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to govern at least all the common cases that would happen in the ordinary course of human affairs, such as descents in the right line, the right of representation in grand-children whose parents are dead, the dower of widows, the rents and services due to seigniors, the obligations and duties due from them to their tenants, the seignior's right to the common mutation-fines, his right of pre-emption of his tenant's land when the tenant is disposed to sell it, the rules of evidence in courts of justice, the solemnities necessary to be observed to give validity to a deed or will, and the like obvious and important matters; which would be sufficient to prevent the province from falling into confusion. And as to the nicer cases which might be omitted in such a code, they might afterwards be supplied by particular ordinances passed from time to time for that purpose.

To revive the old French laws relating to landed property and the distribution of the effects of intestates.

But if this measure of making such a code of laws should not be thought adviseable, your Majesty's attorney general of this province is humbly of opinion that it would be most expedient to let the English law continue to subsist in this province as the general law of the province, and to pass an ordinance to revive those of the former French laws which relate to the tenure, inheritance, dower, alienation, and incumbrance of landed property, and to the distribution of the effects of persons who die intestate. His reasons for thinking that the French laws upon these heads ought to be revived, are as follows,

These heads of law are three in number: First, those relating to the tenures of land in this province, or the mutual obligations subsisting between landlords and tenants with respect to them. Secondly, the laws relating to the power and manner of aliening, mortgaging, and otherwise incumbering landed property. And Thirdly, the laws relating to dower, inheritance and the distribution of the effects of persons who die intestate. And these several heads of law ought, as he humbly apprehends, to be revived in this province upon separate and distinct grounds.

Laws of tenure.

The laws of tenure, he conceives, ought to be considered as having been already granted by your Majesty to your new Canadian subjects by that article in the capitulation of 1760, by which your Majesty's general granted them *the enjoyment of all their estates, both noble and ignoble*,¹ and by the permission given them by your Majesty in the definitive treaty of peace in 1763, to continue in the possession of them;² these laws being essentially necessary to such possession and enjoyment. Such are the laws relating to the quit-rents due by the freeholders, who hold by rent-service, to the seigniors, the mutation-fines,

¹ See Capitulation of Montreal, article 37, p. 18, also p. 32.

² See Treaty of Paris, especially the 4th article, p. 99, and p. 115.