

right of occupying as proprietor, and comprised the use of the unnavigable waters and forests connected therewith. Whenever the seignior conceded lands to *habitants*, he had no right to make any reservations, and the *habitant* became proprietor of the soil which he occupied, subject only to the duties above mentioned. This law remained in full force at the cession of Canada by France to England, after which all concessions under the French crown were confirmed by ordinance issued from the castle of St. Louis, in 1766, by Governor Guy Carleton, and continued in force at the passing of the seigniorial act in 1854, which is now the law of the land.

We believe it is admitted that the Royal Prerogative, as recognised by the law of England, overrides all merely municipal laws of Canada.

There having been no concessions of mines, (which is tantamount to express reservation,) the rights of the crown in this Province remain intact, unless where affected by the DeLery patent and the act incorporating the "St. Lawrence Mining Company." Nothing therefore stands now in the way of legislation but these and the royal pleasure.

Nothing need be said on the DeLery patent, as it is understood its validity will be tested by the courts. The St. Lawrence Mining Company Act, though conferring very valuable privileges, is not considered to cover either gold or silver mines. The experience of the other colonies has shown that the royal pleasure will not stand in the way of necessary legislation.

This then is the position of Canada as regards this important question, at the present moment. Let us now look at the steps taken in other countries, on the discovery of gold.

The progressive stages have been alike. First, gold washing from alluvials, and secondly, the discovery and crushing of quartz rock ; each requiring the establishment of appropriate regulations.