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individual English adventurers of the sixteenth century that religion was in evidence. It was in evidence also in the sphere of companies. A good instance will be found, before Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, in the instructions dated May 9, 1553, in the reign of King Edward VI, which were issued by Sebastian Cabot as 'Governor of the Mystery and Company of the Merchants Adventurers for the discovery of regions, dominions, islands and places unknown.' Cabot ordained that there should be no blaspheming of God, no filthy talk, gambling, or brawling, that morning and evening prayer should be held daily on every ship, 'and the Bible or paraphrases to be read devoutly and Christianly to God's honour, and for His grace to be obtained and had by humble and hearty prayer of the navigants accordingly.'¹

The Company was licensed by the King and commended by letter, which Willoughby and Chancellor took with them to the Princes and potentates whom they might encounter on their north-easterly quest for Cathay. But it was not incorporated by Royal Charter until February 1555 in the following reign, the reign of Queen Mary.

Then, as the result of Richard Chancellor having found his way into Russia, they were given a charter, headed 'the charter of the Merchants of Russia,' and having for one of its marginal notes 'the discovery principally intended for God's Glory.'² In Queen Elizabeth's reign, in 1566, the Company was thought worthy of having its corporate privileges confirmed by Act of Parliament, the title given to it in the Act

¹ Hakluyt, vol. ii, pp. 198-9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 304.