

plaints on the Part of the Merchants, are those taken upon what are called Fishing Ships, fitted and cleared out from England according to the Terms prescribed in the Acts of the 10th and 11th of William the III^d. and the 15th of George the III^d. by which Acts they are entitled to certain Privileges, and amongst others to an Exemption from Fees at the Custom House at Newfoundland; except One to the Naval Officer, of 2s. 6d. at their Entry, and the like at their Clearance.—And being asked, Whether it is his Opinion, that those Complaints are well founded? he said, As far as relates to the Fees taken upon the Fishing Ships, he thinks they are; for there seems to be a fair Contract made by the Acts above-mentioned, between the Legislature and the Merchants; they are told, that by complying with the Terms of those Acts, in sailing from England with what is called a Fishing Certificate; proving that they have taken a certain Proportion of Green-Men in their Crews, and the Vessel being employed in the Fishery, they should only pay the above-mentioned Fee of 2s. 6d. to the Naval Officer upon making their Entry, and getting their Clearance at Newfoundland; and he thinks, that the Pretence of the Custom House there, that those Vessels, because they do not go upon the Great Bank to catch Fish, are not therefore actually employed in the Fishery, is putting a Construction upon the Act of Parliament which in Reason it will not, and in Point of Policy it ought not, to bear; and it is his Opinion that the Fishing Ships (he means those qualified as above-mentioned) should be relieved from this Imposition; they are a great Nursery for Seamen, and therefore ought not to be discouraged; on the contrary, every Encouragement should be given to induce them to continue the laudable Practice of taking out Green-Men as a Part of the Ship's Complement.—And being asked, Whether the Disputes which solely belong to the Fishery at St. John's, are more intricate than formerly? he said, No, not those solely confined to the Fishery; and on that Account it is, that he is of Opinion, that the Captains of the Ships of War should be continued the Judges at the Out Ports, where the Trade, independent of the Fishery, is not increased in the Proportion it has at St. John's.—And being asked, Whether he thinks the Governor is fully competent to answer all the Purposes of the Fishery, independent of the Trade? he said, Most assuredly; but he would by no Means advise its being put under the Jurisdiction of the Governor again.—And being asked, Whether the Fishery carried on from this Country has increased, or whether he meant, the Trade and Fishery as carried on at Newfoundland, taken aggregately? he said, Yes, both; he thinks the Fishery as well as the Trade carried on from this Country has increased.—

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