

Mr. Oswald;
November 30, 1782.

With regard to the limits of three leagues and fifteen leagues, which had been proposed by Great Britain to be those of the American fisheries, Mr. Oswald stated "that if we had not given way in the Article of the fishery we should have had no Treaty at all, Mr. Adams having declared that he never would put his hand to any Treaty if the restraints regarding the three leagues and fifteen leagues were not dispensed with, as well as that of denying his countrymen the privilege of drying fish on the unsettled part of Nova Scotia,"

"On these and other accounts," Mr. Oswald stated, "and being in a manner certain that without an indulgence in this Article of fishery, there would have been no Treaty with America, the abovementioned gentlemen (Messrs. Strachey and Fitzherbert) thought it best to close with the Commissioners by admitting this Article in the way he proposed; in which they not only had my concurrence, but I own I used the freedom to encourage and press them to give their consent, being of opinion that I would be under no difficulty in showing that the grant was not of that importance as to be put in comparison with the consequence of splitting with America at this time. Among other things it occurred to me that if our caution in this particular regarded our marine, and an apprehension of its being abridged by this interference of the Americans to a greater extent in this trade, we might come to suffer much more by what the Commissioners insinuated and indeed threatened in case of refusal, which was to pass an Act of Navigation, by which, after a certain time, all the ports of America should be shut against Great Britain, in so far as the exportation of their produce should be concerned.

"And in the other view of the profits of the fishery trade, and our being deprived of such part of it as the Americans would gain by this admission, I was of opinion that in leaving the fishing sea-port in the West of England, I would not have far to go inland to be satisfied that the loss, by continuing the dispute some time longer with the Americans, or even laying the foundation of a national grudge, would ten times over counterbalance the amount of the said loss; even sup-