

merchant vessels in their intercourse with *America*, and who in that capacity were always liable to serve his Majesty.

The *American* trade and fishery to the coast of Labradore and Streights of Bellisle, employed in 1805, above *nine hundred* sail of vessels belonging to the *United States*; if they were prevented from trading and fishing in the harbours and rivers of that settlement, they would abandon it; as the sea fishery is not worth following, and the trade and fishery would then be engaged and occupied by British subjects, who at present are excluded from any share in it, by the superior numbers of the Americans, who seize on every station which is advantageously situated, and hold the same to the exclusion of British subjects, and this is even done under some of the improvident grants before referred to.

The Nova Scotia fishermen, thus excluded from the fishery of the gulph of St. Lawrence, by the subjects of the United States, have resorted to that part of the Newfoundland shore, which was formerly occupied by the French, where there are some advantageous stations; but they have been driven from thence by the officers of his Majesty's ships on the Newfoundland station imprudently impressing their men.

The encouragement by the legislature of the fish trade to Europe, and to the British West India islands; the prevention of the encroachments of the United States, on the islands in Passamaquoddy bay; the suppression of the contraband trade carried on there, and securing to British fishermen protection from the impress*, will revive a branch of trade in the British colonies, which is of the first importance to Great Britain, as a nursery for seamen, and which furnishes beyond any other, the most extended consumption of British

* By the 41st Geo. 3. c. 21. s. 30. which was a temporary Act, persons employed in the fisheries were *exempt* from the impress, but which is not contained in the subsequent statutes, which continued some of the provisions of that Act; indeed statutable protections from the impress, have of late years (notwithstanding their importance as encouragement to persons to enter into the Merchants' service and fisheries) been too much disregarded, and the expence, trouble and vexation in the service of and in obtaining (by Habeas Corpus) the discharge of persons so protected, has been such, as not only to deter the owners and masters from applying for them, but likewise to discontinue taking apprentices as extensively as formerly. The costs of obtaining the writ of Habeas Corpus are inconsiderable; it is the subsequent charges, and the difficulty of service by the removal of the men from ship to ship, which constitute the great expence and inconvenience.