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Autore	Winstanley Michael J. <1949-, >
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Sommario/riassunto	With a public career spanning 62 years, Gladstone dominated the Victorian political arena. Yet he remains an enigmatic figure; a high Anglican, Tory protectionist who became leader of the Liberals, a party associated with free trade and religious Nonconformity. Michael Winstanley examines both Gladstone and the environment in which he operated, concentrating in particular on the political and social composition of the party which he led. He argues that the parliamentary `Gladstonian Liberals' were far from unqualified supporters of Gladstone and that much of his power was derived from his popu