

is aware, too, that a host of eager competitors will press forward to fill the coveted place at his first sign of faltering. The Premiership is really a job for a superman: Cum tot sustineas et tanta negotia solus. Alone! for there are responsibilities he cannot share.

Supermen in the physical sense are, however, few. The last we have seen at 10 Downing Street, was Mr. Gladstone - marvel of marvels in the way of physical endurance, who, when he laid down the Premiership in his 85th year, made known his intention to reconcile the Homeric with the Messianic cosmogony.

Let one brief anecdote from the "Life" suffice to show of what the G.O.M. was still capable in his last session of Parliament:

"One day," writes Lord Morley, "when a tremendous afternoon of obstruction had almost worn him down, the adjournment came at seven o'clock. He was haggard and depressed. On returning at 10 p.m. we found him making a most lively and amusing speech upon procedure. He sat down blithe as dawn. 'To make a speech of that sort,' he said in deprecation of compliment, 'a man does best to dine out. It's no use to lie on a sofa and think about it.'"

Pious Gladstonian Nonconformists - if that be the correct sequence of epithets - used to say, and believe, that their hero was "sustained" by unseen powers. But they attributed a different origin to the demoniac energy which inspired Palmerston, whose physical powers of endurance at 80 were scarcely inferior to

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