

Gladstone's statement as that of an honorable man, even though he is a politician. When the whole political press ignore, utterly cast out of the discussion as of no value or relevance, a statement made in the most serious manner, at a solemn crisis of his life, by a political leader,—one whose sensitive religious nature and earnestness have been a life-long reproach to him in the eyes of the world—it is a hard saying, but not unfair, as an inference, that falseness of speech is expected of a politician, and its dishonor condoned by its universality. No writer yet has believed Mr. Gladstone's report of his own desires; none have seen in his declaration how noble is the attitude he avows himself to have taken,—how the world needs teaching the lesson of so great an example. Mr. Gladstone is close upon the verge of the life to come. The orb of his life in time nears the eternal horizon, and with Christian confidence he looks the inevitable in the face, and longs so to number his remaining days, that he may apply his heart wholly to wisdom, unvexed by storms which chafe not the shore on which he is preparing to land. That Mr. Gladstone prefers not to die with harness on his back, not to quell thoughts of the future life by the noise and rush and labor of the present, is evidently most mysterious to his critics, who only choose to know him as a member of Parliament. They might, however, at times, have seen the statesman dropped in the quiet life of a Christian gentleman, and noted how gentle, indeed how adorned with pious deeds, was that life; known, too, how keen was the enjoyment of scholarly work and interchange of thought with equal minds, and from us William Ewart Gladstone, consoling a sick cottager, has earned a heartier homage than the applause of party ever gave to the great Privy Councillor, party leader and statesman. Chatham dying in the Senate, and Lyndhurst held up to utter his terrible "*Væ Victis*," before the Crimean War, are great historic figures; but now that a beer barrel is the pivot of English politics, Mr. Gladstone may well prefer not to be handed down to fame revolving round that centre. "The ruling passion strong in death" stirs in him as he looks into the valley, and that passion

never was politics. As the French saying is, "He returns to his first love:" scholarly and pious studies. What the Liberal party will do, is a very small question, as Liberal principles will assert their supremacy whichever party is in power, and Mr. Gladstone, happily, is not essential to their vitality. In moral influence he is a modern Pym; in industry, talents for business, vigilance, honesty, popularity, parts, also, he is like the great Parliamentarian; but as Liberty survived Pym, so will Liberalism survive the retirement of Mr. Gladstone.

The Pope, very naturally, considering his years, is not in health. His life cannot be prolonged beyond a very short period. Men are asking, "What would happen if he died?" Men, too, are plotting to cause some things they desire to happen after that event. It is certain that a successor to the Chair of Peter will follow in due course. The realm he rules is not, nor is likely ever to be, changed into a Republic, and what is equally sure is, that, whoever succeeds Pio Nono, will succeed to his advisers, his policy, and his traditions. The new Pope, in fact, will be a continuation of a line of spiritual kings, whose main object has been pursued by most strikingly similar actions from century to century. "*Semper eadem*" is not a groundless boast of the Catholic Church; Popes may come and Popes may go, but the stream of Pontifical policy flows on for ever, despite a turning to this hand or the other, and occasional broadenings and narrowings, and upheavals of its bed and obstructions, and all manner of troubles incident to the march of great rivers. Bismarck's circular, sounding the Powers of Europe as to their future relations with the Romish Court, as to any steps to be taken to influence the election of the next Pope, seems to us somewhat uncalled for and weak. The Governments of Europe have either to recognize the Pope as a sovereign, with whom the ordinary diplomatic intercourse is to be held, or as merely the chief bishop of a Church inside of, but untouched by, the civil authority of each realm. Any diplomatic recognition of the Pontiff, as matters now stand, when he is the subject of a State,—not a civil ruler at all—is a