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## THE ENGLISH CONSERVATIVE PROGRAMME.

The annual conference of the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations is to be held at Birmingham on November 13, 14, and 15, when among other business the report of its council will be considered. Since their appointment in 1906, the central committee of the council have met once a fortnight during the Parliamentary Session, and once a month during the recess; and at these meetings all manner of questions bearing on party policy have been discussed. They are reflected not only in the report of the council, but in the agenda of the Birmingham conference. The party appears to be resolved to combine the tariff reform and anti-Socialist campaigns into a single issue of the first importance, though we imagine it will be compelled to accept the question of the reform of the House of Lords as its battle-ground if the Premier decides, as he has intimated, to appeal to the country next year on that issue rather than on the larger problem chosen by the Conservative Associations. The Liberal party has been placed in an extremely awkward and unenviable situation. The policy of social reform, on which it originally took its ground and to which it has been able at all times to revert under pressure, is slipping straight into the hands of the Conservatives. The latter claim, quite plausibly, that fiscal reform, and the necessary changes involved in it, embody a scheme of social reform unapproachable by the other side, since Free Trade must continue directly to encourage the growth of Socialism, between which and social reform on constitutional, or traditional, lines there is all the difference in the world. Adroitly enough, but with questionable prudence, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman has endeavoured to push the reform of the House of Lords to the forefront. It is considered everywhere that he has underestimated the conservative instinct of the mass of the people, and that an election on that issue alone would certainly turn against the Government. On the other hand, were he to accept the challenge of the Unionists and fight an election on the great Imperial issues, he would be driven into the arms of the Socialists, whom he cannot accept and dare not repudiate.

It is obvious, therefore, that the interests of the Conservative party can be secured on either issue, and with a good conscience: it is almost certain that the bulk of the electors are not in favour of a Socialist Government, and it is equally probable that they will not approve of any tampering with the House of Lords. At one point, however, there is danger. If the Liberal Free Traders are afraid of being driven into the arms of the Socialists, the Conservative Free Traders are afraid of being driven into the arms of the Tariff Reformers. Much will depend on the attitude adopted by the conference, at which Mr. Arnold Ward, among others, is down to move the following resolution:—"That the National Union should refrain from assisting any member or candidate who is not in favour of the chief constructive policy of the Unionist party—namely, fiscal reform and colonial preference, as laid down by Mr. Balfour at the Albert Hall on May 3rd 1907." How much will be achieved by a determined stand on this question it is as yet impossible to say. Since Mr. Chamberlain disappeared from party politics the public interest in tariff reform has very considerably diminished. The Trade returns have been satisfactory, and it is on this account difficult to push the wider issues when the Government is doing its utmost to shelve matters of Imperial interest in favour of popular, but always more or less petty, legislation.

The fact is that the present Ministry has sacrificed everything to obtain a hearing: it has played an overture on the big drum. This instrument, so



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indispensable to a general election, but so desolating during the time of power, the Premier has clasped more closely than is consistent either with dignity or effectiveness. It is not that opportunities have been lacking for genuine statesmanship, or that in a few instances really statesmanlike work has not been accomplished. Every unbiassed person will pay a ready tribute to the achievements of Sir Edward Grey, to the tact and to moderation of Mr. Morley, even to the fine ability of Mr. Haldane. But because Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman is fortunate in the members of his cabinet, it scarcely holds true that his general policy is acceptable. He has failed not because, but in spite of his henchmen. While he has been reviling the House of Lords, whose offence was merely that it did its duty while he has tacitly encouraged or, at any rate, not openly discountenanced the spread of inflammatory Socialism, while he has adopted a policy in Ireland which has let loose the disorderly spirit formerly held in check by the Crimes Act he is unwilling to apply, every liberal platform has been emitting intoxicating vapours of self-congratulation. About four times in the week, for example, Dr. Macnamara tells the British nation that there never has been such a party, that there never has been such magnificent fecundity of legislation. Meanwhile one hears nothing of the Government's views on questions of national and Imperial policy. The terrible fiasco of the Imperial Conference will not readily be forgotten in England or across the seas; nor will the country, once its eyes have been opened, minimize the pettiness of a policy which sought in an attack on the constitution a purely party advantage. The eye-opening process has already been begun: Conservatives may look forward with some confidence to the development of election issues; they, at any rate, have nothing to lose, whether it be in interest or in prestige.

