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Paper on the importance of the Newfoundland fishery, by Mr. Postlethwayte.

“THE French have taken every measure to improve their fisheries in general since the treaty of Utrecht. They have exceedingly increased that to Newfoundland as well on the coast as on the Great Bank. Nor do they fish only on the Great Bank, for such fish as are cured without drying, as the Dutch do in their white herring fishery in the open sea; but have had the address to obtain, that the island of Cape Breton should be yielded to them to fortify, and do what they please with; where they have been long struggling to establish another Dunkirk, to the ruin of the British American commerce; and where they carry on their dry fishery as well as at Placentia. *But as if this was not privilege enough for them, we have impolitically granted them the liberty to resort to the very island of Newfoundland itself, and erect stages, &c. to cure and dry their fish, to the unspeakable detriment of our fishery there.*

In the time of king Charles I. the French paid us a tribute for the liberty of curing and drying fish at Newfoundland, and we could deprive them of it whenever we pleased. Of late years they have not only ceased to pay tribute, but, by their neighbourhood at Cape Breton, will oblige us to keep large garrisons as well at Nova Scotia as Newfoundland, if we will prevent our being surprized; where at Newfoundland they have the liberty of the fishing season equally with us, from Cape Bonavista northward to the northern point of the said island, and by which they are also become our rivals, in a very fine salmon fishery there. The French are now become so much our competitors in this trade, and are encreased to such a degree, that they employ yearly above five hundred sail of shipping to carry on their fishing on the Great Bank of Newfoundland, and on the coast of that island; that is in their wet and dry fish: hereby they have not only supplied themselves with the fish they formerly took from us, but furnish many parts of Spain and Italy therewith to our prodigious loss.”

Surely this paper proves the bad consequences of the article on this subject in the British Memorial!

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