—the disappointments, the vexations, the crosses that have been met with. All that has not been as we should like is carefully entered, and as we sit there and turn over the pages of the book we find entries similar to the one we have just made—records of trials and disappointments and hardships—and when we read them it seems as if there were no other soul in the wide world whose lot could be so cheerless and desolate as ours. We have no song of praise, for there is no melody in our heart; we cannot say, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul,' for we feel that for us there is no special reason for thanksgiving. We have forgotten to make notes of the benefits.

'Think and Thank' was the motto on the family crest of Sir Moses Montefiore, the lamented philanthropist. Indeed the two words, differing only in one vowel, have the same derivation. In the old Anglo-Saxon, 'thankfulness' means 'thinkfulness'; the thinking, recalling, remembering of our blessings in such a way as to be moved to gratitude. It is our duty to remember. We cannot remember all His benefits, but we certainly ought not to forget them all. It is because we are not more thinkful that we are not more thankful. If we think we cannot but thank.

2. There are some people who pride themselves on never forgetting an injury. It is surely a very

poor thing to pride oneself upon. There are multitudes who should humble themselves because they never remember a kindness—especially a kindness bestowed on them by a loving and bountiful God. 'The river past, and God forgotten,' is a proverb which reminds us how much readier we are to ask good at God's hand, and to implore help from Him in seasons of extremity and distress, than to pause afterwards to give Him thanks. You remember how, when Jesus had healed the ten lepers who besought His mercy, nine out of the ten straightway forgot all about their obligation to Him. And it was with a reproachful sadness in His tone that Jesus exclaimed, 'Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.'

The word 'benefit' is in itself a grand word. It means 'good deed.' Now, I like a man who has good will—*bene volens*—a man who on a dark night says, 'Good-night, I wish you well.' 'Good-night, friend,' I say; 'I thank you.' That is *bene volens*. But I like better the man who says, 'Stop a bit; it is a dark moor over there; I will get a lantern; I know my way, and I can take you across this footpath, which will be a short-cut, and see you safely into the high road.' He shakes me by the hand and says, 'Good-night.' That is *bene volens* turned into *bene fit*. *Bene fit* is good deed. *Bene volens* is good; but *bene fit* is better. Oh, our God loves us never with good will only.[1]

3. God's word ever clothes itself in truth and in deed. His benefits are substantial. Yet of forgetting them we all are guilty. David made no mistake. He knew the temptation to forget, and we know it still. Why are we all so ready to forget all His benefits?

(1) Because we are *so accustomed to them.* Some one has said that if all the stars in heaven were to cease shining for a hundred years, and then were suddenly to flash out again, there would not be an eye in all the earth but would be raised heavenward, and not a heart in all the world but would break forth in hymns of praise to God. But the stars are shining every night. They were there when we were crooning in our cradles. They will be there when we are sleeping in our graves. And we are so accustomed to them that we never lift our heads, but fret and worry every night perhaps, forgetful of these shining remembrancers of God. So with God's benefits. Did they come rarely, singly, unexpectedly, how we should prize them. But they have been over us like the heavens, round us like the air, under us like the earth, ever since we were born. And we are so accustomed to them that our hearts are hardened.

(2) Because they are *so freely given.* The old proverb 'lightly come, lightly go' is true, as in a rough way proverbs generally are. What we get easily, we do not value greatly. God gives His benefits freely, royally. And because they are so freely given, we are ever ready to make light of them. Was it by years of toil that our eyes acquired their marvellous power of seeing? Was it by the sweat of the brow that our ears were trained to hear? Was it the labour of our hands that fashioned the chambers of our thought, and built the galleries of our imagination? Not so. God gave these gifts with royal grace. And since they are so freely given, we hold them lightly and forget them.

Here is a lad living at home. He pays no board or lodging. Look how he spoils his clothes and quarrels with his food. How carelessly and thanklessly he wears the one and eats the other! But wait till he leaves home and goes to fight the world. See him in his lodgings. Ah! what a change has come over him. He is no longer careless of his clothes. He sits down to his food with a new relish. What has made all the difference? Why, this. He earns both food and clothing now with the sweat of his own brow. Once they were freely given, and he despised them. But now he wins them by his work, and so he knows their value.[2]

(3) Because they are often *disguised.* Earth speaks one language; heaven speaks another; and many a happening that in the speech of earth is called a curse, in the speech of heaven is called a blessing. God clothes His ministering angels in strange garments. And if we have failed to see the shining angel, it is because we could not pierce that strange disguise. In one of the old fairy tales there is a magic wand that touches the wizard dwarf and he becomes a prince. There is a wand like that for us. God calls it faith. And when we wield it, and touch with it the hardest and bitterest things that seem to dwarf us, they often change and become regal helps. We thought them blackest, and now we see them brightest.

