

by Spain and France in 1703, and again recovered by England soon after. In 1706, Woods Rogers, Esq. was appointed Governor-in-Chief of the Bahamas by Letters Patent, which recite that four out of six of the Proprietors, the other two being minors, had surrendered their rights to the Crown. The Carolina Company surrendered its Charter of Carolina in 1720. A Commission for the separate Government of the Bahamas, issued in 1758, directed an Assembly to be called. An Assembly was called as early as 1764. These Islands were taken again by the Americans and Spanish in 1776, and by the English finally in 1782. New Commissions thereafter issued for the Government of these Islands; and in 1799 they passed an Act declaring the Common Law of England and certain enumerated Acts of Parliament in force in those Islands. This Colony is still governed by a Governor-in-Chief, with a Legislative Council and Assembly.

These Islands were first granted in 1612 to the Virginian Company, and sold by them to one hundred and twenty persons, who obtained Letters Patent from King James the First in 1612, when a Settlement was made. A Legislative Council existed till 1619, and an Assembly was then introduced. That form of Government has continued ever since. The Charter of Virginia was not yet cancelled when this Colony was thus separated from the former Government; its consent however seems to have been given by the previous sale.

The Bermudas.

The Charters, Patents and Acts of Parliament relating to the now United States when Colonies and Provinces of Great Britain, tend no less to show the Prerogative of the Crown to divide a Colony or endow any part of it with a separate Legislature, and the irrevocable nature of such an endowment.

The some time North American Colonies, now the United States.

The first Charter relating to the British Dominions in America seems to have been (in the year 1578) Queen Elizabeth's Charter to Sir H. Gilbert, to discover and take possession of all Lands unoccupied by Christians. That Charter gave him the right of property in the soil of those Lands, with power to govern them, and declares all who settled there should have all the privileges of natives of England. In 1584 Sir Walter Raleigh, half brother to Sir H. Gilbert, having obtained, it is said, a similar patent, sent out Amadus and Barlow, who having visited Albermarle Sound and returned home, made so favourable Report that Queen Elizabeth gave to the whole country the name of Virginia; and in the following year the first English Colony was planted on the Continent. This and several subsequent and similar attempts having failed, Raleigh about the year 1591 assigned his interest and patent to Sir Thomas Smith and a Company of Merchants.

The earlier Charters and Commissions.

The earlier Charters of Queen Elizabeth to Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh having been surrendered or forfeited to the Crown, King James the First, in 1606, established two Colonies between the 34th and 45th degrees of north latitude, to be called North and South Virginia, giving the former liberty to plant between the 38th and 45th degree, and the latter between the 34th and the 41st degrees, and to each a tract of 100 square miles.

North and South Virginia.

In 1609 the Company of South Virginia obtained from King James a Grant and Charter of 400 miles of Coast north and south of Cape Comfort, extending westward to the South Sea. In 1612 the Company of South Virginia obtained a third Charter, extending their limits to all Islands within 300 leagues of the coast. The Bermudas lying within these limits were sold soon after by that Company to Sir George Somers and others. In 1624 the Charter of King James was pronounced void by judgment in Banco Regis, on a Quo Warranto, and a new Commission issued by King James the First, appointing Sir F. Wyatt Governor of Virginia. Similar Commissions followed, making no mention of an Assembly till 1639, when Sir William Berkeley was instructed to call one.

South Virginia.

In 1620 King James the First granted another Charter to the Company of North Virginia, which was called thereafter "The Council of Plymouth," and gave them all lands between 40 and 48 north latitude, and westerly to the South Sea. This Company made several ill-defined, subordinate and interfering grants of large tracts, as to the

North Virginia.