

CHAPTER CCXCI.

AN ACT FOR THE BETTER ENABLING OF BERNHARD VANLEER, ARENT HASSERT, MICHAEL SMITHS, WILLIAM SELIGER, ARNOLT BAMBERGER, WILLIAM HILLIGART AND ULRICK HAGEMAN TO TRADE AND HOLD LANDS IN THIS PROVINCE.

Whereas by the royal charter of the late King Charles the Second to William Penn, Esquire, late proprietary and governor of the province of Pennsylvania, license is granted to all persons not specially forbidden to transport themselves and families into the said province in such shipping as by the laws of the kingdom of England they ought to use, paying the customs therefor due, and here to settle themselves, dwell and inhabit, and plant for the public and their own private advantage, with license to purchase and hold lands in fee-simple or otherwise of the said proprietary and his heirs, with full license to all persons who shall from time to time repair hither with a purpose to inhabit or trade with the natives of this country, to load, freight and transport all and singular their goods, wares and merchandises not prohibited by the laws and statutes of England into any ports whatsoever of the said late King, his heirs and successors, according to the laws made or to be made within the said kingdom of England.

Saving always to the said late King, his heirs and successors, the legal impositions, customs or other duties due or to become due by any law or statute for the said wares or merchandises as by the said royal charter (amongst other things) may more fully appear.

And whereas the said Bernhard Vanleer, Arent Hassert, Michael Smiths, William Seliger, Arnolt Bamberger, William Hilligart and Ulrick Hageman were born under the allegiance of the Emperor of Germany, now in amity with the King of Great Britain, and being of the Protestant or reformed religion and desirous to come under the power and protection of His British Majesty, have transported themselves with their

effects into this province, and duly considering the happiness of being governed by a constitution agreeable to the laws, rights and liberties of England, and desiring to be made partakers of those immunities belonging to the natural-born subjects of this province and be more effectually secured of those privileges and advantages granted by his said late Royal Majesty King Charles the Second to persons coming into this province to settle and inhabit, they the said Bernhard Vanleer, Arent Hassert, Michael Smiths, William Seliger, Arnolt Bamberger, William Hilligart and Ulrick Hageman, having on the sixth day of December, one thousand seven hundred and twenty-five, in the general quarter-sessions of the peace of our Lord the King that now is, held at Philadelphia in the said province, taken and subscribed the several qualifications required by law to be taken and subscribed by His Majesty's liege subjects, obtained leave to bring in this bill to the present assembly. Now forasmuch as the increase of people in these foreign plantations is an encouragement to the English trade and a means of advancing the wealth and strength of the English Empire:

Therefore may it please the governor that it may be enacted:

[Section I.] And be it enacted by Sir William Keith, Baronet, Governor of the Province of Pennsylvania, &c., by and with the advice and consent of the freemen of the said Province in General Assembly met, and by the authority of the same, That the said Bernhard Vanleer, Arent Hassert, Michael Smiths, William Seliger, Arnolt Bamberger, William Hilligart and Ulrick Hageman are hereby declared and shall at all times hereafter be esteemed and taken to all intents and purposes to be and to have been since their first arrival in this province free and fully able and capable to trade, traffic, load, freight and transport all and all manner of goods, wares and merchandises not by law prohibited to be imported or exported as if they the said Bernhard Vanleer, Arent Hassert, Michael Smiths, William Seliger, Arnolt Bamberger, William Hilligart and Ulrick Hageman had been the natural liege people and subjects of the King of Great Britain, born in this province of Pennsylvania.

[Section II.] And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the said Bernhard Vanleer, Arent Hassert, Michael Smiths, William Seliger, Arnolt Bamberger, William Hilligart and Ulrick Hageman shall and are hereby enabled and adjudged able to all intents, constructions and purposes whatsoever as well to demand, take, have, retain and enjoy any privileges and immunities belonging to His Majesty's liege people and natural subjects of this province, as also to have and enjoy all lands and tenements or other hereditaments by way of purchase or gift of any person or persons whatsoever, and also to prosecute, pursue, maintain, avow and justify all and all manner of actions, suits and causes and all other things to do as lawfully, freely and fully as if they the said Bernhard Vanleer, Arent Hassert, Michael Smiths, William Seliger, Arnolt Bamberger, William Hilligart and Ulrick Hageman had been and were born natural subjects of this province or as any other person or persons born within this province may lawfully in anywise do, any law, custom or usage to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding.

Passed March 5, 1725-26. Apparently never considered by the Crown, but allowed to become a law by lapse of time, in accordance with the proprietary charter. See Volume III, Appendix V, Section I.

CHAPTER CCXCII.

AN ACT FOR THE BETTER REGULATING OF NEGROES IN THIS PROVINCE.

Whereas it too often happens that negroes commit felonies and other heinous crimes which by the laws of this province are punishable by death, but the loss in such case falling wholly on the owner is so great a hardship that sometimes may induce him to conceal such crimes or to convey his negro to some other place and so suffer him to escape justice, to the ill example of others to commit the like offenses: