

Golden Rules for English Magistrates.

By Sir Richard Phillips.

1. The people's estimation of the government under which they live, being founded on the pure, just, and rational administration of the laws, it ought to be felt that no social duties are more important and obligatory than those of a local magistrate or justice of the peace.

2. All such magistrates, being representatives, in regard to their particular powers, of the constitutional authority of the supreme executive government, they are bound in every act of their office to consider themselves as delegates of the sovereign, and in consonance with the royal oath, "to execute law and justice in mercy and to govern the people according to the statutes agreed on in parliament, and to the laws and customs of the kingdom."

3. An English magistrate should always bear in mind that the supreme executive authority, of which he is the local representative, is restricted in its powers, by the laws and the constitution; that the rights and privileges of a free people are as inviolable as the prerogatives of the sovereign; and that English magistrates are not instruments of a despotic power, but agents of a constitutional monarch, whose obligations to his people are determined by the same laws that constitute the obligations of the people.

4. An English magistrate should feel that every subject of these realms, be he rich or be he poor, be he accuser or under accusation, is equal in the eye of the law; that the laws of England are no respecters of persons; that they can never be dispensed with to suit the humour of the magistrate or the policy of the crown; and that they are literally imperative in their popular sense, until they have been altered or repealed by the conjoint authorities which made them.

5. The cardinal virtues of all magistracy are INCORRUPTIBILITY, IMPARTIALITY, VIGILANCE and BENEVOLENCE.

6. An incorruptible magistrate will not only be incorruptible in his own conduct, directly and indirectly, immediately and remotely; but he will exercise a wholesome