

discriminate slaughter and disregard of close seasons, and our representatives are ready to meet them fully half way, it may be hoped that a reasonable and fair working arrangement will shortly be reached. We are glad also to perceive that the idea of an international park in the Thousand Islands, though only informally broached at this Conference, was received with favour. Not the least of the advantages to be derived from such a park would be its effect in promoting closer acquaintance and mutual good will between those who are geographically, and should be in the higher sense, neighbours.

The New Commander-in-Chief.

The announcement of Lord Wolseley's appointment as Commander-in-chief of the British forces cannot fail to please all British subjects, everywhere, save possibly a very few who may carry their notions of loyalty, or rather their reverence for royalty, to the absurd extreme of supposing either that the members of the Royal Family inherit in virtue of some infallible law of heredity, superior qualifications for military leadership, or that the most important position in the national army should be regarded as a prerogative or perquisite of royalty, rather than as a trust of tremendous importance to be committed to the most worthy, for the safety of the nation. The precedent being now established of placing in this position the soldier believed to be the ablest general in the kingdom, it is most unlikely that a return to the old system will ever be made. It must be extremely galling for officers of proved ability and ripe experience in actual war, to find themselves under the absolute command of one whom they and everybody else know to be immeasurably inferior to them in every quality of generalship. It might also prove very disastrous to the nation in time of trial, especially should the commander of royal birth happen to possess a specially good opinion of his own abilities, combined with a great hereditary obstinacy. The practical good sense of the nation, as well as of the Ministry which paved the way for the innovation and that which has now completed it, is conspicuous in the new arrangement. Nor is it unworthy of being taken into the account that the possibility of attaining to such a distinction is henceforth before every general and soldier in the army as a new incentive to exertion.

The Balance of Parties

Dr. Lyman Abbott, the able Editor-in-Chief of *The Outlook*, of New York, who is spending his vacation in England, points out in his paper a fact in connection with the crushing defeat of the British Liberals in the late election which has not hitherto received much attention. Notwithstanding the overwhelming majority gained by the party, or rather parties, now in power, the election was really won by a comparatively small majority of the voters of Great Britain. Leaving Ireland out of the account, the official figures are given as follows :

Conservatives and Unionists.....	2,263,121
Liberals	2,006,300

Conservative and Unionist majority.. 256,821

"The most significant fact," says Dr. Abbott, "in this election—far more significant than the Parliamentary majority of 152—is the fact that in England, Scotland, and Wales, out of an aggregate vote of 4,269,421, there are 2,006,300 who voted solidly for a democratic advance, not at one point, but at every point: for disestablishment, for local popular control of the liquor traffic, for lessening the power of the Peers, and for the introduction of local self-government in a quasi federal system; and that they have done this in spite of strong ecclesiastical and traditional prejudices in Scotland as well as in England, of a tremendous money interest repre-

sented in the breweries, of a hereditary reverence for hereditary families, and of a conception of Imperial solidity which is shocked, not to say horrified, at the suggestion of separate local governments for the separate communities of which the Empire is composed."

In keeping with this view is the statement in recent press despatches that the Liberals are beginning to recover courage in view of the smallness of the majorities by which they were defeated in many constituencies. It is by no means improbable that the usual tendency towards reaction may begin soon to manifest itself in bye-elections. The force of Dr. Abbott's argument is, however, much lessened, if not wholly neutralized, by inspection of the other side of the shield. If the total Liberal vote was reduced by the aggregate ballots of all who voted against any one of the radical proposals in the Newcastle platform, that vote was, on the other hand, swelled by the aggregate number of all the ballots cast specially for any one of those proposals. As many who were in favour of two or three of the planks included in the platform voted no doubt against the Party because of their strong objections to the remaining one or two, so many who may have disapproved of two or three of those proposals no doubt voted the Liberal ticket because of their strong approval of the remaining one or two. Is not the length equal to the breadth?

Turkey and China.

It so happens that the Great Powers find themselves just now called on to intervene for the protection of life and the punishment of massacre and outrage, in two Asiatic countries, Turkey and China. Mr. Gladstone, in his impassioned speech on the Armenian question, touched very briefly upon the radical difference, in other respects besides magnitude, between the two cases. It is usually the case when such atrocities occur in violation of treaty obligations and international laws that the crimes are found to have been perpetrated by some particular class or classes of malefactors. These are frequently foreign to the country in which the crimes are committed. If the words of a high Chinese plenipotentiary may be accepted, the latter is the case in regard to the massacres in Southern China, though it must be confessed that his explanation is not very coherent, seeing that, after declaring that on this as on previous occasions, the outrages were mainly the work of bands of Russians, who are taking advantage of the disturbed state of the country to indulge their lawless propensities, he goes on to explain them further by reference to the sore feeling of the people in consequence of their recent defeat, and on the further ground of resentment at the undisguised contempt with which, it is alleged, they are treated by the missionaries. These statements emphasize the need of a searching inquiry into the facts. Even should they be found to be altogether truthful, they cannot free the Chinese Government from responsibility, or the nations concerned from the duty of taking strong measures to prevent their repetition and to compel China to respect her treaty obligations. Yet they certainly are entitled to some weight in determining the course to be pursued. In the case of the Armenian massacre, as Mr. Gladstone so graphically showed, no such palliation of the horrible crimes is admissible. The Sultan and his Government are directly responsible, and should be held to strict account. Lord Salisbury has spoken very emphatic words of warning and even of menace, and the whole British nation is looking for their fulfilment. And yet, few will be surprised should a much sterner and more inflexible course be pursued with China than with Turkey. If so, it will not be the first time that diplomacy has proved more potent in national councils than righteousness.