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his cousin, Prince Rupert — covering with his name a few associates, the king gave over the icy confines and the rich interiors of what from that time onward has been known as "Prince Rupert's Land." Under a charter dated May 2, 1670, by his own "especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion," without advice or confirmation by council or Parliament, Charles gave "to his beloved cousin, Prince Rupert," the Duke of Albemarle, the Earl of Craven, Lord Arlington, Lord Ashley, several baronets, knights and citizens — less than twenty named in all — the territory which was henceforward to be the property of the Hudson Bay Company.

Passing notice may here be taken of the high rank as nobles and gentlemen of those associated with a prince of the royal blood in this mercantile company. This aristocratic character of the members, with its power and privileges, was perpetuated through the succession of the company in the admission of partners and the transfer of shares. The fact is recognized here, at the start, as doubtless having a vast influence subsequently, as we shall see, in protecting and sheltering the company, in enabling it to conceal its secrets and to parry the vigorous assaults made upon its monopoly and management in after years.

The motive assigned for the royal gift was the plea that the corporators "have at their own great cost and charges undertaken an expedition for Hudson's Bay, for the discovery of a new passage into the South Sea, and for the finding some trade for furs, minerals, and other considerable commodities, and by such, their undertaking, have already made such discoveries as do encourage them to proceed further in pursuance of their said design, by means whereof there may probably arise very great advantage to us and our kingdom." It does not, however, appear what were "the discoveries already made" by these corporators or their agents, which furnished a reason for the generous grant.

The charter assured to the company "the sole trade and commerce of all those seas, straits, bays, rivers, lakes, creeks, and sounds lying within the entrance of Hudson's Straits, with all the lands, countries, and territories upon the coasts and confines" of the above seas, etc. It was stipulated that the territory thus granted should include only such as was not then "possessed by the subjects of any other christian prince or state." The parties named and such others as they shall admit to their society are incorporated as "The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay," with a seal, etc. They are to choose a committee of seven of their number, any three of whom, with the governor or deputy-governor, may have the direction, management, and handling of all voyages, ships, merchandise, etc. Prince Rupert was to be the first governor; the first seven were named for the committee; a general court was to be held in November of each year, to choose officers and the committee, who were to be removable for reasons. The territory was to be reputed as a British colony, and to be called "Rupert's Land." All fisheries, mines,

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