I daresay that you have all noticed this, that in seeing scenery—like that, for instance, in Switzerland—one great secret is often to look back. You may be ascending an Alpine path, with great walls of mountain on either side shutting out the view, and in front of you all day there may be nothing but a snowclad, towering height; but after you have ascended for some time turn round and look back, and

[1] Mark Guy Pearse.

[2] G. H. Morrison.

probably you will find that you can see over the tops of the mountains which have been shutting out the view to great valleys beyond, while round the horizon the mountains are glowing in the sunset. 'Now in life also it is a great secret often to look back; and it will frequently be found that those passages that appeared the dullest and darkest as we passed through them are in the retrospect glowing in the light of God.[1]

4. How shall we get better memories for all God's benefits?

(1) Let us *number* His benefits, as David did. A general thankfulness never praises God. We must get to it benefit by benefit if we want to know what we owe God. David knew that. David did that. And never was there a man who better knew than noble David how to confess sin and how to remember benefits. He cried to his soul, 'Forget not all his benefits.' Then he began to number them.

I was walking along one winter's night, hurrying towards home, with my little maiden by my side. Said she, 'Father, I am going to count the stars.' 'Very well,' I said, 'Go on.' By-and-by I heard her counting—'Two hundred and twenty-three, two hundred and twenty-four, two hundred and twenty-five. Oh dear!' she said, 'I had no idea there were so many.' Ah! dear friends, I sometimes say in my soul, 'Now, Master, I am going to count Thy benefits.' I am like the little maiden. Soon my heart sighs—sighs not with sorrow, but burdened with such goodness—and I say within myself, 'Ah! I had no idea there were so many.'[2]

(2) Let us *measure* them. And let us be careful *how* we measure them, for if we measure them aright, we can make molehills into mountains, but if we measure them wrongly we can make mountains into molehills. All depends on how we measure them.

We are very apt to measure out benefits by our *desires*, and the result is always disastrous. Our desires are made to hold God, and what is big enough to hold God cannot be filled with anything less. We might fling into a man's desire a million worlds, and the man should yet perish of hunger. 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world?' Why, he is too big for the world; we cannot fill him up with worlds. A universe without God could not satisfy him; his desires are made to hold the infinite.

We are apt to measure our benefits by *those of other people*. Some of us are always reckoning up the blessings which other people have received, and reckoning up our own miseries. We look at ourselves from picturesque points of view and take a strange kind of pleasure in the thought that we are exceptionally miserable. It is an unhealthy state of mind, and it is productive of misery to ourselves and of unhappiness to other people. We cannot measure our mercies by other people's. God fits men's packs to their backs, and our backs will not suit other people's packs.

The only true way to measure our benefits is by *our deserts*. Then is every molehill a very mountain of mercy. Saadi, the Persian poet, informs us that he never complained of his condition but once—when his feet were bare, and he had no money to buy shoes; but meeting with a man without *feet*, he instantly became contented with his lot and thankful for his mercies. When we measure our mercies by our deserts, we are lost in wonder, love, and praise.

(3) Let us strive to *recognize* God's benefits, to see His hand in everything that befalls us. We need prayerful hearts and open eyes that we may be quick to detect God in all around us. Then we shall love Him for His exceeding mercy, and if we love Him we shall remember Him, and thank and praise Him.

Thomas Boston lived some hundred years ago, and was one of those faithful ministers whom God gives from time to time as His best gifts to Scotland. And when you come to read the Memoirs of Thomas Boston I know what will arrest you first. It will be this. Whatever befell Boston, you are sure to find him on his knees asking God to reveal to him the meaning of the providence. Did his wife sicken, did his child die, was he detained from a Sacrament by snowstorms, did his horse cast a shoe, you will have Thomas Boston asking God to let him see the meaning of it. And very often God was pleased to do it; till Boston grew to feel that in God he lived and moved and had his being, and that God was doing all things well; and till, instead of murmuring and fretting, he came to have a heart so full of praise and thankfulness and humble resignation, that the fragrance of it breathes through Scotland yet.[3]

I thought, on first reading the great simple words of the Great Text for September, that it would not be easy to light upon a satisfactory illustration of them, and yet that very day I came upon one in a rough-looking, hard-working, woman friend. This woman, on the death of the mother of a large family, to whom she was in no way related but whom as an orphan she had brought up, took the family, and brought them up also in the kindest and most careful manner. After a few years she went to a district town with them where she thought they might have a better chance of getting on. That going-away happened seven years ago, and a fortnight ago she returned to the house she left, having with her two of the daughters of the large family—one of them in a

[1] J. Stalker. [2] Mark Guy Pearse. [3] G. H. Morrison.

helplessly delicate state of health. One day last week, in my afternoon visits, I came upon the delicate one sitting on the topmost of six stone steps leading into their very humble dwelling, and as I was kindly inquiring for her and for them all, my rough-looking friend, hearing my voice, came out from the kitchen with linen cloths wrapped about her face; for she has been suffering for some considerable time from cancer which already has made sad and sore inroads on the honest countenance. 'And how are you keeping?' I asked; and then she replied with a smile, and a touch of hopefulness, 'Thank God, sir, I feel no worse, but I think rather better, and I have much to be thankful for, very much; God has been good to me and merciful, and I canna be too thankful.' As I came away she said in the most graceful way, 'I'll be glad to see you at any time.' And this is a woman who never got charity, and who does not beg or look for charity even yet.[1]

[1] Donald M. Henry, Whithorn.

