

Being unable to pass further than the fifty-sixth degree of North latitude, called by him the *Nova Ultra*, he wintered at Port Nelson, and from him the bay was called Button's Bay. The civil wars of England soon after coming on, prevented our countrymen from pushing their discoveries farther; but Prince Rupert and some public-spirited gentlemen, in 1667, fitted out Guilam, who landed at Rupert river, on the east continent of Hudson's Bay, where he built Fort Charles, and laid the foundation of the Fur Trade with the natives.

This trade bore so good an aspect, that in 1669, a royal charter was granted to the adventurers, in the following terms:—"To Prince RUPERT, Count Palatine of the RHINE; to GEORGE Duke of ALBEMARL, to WILLIAM Earl of CRAVEN, and to FIFTEEN others, and to others whom they shall admit into the said body corporate; power to make a common seal, and to alter it; to chuse annually, sometime in November, a governor, a deputy-governor, and a committee of seven; any three of the committee, with governor and deputy-governor, to be a court of directors: freemen to be admitted (their factors and servants may be admitted freemen) at a general court, a power to dismiss the governor, deputy-governor, or any of the committee, before the year expires; and upon their dismissal or death to elect others in their room for the remainder of the year: to have the sole property of lands, trade, royal fishery, and mines, within Hudson's Straits, not actually possessed by any christian: Prince, to be reputed as one of our Colonies in America; to be called the RUPERTS' land, to hold the same in free and common soccage, to pay the skins of two elks, and two black beavers, as often as the King and Queen shall come into those lands: power to assemble the company, and to make laws for their government and other affairs, not repugnant to the laws of England; an exclusive trade, without leave obtained of the company, penalty, forfeiture of goods and shipping, one half to the King, one half to the company. In their general meeting, for every £100 original stock, to have one vote; may appoint governors, factors, and other officers, in any of their ports; the governor and his council to judge in all matters, civil and criminal; and execute justice accordingly: where there is no governor and council, may send them to any place where there is a governor and council, or to England for justice: liberty to send ships of war, men, and ammunition, for their protection, and erect forts: to make peace or war with any people who are not christians, and may appeal to the King in Council."

Notwithstanding this charter, the French pretended to the right of pre-occupancy, founded upon the discoveries of their countrymen, long before the date of this charter. They alledged, that the Sieur Bourdon, and another Frenchman, repeatedly took possession of Hudson's Bay and its neighbourhood, between the date of this charter and the year 1656. It is certain, that in 1663, three Frenchmen—Medard Chouard des Grosilliers, and Pierre Esprit de Radisson—out of some pique they had conceived against their own country, conducted Guilam to the river Nemiscan, which discharges itself into the bottom of the bay, and there first built fort Rupert, and afterwards fort Monsonis.—

* In a future number this Charter will be given more at large.