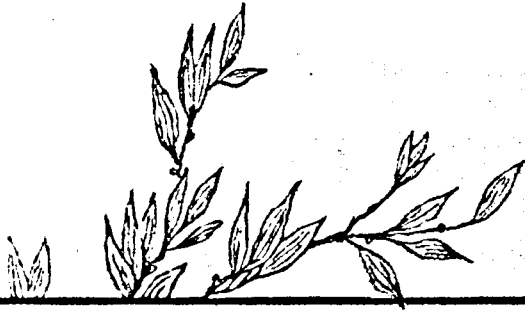
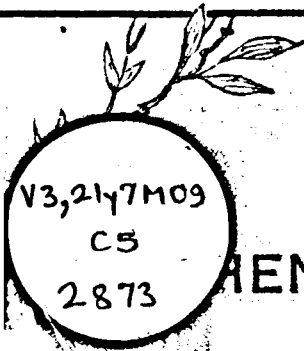


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THE obvious difficulty of writing within the limits of this volume a sketch of the career of Mr. Gladstone is the superabundance of material. The task is akin to that of a builder having had placed at his disposal materials for a palace, with instructions to erect a cottage residence, leaving out nothing essential to the larger plan. I have been content, keeping this condition in mind, rapidly to sketch, in chronological order, the main course of a phenomenally busy life, enriching the narrative wherever possible with autobiographical scraps to be found in the library of Mr. Gladstone's public speeches, supplementing it by personal notes made over a period of twenty years, during which I have had unusual opportunities of studying the subject.

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Reform Club, Feb., 1895.

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