# Codex Edinburgensis.

## A HITHERTO UNKNOWN MANUSCRIPT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

By Professor the Rev. A. R. S. Kennedy, D.D., University of Edinburgh.

### III.

The Edinburgh Codex, then, is simply an additional witness to the scrupulous care with which the text approved by the Massoretes has been transmitted from age to age. At the same time it presents innumerable variations, each of little account in itself, but in the mass sufficient to give the MS. an individuality of its own. The nature and extent of these variations could be adequately shown only by the collation of a number of typical passages from the several divisions of the Canon. To attempt such a collation within the present limits is out of the question. This description of the Codex Edinburgensis, however, would be incomplete without some more precise indication than has yet been given of the variations referred to. I propose, therefore, to collate the two passages (2 K $25^{27b-30}$, Jer $1^{1}$–$2^{2}$) contained in the page of the MS. reproduced as the frontispiece to the June number of this magazine. The student will thus be able to check my results for himself. The standard of comparison will naturally be the printed texts of Baer and Ginsburg, which claim to reproduce 'accuratissime' the text 'according to the Massorah.'

Collation of the Original Text of a Page of Codex Edinburgensis, with Explanatory Notes.[1]

*A.* 2 K $25^{27b-30}$.

| | | *Codex Edinburgensis.* | *Baer and Ginsburg.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Col. **a** | 4 | יְהוֹיָכִין [a] | יְהוֹיָכִין |
| ,, ,, | 9 | בבלה [b] | בָּבֶלָה |
| ,, ,, | 15 | חיין [c] | B. חַיִּין; G. חיין |

[1] No account is taken of the differences in the divisions of the text, or of the more minute variations in the accentuation.

*B.* Jer $1^{1}$–$2^{2}$.

| | | *Codex Edinburgensis.* | *Baer and Ginsburg.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Col. **a** | 32 | עשתי־עשרה [d] | עַשְׁתֵּי־עֶשְׂרֵה |
| ,, **b** | 2 | החמשי [e] | הַחֲמִשִּׁי |
| ,, ,, | 4 | אצורך [f] | (B. "אֲצָוְךָ) אֲצָרְךָ |
| ,, ,, | 8 | אהה אדני יהוה [g] | אַהָהּ אֲדֹנָי יֱהוִה |
| ,, ,, | 12 | כי על כל־אשר [h] | כִּי עַל־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר |
| ,, ,, | 13 | אשלחך [i] | אֲשַׁלַּחֲךָ |
| ,, ,, | 27 | רואה [k] | רֹאֶה |
| ,, ,, | 31 | לעשותו [l] | לְעַשְׂתּוֹ |
| ,, ,, | 32 | אלי, an omission supplied by the corrector | |
| ,, ,, | 34 | נפח corrected to נָפַחַ [k] | נָפוּחַ |
| ,, **c** | 14 | לְמַעֲשֵׂי [m] | Baer as Cod. Ed., but with metheg; G. Këth. as Cod. Ed., but Qĕrê לְמַעֲשֵׂה |
| ,, ,, | 15 | תאזר [n] | B. תְּאַזֹּר; G. תְּאַזֹּר |
| ,, ,, | 16 | אליהם [o] | אֲלֵיהֶם |
| ,, ,, | 18 | מצוך [p] | אֲצֻוָּךְ |
| ,, ,, | 21 | מבצר [q] | מִבְצָר |
| ,, ,, | 26 | ולא־יוכלו לך [r] | G. ולא־יוכלו לך |
| ,, ,, | 27 | נאם־יהוה | נְאֻם יְהוָה (with maqqeph) |
| ,, ,, | 29 | הלוך [s] | B. הָלְךְ; G. הָלוֹךְ |
| ,, ,, | 34 | במדבר, an omission supplied by the corrector. | |

(*a*) 2 K $25^{27}$. The absence of the metheg is characteristic of Codex Edinburgensis as of other early MSS., see above, p. 438*b*. Cf. וארחתו, **a** 12, which in the current texts has two methegs, הכהנים and בענתות, **a** 23, in modern editions "בָּעֲנָת, "הַכֹּהֲנִים —and so throughout. Note also on the photograph the position of the points of the preceding word, which in Baer appears as אתראש, in Ginsburg as אתראש.