

more formidable opposition sprang up in a new and unexpected quarter.

A few years before this date, M. de Groiseliez, an inhabitant of Canada, a bold and enterprising man, and one who had travelled extensively among the Indians, had pushed his discoveries so far, that he reached the coasts of Hudson's Bay from the French settlements by land. On his return, he prevailed upon the authorities at Quebec to fit out a vessel for perfecting this discovery by sea, which led in the same year to the establishment of the first European settlement on the shores of Hudson's Bay, at the mouth of Nelson River—near the site of the present York Factory—to which the French gave the name of Fort Bourbon. Some subsequent difference with his employers led to Groiseliez's abandoning his establishment, and proceeding to France, where, finding his representations as ill received as they had been in Canada, he was induced to lay his proposals for opening a trade in Hudson's Bay before the Duke of Montague, then our minister in France, who, entering warmly into the project, despatched Groiseliez, with his brother-in-law, M. Radisson, who had accompanied him from Canada, at once to England, with a recommendation to Prince Rupert, then the great patron of all enterprises of this nature. From Prince Rupert our adventurers received every encouragement. A small vessel, the *Nonsuch*, under the command of Captain Zachariah Gillam, with the Frenchmen on board, was sent into Hudson's Bay under the prince's auspices, in the summer of 1668, and in the same year established, at the mouth of Rupert's River, at the southern extremity of the bay, the first English settlement, to which Captain Gillam gave the name of Fort Charles. This led in the following year to the incorporation of the adventurers into a company, by a charter from King Charles II., dated 2d May 1669; and thus was instituted the Hudson's Bay Company, destined in time to exercise over the wintry lakes and boundless forests of the north, a sway equalled only by that of the East India Company over the voluptuous climes and magnificent realms of the East. This charter—which continues to the present day to confer upon the Company whatever legal right it may possess to the monopoly it has so long exercised over the fur-trade of British North America—appears to have been as nearly as possible an unconscious counterpart of that of Cardinal Richelieu's Association. In the same loose and ignorant phraseology, it grants to the Company immense territories, the situation and extent of which were at the time entirely unknown, but which, strictly interpreted, enables the Company to claim at the present day, in the language of one of its governors before a recent parliamentary committee, 'the country all the way from the boundaries of Lower and Upper Canada, away to the north pole as far as the land goes; and from the Labrador coast all the way to the Pacific Ocean'—that is, a territory considerably greater than the entire area of the continent of Europe! Such grants