

PART I.

42 ED. III. TO
A. D. 1351.Petition of the
Commons on
the Carrying
Trade.

half to the king and half to the person seizing. But this provision in Favour of English shipping was to last no more than three years; and we find no other statute on this subject till the reign Henry VII.

BUT in the mean time a petition made by the commons in parliament in the 18th year of *Henry* 6. is well worthy of notice. It was there prayed, that thenceforward no Italian, or other merchant of the countries beyond the Straits of Morocco, should sell in this realm any other merchandize than that of the countries beyond the Straits, on pain of forfeiture thereof. And the reason there alledged for such a regulation is, that since the Italian merchants had become carriers of the commodities of Spain, Portugal, and other countries without the Straits, in addition to the productions of the countries within the Straits, those articles were not brought in such abundance, nor were they sold so cheap as when they were brought by the merchants of those countries respectively, or were fetched by the merchants of this country in their own ships; the consequence of which was, not only the decrease of the king's customs, and the depreciation of the merchandize of this realm, but also a great hurt to all the navy of the realm.

SUCH are the mischiefs which were meant to be remedied; and the benefits the commons proposed by the regulation thus prayed were stated to be, that the countries without the Straits would be more desirous of peace and friendship with England, in order that their merchants might have safe-conduct to bring their goods hither; and that

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