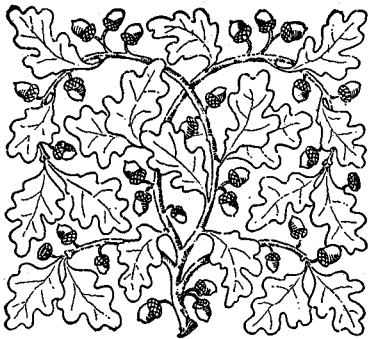


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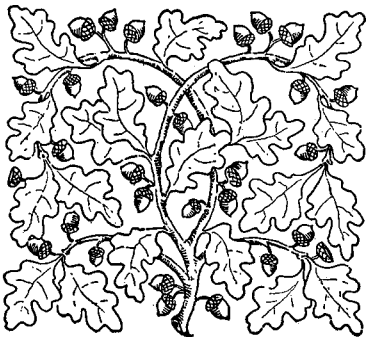
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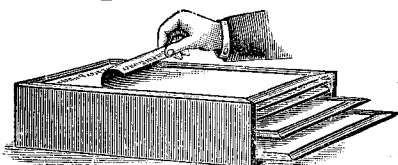
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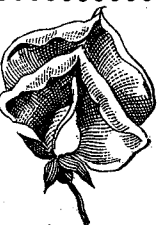
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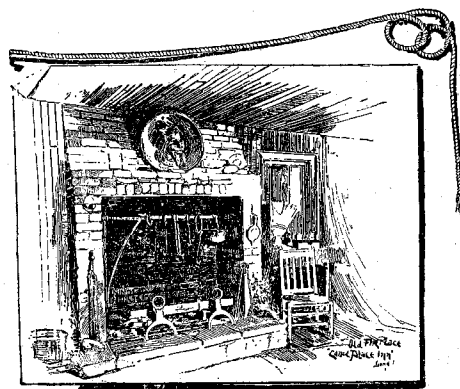
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NEW SERIES OF THE CHRISTIAN UNION

Volume 49

For Week ending 10 March, 1894

Number 10



## The Week



THE crisis so long impending in English politics was precipitated last week by the resignation of Mr. Gladstone. On Thursday evening the Premier made his last speech in office, and it will undoubtedly be regarded hereafter as a very notable and significant speech. It was characteristic of the man that, instead of referring to the great part which he had played and to the achievements of the Liberal party, he should open the door to the next reform and throw down the gage of battle with his last official words. Those Radicals who were disappointed by his failure to refer to the agitation against the House of Lords a week earlier greeted his words on Thursday night of last week with a tumult of cheers. They were not the words, however, of a demagogue, nor of an iconoclast. They were rather the clear and measured utterances of a statesman whose temper is constructive, and who aims to preserve the spirit of the English Constitution by modifying, from time to time, to suit the needs of the age, the institutions in which it is incorporated. Mr. Gladstone did not assail the House of Lords in general terms; he called attention to the fact that, although the House of Commons had devoted about one hundred days to the Home Rule Bill and the Employers' Liability Bill, the House of Lords had wrecked both pieces of legislation after the briefest and most insufficient consideration. For fifty years, he declared, the action of the Upper House had been grievously unsatisfactory, and the question was now raised whether the judgment of that House is to be allowed to annihilate the whole work of the House of Commons. The Government had endeavored to avoid the crisis and to save something from the shipwreck of legislation, and it had, therefore, accepted some of the amendments of the House of Lords, but the indisputable fact remained that "an issue is raised between a deliberative assembly elected by the votes of seven million people and an assembly of an entirely different kind"—an assembly which had now forsaken the reserve and discretion which had formerly characterized it. The House of Commons could not pass judgment on this matter; it must be settled by the authority of the nation. The time had come when that authority must be invoked.

These words were the last public utterances of the Premier, and the long uncertainty regarding his course was ended on Saturday, when his resignation was formally placed in the hands of the Queen. No formal announcement has yet been made with regard to the immediate cause, but it is probably his failing sight. His general health and his intellectual vigor are declared to remain unimpaired. It is reported that there have been some dissensions in the Cabinet, especially over the question of an increased expenditure for ship-building, but it is not be-

lieved that these dissensions have been of a character to force the resignation. Mr. Gladstone has always been singularly frank and accurate in his statements about himself, and his resignation was distinctly foreshadowed in the statement which he made while at Biarritz three weeks ago. There appears to be no doubt that the condition of his eyes will necessitate a temporary withdrawal from all active duties, and that, in the present condition of things, such a withdrawal was impossible without resignation of the functions of Premier. The situation created by the resignation was complicated by the differences in the Liberal party between the Liberals and the Radicals, to say nothing of the necessity of considering the position of the Irish contingent. Those difficulties, however, have apparently been happily settled by the practically unanimous consensus of opinion in favor of Lord Rosebery, who has the support of all the Liberals, with whom very many of the Radicals are in sympathy, and who commands at least the respect of the Irish party. There has been a strong feeling against the selection of a Prime Minister from the peerage, and the new Premier is undoubtedly put to a disadvantage by the fact that he cannot lead his party in the House of Commons, as well as by the prejudice against the leadership of a peer on the part of the Radicals. Mr. Labouchere, the fighting leader of the Radicals, has threatened many things, but it is believed that he will fall into line. Sir William Harcourt, from whom opposition might have been expected, has apparently accepted with cordiality the primacy of Lord Rosebery, and will himself become the Liberal leader in the House of Commons. Mr. Morley remains Chief Secretary for Ireland, the Earl of Kimberley succeeds Lord Rosebery as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Fowler takes the Secretaryship for India. Parliament has been prorogued.

The new Premier, whose portrait is on our cover page, is in the prime of life, having been born in 1847; he was educated at Eton and at Oxford, where he ranked well as a student, and was regarded by men like Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone, whom he met at that time, as a young man of remarkable promise. A political career was early marked out for him, and he was on the point of securing a seat in the House of Commons in 1868, when, by the death of his grandfather, he succeeded to the title and became a member of the House of Lords. He at once identified himself with the Liberal party, and rapidly developed marked ability as a speaker and as a working member. He put himself at the head of the Liberal party in Scotland. He was the companion of Mr. Gladstone in that great Midlothian campaign fourteen years ago, and in 1881 became Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department. Five years later he was made Secretary of War for Foreign Affairs, and his treatment of the questions connected with Bulgaria and Greece was so firm and wise that it won instant recognition from all