

states to keep their former laws in operation, and it is considered proper that this chapter of Magna Charta, and some of the other statutes on the same subject, should, for the present, be incorporated or continued in the body of our statute law.



*Statute of Merton, 20 Hen. 3.—A. D. 1235.*

CHAP. 1. A woman shall recover damages in a writ of dower.

The method of endowment of women in the province and in the state, has been according to the laws of England, and it will be observed, that the testamentary law which is very comprehensive in its provisions on other subjects, declares, that a widow's remedy for dower, shall be as heretofore.

Among the thirty-six laws read but not passed in 1638, there was one for the descending of land, which contained provisions nearly similar to those in Magna Charta respecting dower.

No act has since passed inconsistent with this statute, and it is therefore considered proper to be incorporated with our laws. This statute is mentioned in the letter from S. Chase, which has been referred to.

CHAP. 2. Widows may bequeath the crop of their lands.

This statute (except the saving as to the lords of the fee,) is considered proper to be incorporated together with Ch. 1, and 9 Hen. 3, Ch. 7.

CHAP. 9. He is a bastard that is born before the marriage of his parents.

This statute although only in affirmance of the common law, was, as affecting the rules of property, applicable to the circumstances of the people. It is considered proper to be incorporated, but subject to the provisions contained in the act of 1786, Ch. 45, as to the legitimation of such children by acknowledgment after marriage. This statute is mentioned in the letter from S. Chase, which has been referred to.



*The statute de Anno et die Bessextile, 21 Hen. 3.—A. D. 1236.*

The day of the leap year and the day before shall be holden for one day.

From the various occasions in which the termination of the year may come in question, it appears that this statute was in force in the province and ought so to be continued. See 1 Com. Dig. 503, Co. Lit. 135 b, and 2 Bl. Com. 141.



*The statute de districtione saccarii, 51 Hen. 3, St. 4.—A. D. 1266.*

What distress shall be taken for the king's debts, and how it shall be used. (Part.)

The parts of this statute relating to the king's debtors, and their payments into the exchequer, were not applicable to the province; but those parts relating to distresses for rent, were always so considered, together with all or most of the other statutes on the same subject. In consequence of this extension of the laws of England, no material regulations have been made by act of assembly,