

they considered the *defence* of this island from *foreign* invasion as the *first* law in the *national* policy ; and judging that the *dominion* of the *land* ¹ could not be preserved without possessing that of the sea, they made every effort to procure to the nation a *maritime* power of its own. They wished that the *merchants* should own as many ships, and employ as many *native* mariners, as possible. To induce, and sometimes to force them to this application of *their capitals*, restrictions and prohibitions were devised. These affected not only foreigners, but natives ; the *interests* of *commerce* were often *sacrificed* to this object. Trade was considered *principally* as the means of *promoting* the employment of *ships*, and was encouraged *chiefly* as it conduced to the *naval strength* of the *country*.” ² Such was the system adopted by our ancestors to give vigor and effect to the maritime power of the nation : the laws they enacted were wise and comprehensive ; that is, in Lord *Verulam's* nervous expression, “deep, not vulgar ; not made upon the spur of a particular occasion for the present, but out of providence of the future ; to make the estate of the people still more and more happy, after the manner of the legislators in ancient and heroic times.”

The war in which the country is engaged in support of its **MARITIME RIGHTS**—the additional number of ships and seamen it is necessary to employ in various and distant stations, to protect his majesty's dominions, and to preserve unsullied the lustre which adorns the naval annals of Great Britain—forcibly point out the vital importance of the *British carrying trade*, and particularly that of the West Indies and the Fisheries, as constituting two of the most prominent features of the nursery of British seamen. The Newfoundland fishery forms of itself a subject fit for separate consideration. The complaints which continue to be made of the interference of the *American* fishermen, show the necessity in future negotiations with the United States of excluding them from any participation in it ; indeed, if treaties are contemplated to be renewed with the

¹ See Bacon, Raleigh, Temple, Child, Lidiard, Law, Cary, Burchet, Anderson, Campbell, Postlethwaite, and all the other writers in support of this system—they wrote for the country, not from interest, pique, or party motive. See also Dr. Johnson's introduction to the political state of Great Britain, in 1756.—“At present, amongst *European* nations, a *naval strength*, which is the portion of Great Britain, is *more than ever* of the greatest importance to sovereignty, as well because most of the kingdoms of Europe are *not* continents, but, in a good measure, surrounded by the sea ; as because the *treasures* of both *Indies* seem but an *accessory* to the *dominion* of the seas.” Bacon.

—“The sea, which is our mother (that embraces Both the rich *Indies* in her out-stretched arms), Yields every day a crop, if we dare reap it.”

Massinger.

² Reeves's History of Shipping, edit. 1807.