

The subjoined document has never before appeared in print, its existence having been not even suspected by the British Government. It was passed in the Second Year of the Reign of William and Mary, A. D. 1690, and was intituled,—

“AN ACT FOR CONFIRMING TO THE GOVERNOR AND COMPANY TRADING TO HUDSON’S BAY THEIR PRIVILEGES AND TRADE.”

(Copied verbatim from the Rolls of Chancery.)

“Forasmuch as his late Majesty King Charles the Second, by his letters patent or Charter, under the Great Seal of England, bearing date the second day of May, in the two-and-twentieth year of his reign, reciting, or taking notice, that his then Highness Prince Rupert, Christopher Duke of Albemarle, William Earl of Craven, and divers other lords therein particularly named had, at their own great costs and charges, undertaken an expedition to Hudson’s Bay, in the north-west parts of America, for the discovery of a new passage into the South Seas, and for finding some trade for furs, minerals, and other considerable commodities, and that by such their undertaking they had made such discoveries whereby might probably arise much advantage to his said Majesty and this kingdom; for which, and for other reasons and motives in the said Charter mentioned, his said late Majesty was graciously pleased thereby to incorporate, create, and make the said Prince Rupert, Duke of Albemarle, Earl of Craven, and other the lords and persons therein particularly named, and such others as should be admitted into the Society (as therein is mentioned), one body corporate and politic in deed and name, by the name of the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England, trading into Hudson’s Bay, and by that name to have perpetual succession, and to sue and be sued, take, purchase, or grant; and by the said letters patent or Charter of Incorporation provision was made, as well for the appointment and constitution of the first and present as well as for the choosing, appointing, and admitting of all future governors, deputy-governors, committees, members, and officers of the said Company, and for the making of laws, constitutions, and ordinances, and for the government of the said Company and trade, and otherwise, and the sole trade and commerce of all these seas, streights, bays, lakes, rivers, creeks, and sounds, in whatsoever latitude they shall be, that are within the entrance of the streights commonly called Hudson’s Streights, together with all the lands and the territories upon the countries, coasts, and confines of the seas, bays, lakes, rivers, creeks, and sounds aforesaid, which were not then actually possessed by or granted to any of his said late Majesty’s subjects, or possessed by the subjects of any other Christian prince or state, with divers and sundry privileges, liberties, jurisdictions, franchises, powers, and authorities to punish offenders, and to sue for and recover penalties with other powers, and authorities, matters, and