

ever, they employed every Year some Ships more or less, as they could obtain Protection for their Men; and the Inhabitants maintained (as formerly) about 300 Boats per Annum, until the French, in 1696, without any Regard to what was stipulated by the 18th Article in the Treaty of 1686, ravaged several of the Harbours in Newfoundland, and destroyed all that appertained to the Fishermen; whereupon His late Majesty King William the Third erected a Fort at St. John's for the better Security and Protection of His Subjects and their Trade.

But upon the Conclusion of the Peace at Ryswick, the Adventurers, either forgetting the Difficulties their Predecessors were not able to surmount, or imagining that the Inhabitants, by Reason of the severe Losses they had lately suffered, were rendered incapable of carrying on the Fishery; or else very probably adhering (for their own private Ends) to the Practice of those refractory Masters of Ships who could not be restrained from transporting Passengers, they re-assumed and returned to their old Trade with fresh Vigour;

And in 1698 there were employed by the				
Adventurers	—	—	—	143 Fishing Ships,
			And	532 Boats,
And by the Inhabitants and Bye Boat				
Keepers	—	—	—	397 Boats.

In all, Boats 929, who took  
265,198 Quintals of Fish.

The Fishery at Newfoundland being thus revived, and His said Majesty, in His most gracious Speech from the Throne on the 9th December 1698, having recommended it to His Parliament *to employ their Thoughts about some good Bills for the Advancement of Trade*, they were engaged to take the State of this Fishery into their Consideration; and in order to restore good Government, and to prevent Contentions and Disorders for the future, an Act was passed in that Sessions, intituled, *An Act to encourage the Trade to Newfoundland*.

The Abstract whereof is as follows:

1st, That it is and shall be lawful for all His Majesty's Subjects residing in England to have and enjoy a free Trade to Newfoundland as formerly; and that no Alien or Stranger whatsoever take any Bait or Fish there.

2nd, That no Ballast be thrown out to the Prejudice of the Harbours.

3d, That no Person destroy or deface any Stage, Cook Room, Flakes, &c.

4th, That according to ancient Custom, every Ship that first entereth a Harbour shall be Admiral of the said Harbour, &c.

5th, That Stages, &c. taken up and detained since 1685, be relinquished for the Use of the Fishing Ships.

6th,