

pute the strategy or disturb the orderly arrangements of his successor ; so long as he is in Parliament, there will be a skeleton in the Liberal closet. The Radical party is, for the present, a broken and voiceless faction—*inceptus clamor frustatur litantes*. Mr. Bright has made what may be taken as a valedictory address to his constituents at Birmingham. "He did not ask his hearers to declare for disestablishment. He would only ask them to consider the question as reasonable beings ;" but "he declined to enter upon an agitation to hasten disestablishment." Mr. Gladstone's retirement has set his party on the search for a leader. The Marquis of Hartington, eldest son of the Duke of Devonshire, would make an "eminently respectable" leader of the old aristocratic Whig type, so dear to Edinburgh Reviewers. Sir William Harcourt is protesting too much, and angling for support in all waters with too palpable an aim at the coveted prize, to take with the party. Moreover, he had the bad taste to abuse Mr. Gladstone while yet his chief, with singular coarseness and virulence. He would be of no service to the Left, for with characteristic straining after originality, he opposes disestablishment on the ground that Rome would be the "residuary legatee" of the English Church. He aims to be regarded as a Disraeli of the Reform type ; and certainly one Sphinx at a time is enough. Mr. Forster would be at once hailed as the best available successor to the ex-Premier, but it has not been forgotten that he was the author, and is still a strenuous defender of, the twenty-fifth clause of the Education Act. He is therefore unacceptable both to the Secularists and the radical Nonconformists ; yet, no doubt, they would accept him, *au défaut de mieux*. The advanced Liberals have very little to hope for from any leader that may be chosen ; indeed, they have reason to expect more from Mr. Disraeli than from him. The Home Rulers may possibly fall into line again ; but theirs will

no longer be an "undivided allegiance." They are not blind to the unconcealed exultation with which Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet has been received by their former English allies. Parliament meets ominously on a Friday, the 5th inst., and will no doubt expect to be startled by a sensational programme. It is more likely, however, that Mr. Disraeli's illness will have prevented his excogitating any of those startling surprises he delights to spring upon the House. Still he is not as other men, and no one may venture to indulge in speculations on his probable course.

The affairs of Continental Europe call for no special remark this month. France has been as busy as usual, organizing the Septennate [or disorganizing it with becoming seriousness. Nothing delights French politicians so much as building up a system of government, except perhaps the luxury of pulling it down. Marshal McMahon's Government is avowedly provisional ; but until the twentieth of November, 1880, casualties excepted, its stability will merely depend on the will and temper of its chief. The Marshal's message to the Assembly, at the opening of the Session, laid down his position and intentions with soldierly lucidity and bluntness. If the Assembly chose to hedge about his nondescript authority with constitutional defences, so much the better. If not, they might go their own way and he would pursue his ; and, although they did not seem likely to agree upon anything, he had come to a very positive conclusion, and that was, that, having the army at his back, he would retain the supreme power in his hands until the end of the allotted period. Early in the year, however, this vein of masterly indifference was succeeded by another stroke of masterly activity. The President had discovered that a Second Chamber was "imperatively called for by the Conservative interests which you entrusted to me, and which I will never abandon," and the neces