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MR. GLADSTONE AT WORK.

If this article were to be an exhaustive exposition of its title, and fully describe Mr. Gladstone at work, it would resolve itself into a minute description of every hour of the waking day. Mr. Gladstone is at work only once a day. But then it is all day long.

Heaven, in endowing him with intellectual qualities of the highest order, added the gift, rare in this combination, of incomparable bodily health. Of his more than seventy years of life, very few weeks have been filched from him by illness. This is an advantage to a man in any rank of life.

To a public man it is priceless. If we review the list of prominent public men throughout Europe and in the States, it will invariably be found that they are men of robust health. This is, of course, not because statesmanship is a peculiarly healthy avocation, but because only physically strong men can stand the wear and tear of public life.

"Gladstone, who was always fond of music, is now quite enthusiastic about negro melodies," Lord Malmesbury writes under date 1860, in his recently published memoirs. "He sings them with the greatest spirit and enjoyment, never leaving out a verse, and evidently preferring such as 'Camp Down Races.'" Mr. Gladstone has long ago abjured negro melodies, but this extract is strikingly illustrative of his disposition. Whatever he undertakes, he performs with the greatest spirit and enjoyment.

Some years ago he was smitten with the china mania. This ran through the period of the Parliament of 1868, when he was, or might have been thought to be, engrossed with such works as the Irish Church Bill, the Irish Land Bill, the Education Bill, and the Ballot Bill. But he found time to go on with the collection of china, pursuing

a rare cup and saucer as if they were clauses of the Land Bill, upon the carrying of which he had set his heart. He had not only a collection of china, but one of the best in the possession of a private collector, and every piece he had himself secured.

His passion for felling trees is of world-

wide renown. It is characteristic of him that he should take up this unusual method for recreation. Felling a tree, as any who have tried it will know, provides for two or three hours, according to girth, about as hard work as a man can put his hand to and this is the outdoor recre-

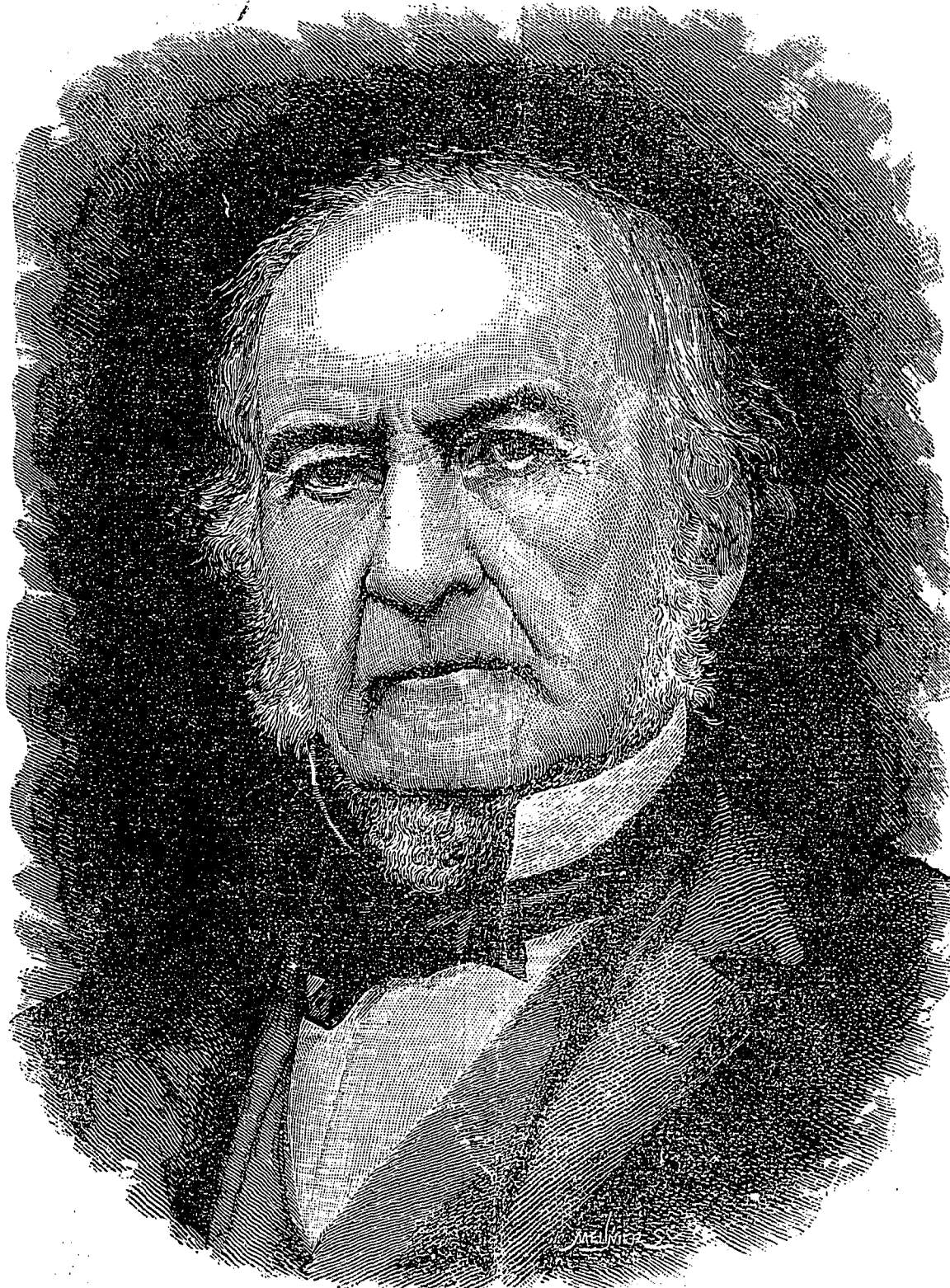
ation which the Premier kindly takes to. He never rides, does not shoot nor hunt. He walks with long strides and unflagging vigor. But with a trusty axe in his hand, coat and waistcoat off, trouser-band tightened, and braces looped at his side, he enjoys some intervals of rest.

Like all men of healthy organization, the Premier must have his reasonable allowance of sleep. He can do with eight hours, when he can get it, but his allowance rarely exceeds seven. When at home at Hawarden, he makes a point of going to bed before midnight, and is down with the regularity of clock-work at a quarter to eight. His first work is to walk over to the church in the neighboring village, of which his son is rector, where there is always early morning service. No vicissitudes of weather prevent him from fulfilling this duty.

Lord William Bentinck used to say of Mr. Bright that if he had not been a Quaker, he would have been a prize-fighter. It is at least equally safe to assert that if Mr. Gladstone had not turned his attention to politics, he would have been a bishop, and in due course an archbishop.

Failing that, every Sunday morning when he is at Hawarden he walks out to the reader's desk in the parish church and gratifies a crowded congregation by reading the lessons for the day.

During the session of 1886, just before the adjournment for the Whitsun recess, Mr. Gladstone, as he sat upon the Treasury Bench, looked dead beat at last. Things were troublous at home and abroad. Negotiations with Russia were still proceeding to no visible end. Egypt was in a state of confusion; whilst in the House of Commons the free lances of the Opposition, encouraged by this dark look-out, had redoubled their personal attacks upon the Leader of the House,



WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

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