

to which an appeal to the British government has become necessary for the protection of the rights of property in that colony. I am desirous to plead the urgency of the case as an excuse for bringing the subject under your notice at the present moment. Two bills were introduced into the house of assembly during last session, one of which to define certain rights of seigniors and censitaires in Lower Canada, and the other to facilitate the redemption of seigniorial rights, and to convert the tenure of the lands into that of *franc-alleu roturier*. Under the influence of circumstances, the breaking up of the Lafontaine ministry, the leading members of which were opposed to many of the provisions of these bills, the question of the clergy reserves, and the re-construction of a mixed ministry, several of the members of which hold very extreme opinions; these two bills are now again about to be brought forward by the present attorney general, and assequently, under the system of self-government now accorded to the colonies, will pass into law, unless the governor general be instructed to withhold his assent, and, by the exercise of the prerogative of the Crown, reserve these two bills for the consideration of the authorities in England.

I hold extensive property in Canada, having at one time been a member of the house of assembly for the city of Quebec. One part of my property is a seigniority granted by the King of France, and liable to *foi* and *homage* to the Crown. Another part of my property I hold as a free gift and grant of a very old date, and I submit my own case, which, however, assimilates to that of the others seignior in Lower Canada, as almost all the seigniors hold their properties under the one or the other of these titles, which titles are enregistered in the *Registre d'Intendance*, at Quebec, and are not contested.

By the enactments of the bills now under consideration, the compensation to be given to the seigniors for the rights and privileges they are required to surrender and give up, is to be estimated, valued and paid for in a manner utterly unjust and contrary to the evidence of the attorney general (Ogden) and of the solicitor general (O'Sullivan), as given in the year 1836, is not only quite inadequate and far less than recommended by the commissioners of grievances in their general report in 1836, and even then the compensation granted to the seignior in France, when under the influence of the Revolution, the *régime féodal* was done away with in 1789-90; but the seigniors in Lower Canada are now about to be deprived of a part of what has hitherto been recognized as their property and their right, and which property is virtually to be confiscated by the provisions of these bills, and without any compensation being given to the seigniors.

That part of my property originally granted as a free gift and not under the seigniorial title, is about to be held liable to the enactments of those bills, to which I do not object, as such lands, although not liable to *foi* and *homage*, or to any fine to the Crown, have hitherto been treated as seigniories by the custom of the country and under the maxim of French law: *nulle terre sans seigneur*; but while this maxim is held to be valid and is about to be adopted so as to bring these lands under the provisions of those bills, it is nevertheless to be abrogated and set aside, as regards the rights and privileges of the proprietor of the lands, and who is to be deprived of the