

the instructions to the British delegates it was stated that they were not to hold out any hope that the English rules of law were likely to be substantially modified and brought into conformity with continental rules, particularly in cases where the English rule prevails, not only in the United Kingdom, but also throughout the English-speaking world. But there were certain points on which the English law was doubtful, or where there were points of divergence between the different English-speaking communities, and in such cases it was pointed out to our representatives that it would evidently be desirable if a uniform rule could be arrived at, as the uniformity of the rule would be probably of more importance than the nature of the rule itself.

The attitude of this country, and the reasons therefor, were defined before the commencement of the conference, this position being made quite clear by Sir George Buchanan in his final speech in the following words:—

“However, it is our duty to affirm that it is impossible for our Government to go further or to depart from the attitude which it has taken from the beginning of this conference. It is no question of national pride or obstinacy which has given rise to this attitude, but the necessity of safeguarding the interests of our mercantile community. A law which governs more than 120,000,000 people—including the United Kingdom, the British colonies, and most of the States of the United States of America—without counting the vast population of the Indian Empire—cannot be modified without disturbing long-settled commercial relations and without creating divergencies in legislation among the members of the Anglo-Saxon family. It is possible that among the rules of English law there are some which are antiquated and inconvenient, but in its main lines our law does but incorporate the usages of our commerce. It is not an arbitrary law imposed by the Legislature on the commercial community; the Legislature has but given the sanction of law to the usages of our commerce and trade, and in modifying that law we should upset long established customs. There are other reasons in the domain of law which raise equal difficulties. We have no separate *droit de change*. We have no tribunals of commerce. We draw no distinction between traders and non-traders. Our commercial law is an integral part of our common law, and it is the