Beermugs in Germany have a sort of Plimsoll mark cut in the side, so you can tell when one is legally loaded. When you get your half-litre for two cents the foam must be all above the Government line. Here's where the Kaiser is ahead of T. R.—*Discoveries in Europe.*

## MOST THOUGHTFUL.

In order not to offend the susceptibilities of the nations represented at the Hague, the Moors are calling their struggle with the French "a holy War."

## THE KAISER'S VISIT TO ENGLAND.

At the urgent request of the King and Queen of England, Her Majesty the German Empress will after all accompany the Kaiser. The news of the Kaiser's intention of spending some time in the Isle of Wight has caused great satisfaction in London.

## SETTLEMENT OF THE ENGLISH RAILWAY DISPUTE.

London, November 7.

The Board of Trade has issued a statement to the effect that the dispute between the Railway companies and their employes has been practically settled.

The following decision has been reached: The railway directors and the representatives of the Amalgamated Society have declared their readiness, the former to consider and the latter to submit, all grievances concerning wages and working hours, in an Arbitration Court. The companies will form separate departments to deal with questions relating to employes. Should these not reach mutually satisfactory agreements, the questions and disputes are to be submitted to a central reconciliation committee. If this fails to restore unanimity and peace, the matters in dispute are to be left to the final decision of the Board of Trade.

## FAMINE FEARED IN INDIA.

The Viceroy of India telegraphs that slight rains have fallen in Madras and Mysore and heavier ones on the Burmese coast. In other parts it has been quite dry. The failure of rain makes the prospects for the winter rice harvest in Bengal more serious and delays the spring-sowing in most of the provinces. The autumn crop, which also got no rain, is almost entirely spoilt in the United Provinces, as also in the Punjab, Gwalior, Gujarat and the North Deccan. The situation is most serious in the United Provinces.

## AMERICAN NEWS.

### THE ELECTIONS.

New York, November 6.

In the elections in Massachusetts Mr. Gould, Republican, was elected Governor with a majority of 104,000; in Maryland Mr. Crothers, Democrat, was elected Governor. Mr. Higgins was re-elected Governor of Rhode Island. In Pennsylvania, the Republicans elected Mr. Sheals as State-Treasurer with a majority of 175,000.

New York, November 6.

The elections were quiet everywhere. Kentucky elected a Republican Governor, and in New Jersey a democratic candidate was returned. In the contest for Mayor of Cleveland (Ohio) the Democrat Mr. Johnson, was victorious over the Republican Mr. Burton, who was supported by President Roosevelt and Mr. Taft. Tammany Hall won against Mr. Hearst and all other candidates in the County of New York.

Trenton, New Jersey.

The Republicans claim that their candidate has been elected Governor; a recount will probably take place.

### THE TELEGRAPHISTS' STRIKE.

The leaders of the telegraphists' Union in Chicago have resolved to end the strike. In New York a similar decision has been adopted by the Unions.

### THE ENGINE IN THE TICKET OFFICE.

#### CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT.

It has been officially made known that the cause of the railway accident at Dülken was the slippery condition of the tracks in consequence of the dampness, so that neither the putting-on of the brake nor the reversal of the engine by the driver had any effect. The heavy luggage vans were forced with great impetus into the other carriages and telescoped them. The mail van behind the engine was only slightly damaged. The fire brigade came immediately and were very useful in rescuing the injured.

### A CURIOUS INTERRUPTION OF A PARLIAMENTARY SITTING.

A curious incident happened at the Sitting of the Chamber of Deputies at Budapesth on Wednesday.

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