

that in every case where representative government has been established, the theoretical principle which I have just stated exactly corresponds with the historical facts. There is no exception; it is a necessary consequence of growth under our system; the freer that system is, the less interference there is; the more promptly concession is made by the parent state to the wants of the colony, and the more clearly they are laid before the parent state, the less will be the friction, and the stronger the bond of union between them. Now, Sir, no one would venture to argue before a judicial tribunal that when a person comes to a point where his interest and his duty are on opposite sides, that he may be safely left to go against his interests in discharge of a duty. The rule which has been recognized as an elementary rule in the principles of jurisprudence is equally applicable in the administration of public affairs. Every one knows that gross abuses would spring up if that rule of law were abolished. Now, this rule, I say, is equally applicable to the conduct of the administration of the affairs of the state. Experience shows that the rule of fair dealing is more readily applied in private than in public affairs, and that the public conscience is less sensitive than the individual conscience. This is the necessary result from the fact that the individual stands alone against the whole community, and in matters of public interest it frequently happens that one-half the community, in political ethics as well as in questions of public policy, stands against the other half; so that rules of upright dealings are more readily applied as between one individual and another than between any individual and the state, or between one state and another. Public opinion always comes more promptly to the support of the public as against the individual, than it does in one state against another. Take the case of some matter in which an Imperial officer is undertaking to act for a province. Is it not perfectly clear that in such a case there is in the first place a disposition to maintain things as they are? But, under disinclination to change and that strong interest which the parent state has in maintaining things as they are, a public wrong is often shielded by the ignorance, by the indifference, by the self-interest, by the false political maxims which have become current in the community with regard to the particular subject which is regarded as a grievance. In the case of one entrusted with

authority in the parent state, there comes to the support of that official the public opinion of a very numerous community—of a community who undertake to maintain the existence of the office and the functions of the officer upon the ground that they have existed for a long series of years. And so we frequently find that the best interests of a province are held in check by the maintenance of the authority of some Imperial officer, whose functions ought to come to an end, and whose duty should be superseded by some other in authority. An official in the United Kingdom, in the discharge of his duty abroad, can never be able to give more than a subordinate place to colonial matters which are not also matters of great Imperial concern. But, Sir, we are met at this point by the objection that the external relations of all parts of the Empire must ever remain in the hands of Her Majesty's advisers at Westminster; that no other rule can be reconciled with the unity and stability of the Empire. This, Sir, it seems to me, is simply begging the question in dispute. I deny it. Were the contention well founded, it would only prove this, that the destiny of the British Empire is that its colonies shall reach a period of maturity, and that the Empire shall then fall to pieces. The doctrine of Imperial supremacy, and of Imperial superintendence, was stated about a year ago with great force and precision by Lord Salisbury. In discussing the action of the Imperial Government towards Newfoundland in its dispute with the Government of France, Lord Salisbury made these observations in defence of interference by Imperial authorities. He said:

“We give them (the Newfoundland people) unlimited power in respect to their internal affairs because they will be the people who will suffer if they make a mistake. Therefore it is right that they should be in such matters independent. But if they make a dangerous mistake in this matter, it is not they who will suffer. It is we who run the whole risk, and they hardly any risk at all. I do not suppose that in case of war with France, the French would take the trouble to invade Newfoundland. And this being our risk, the whole burden and responsibility falling upon us, we should have the necessary power to defend our interests and our fellow subjects, and also comply with international law, to fulfil international obligations, and to satisfy the pledged word of the country.”

Now, I accept this statement as a true ethical and constitutional basis for Imperial supremacy and Imperial superintendence. It is a