

## 62 RODNEY STREET: GLADSTONE'S BIRTH-PLACE.

IT is well known that William Ewart Gladstone was born on 29 December, 1809, in the house No. 62 Rodney Street, Liverpool. He became a life member of the Society in 1862, was elected President the following year, and from 1886 to his death on 19 May, 1898, he was one of the Vice-Presidents. In 1899, at the instigation, and partly at the expense of the Society,<sup>1</sup> a tablet of Liverpool Della Robbia pottery (probably designed by Mr. W. F. Price, who had prepared the tablet erected at No. 118 Duke Street in memory of Mrs. Hemans) was affixed to the front of No. 62 Rodney Street.

In 1931 Mr. Henry Neville Gladstone (now Lord Gladstone) (a member of the Society) arranged to purchase the Corporation lease of this house, then held by the executors of Dr. T. R. Glynn, who had lived there for many years. Mr. Gladstone's desire was to preserve the premises in commemoration of the fact that his father was born there, and also to secure it from alteration in outward appearance. Mr. Gladstone also purchased the freehold interest in the house from the Corporation of Liverpool and has arranged for it to be held in perpetuity by the Liverpool Diocesan Board of Finance as Trustee, in the first place to grant a lease to Toc H (Talbot House) (in which Mr. Gladstone was interested), and, subject to such lease, to hold it upon trust for ecclesiastical charitable purposes in connection with the Church of England in the City of Liverpool, with special reference to the Parish Church of St. Nicholas, and the Cathedral of Liverpool. Mr. Gladstone has imposed as conditions

<sup>1</sup> *Trans.*, 51, p. 234.

of his gift, and of the lease to Toc H, that the structure and external appearance of the façade of the premises to Rodney Street shall be kept as at present, that a new memorial tablet, bearing the inscription mentioned below, shall remain affixed in a conspicuous position on the outside of the house fronting the street, and, further, that the room in which the Prime Minister was born on the first floor shall be carefully maintained in its present form and unaltered. The inscription upon the new tablet, made of cast lead, is to be as follows :

GLADSTONE  
Four Times  
Prime Minister.  
Born  
In this House  
29th December 1809.

On 12 December, 1931, Mr. Gladstone presented the lease of "Gladstone House" to Toc H and the hostel was declared open by Lord Derby. Subsequently, Lord Gladstone, through his architect, Mr. Gilbert Fraser, proposed to the Council of the Society that the memorial tablet placed on the house in 1899 should be re-erected in the hall of the hostel. The Council welcomed and accepted the proposal and this tablet will be re-erected accordingly.