

political reform which at that time were held by many people to be well-nigh revolutionary. Yet even in young Gladstone's strongest speeches against the reform movement he seems to have taken good care not to commit himself to any unqualified objection to reform as a principle. His mind, indeed, would appear to have been a sort of mirror of the general mind of Oxford—a veneration for the past, a love of tradition, a romantic sentiment of reverence for the ancient institutions of the country, and yet a mind open to see the inevitable tendencies of the future. Gladstone worked very hard for the Oxford Union, of which he became first the Secretary and afterwards the President. He was studying hard for classical honours and for divinity. He studied Hebrew as well. He worked for four hours in the early day and then went out for exercise, chiefly walking and boating, and also a certain amount of what we now call athleticism—more, at least, than he had done in his Eton days. Then he attended classes and lectures and resumed his solitary readings for many later hours. Not content with his studies and the work of the Union Debating Society, he founded and organised a debating society all of his own device and construction, which he named the Oxford Essay Club, but which became after a while colloquially named the "Weg," a title taken, as will readily be seen, from Gladstone's own initials. Frederick Denison Maurice, afterwards famous in English Church history, mentioned