

# Canada Law Journal.

VOL. XLIV.

SEPTEMBER.

Nos. 17 AND 18.

## *THE RIGHT OF DISALLOWANCE.*

That judge must have been speaking in terms of bitter irony who, in giving his decision in a recent case, used these words: "The Legislature within its jurisdiction can do everything that is not naturally impossible, and is restrained by no rule human or divine. If it be that the plaintiffs acquired any rights, which I am far from finding, the Legislature had the power to take them away. The prohibition 'Thou shalt not steal' has no legal force upon the sovereign body, and there would be no necessity for compensation to be given."

In using this language Mr. Justice Riddell knew, what every student of history knows, and what every Christian believes, that disobedience of the moral law, as declared in the ten commandments, will bring its own punishment, alike upon the government which wilfully sets it aside, and upon the country which submits to be so governed. And this law is as applicable, both in its operation and in its results, to men as well as to governments and peoples. Nor is it a doctrine only for women and priests which men of affairs, in busy times like these, can venture to disregard. It has the sanction of religion, it has been accepted by the wisest, as well as the best, of human kind, but besides all this it has been attested by the experience of all ages. Countries brought to desolation, communities ruined, families reduced to poverty, and men and women driven to despair, shew what follows upon neglect of it.

On the other hand, Great Britain mainly owes her supremacy among the nations to the fact that, in general, her Parliament, speaking for the nation at large, and possessing all the power described in the judgment referred to, has never exercised it in the cause of injustice—that her statesmen, her merchants, her representatives in all parts of the world, both by sea and land,