

of the Admiralty, and a naval officer was from time to time sent out there to administer its affairs. He has been allowed to remain but a short time, when he has been recalled to make room for some other naval commander, and in consequence of this species of management, though, I may venture to assert, that there is no one of our colonial settlements possessed of greater natural advantages than Newfoundland, yet there is not one that has made so little progress in population, in wealth, and, I may add, in civilization. The fact is, that the resources and the wealth, and the population of the colony, have latterly declined; and if we look to the state of our fisheries there, we shall find that we have made less progress in them than our neighbours, the French and the Americans. These are the reasons which induce me to bring the state of this colony under the consideration of Parliament. I wish to shew to the House that the system of policy which has been pursued towards this island for many years past has been one calculated to retard its improvement, and cripple its resources. The policy of our Government for a great many years has been to treat Newfoundland as a moveable fishery—the Governors and other official individuals sent out have been left there but for a short period, and the few Acts of Parliament passed for the colony have been calculated to return every shilling produced there to this country, with a view to render Newfoundland a mere nursery for seamen. Yet, notwithstanding that the policy of our Government has been to prevent any persons from settling permanently in Newfoundland, there is a large population there at present, amounting to upwards of 90,000, and consisting of Irishmen, Scotchmen, individuals from this country, and their descendants. In accordance with the policy to which I have alluded, the naval governors were generally sent out to Newfoundland with instructions, in some instances, to compel parties, who were desirous to settle permanently there, to return to this country; and in other instances, to prevent them from erecting buildings for the purpose of taking up their residence there. In this manner individuals have been prevented from effecting a permanent settlement in Newfoundland. Indeed, I will venture to assert, that such a system of policy as has been pursued in this instance towards that island has not been adopted towards any