

REPORT.

THE COMMITTEE, appointed to inquire into the State of the Trade to *Newfoundland*, and into the Situation of that Settlement;—HAVE, pursuant to the Order of The House, examined the several Matters referred to them; and have agreed to the following REPORT:

YOUR Committee have commenced their Inquiry into the state of the *Newfoundland Fisheries*, as well as into the very distressed situation of the persons settled in that Island.

They first examined those Merchants who were best able to detail to them the present condition of the Residents of *Saint John's*, and in the different Bays occupied by *British* subjects.

The Evidence on these points was so uniform, so decisive, and so afflicting, that it was thought, from its pressing urgency, to be a duty incumbent on Your Committee to lay before the House, without delay, the opinion of the Sufferings experienced by the great majority of a very extended Population, amounting, unless speedily provided against, to the certainty of absolute Famine; and which has already involved in its consequences the violation of private property and the destruction of civilized order.

Unless, through the intervention of Parliament, some immediate relief shall be granted, it is the opinion of Your Committee, that the horrors of the ensuing winter will, if possible, be still further aggravated and increased. It appears also to Your Committee, that the Trade itself has experienced a serious and alarming depression: the causes from which this has arisen will require, in the opinion of Your Committee, in the ensuing Session of Parliament, a much more detailed and accurate investigation; but enough has been shown by the testimony of respectable Witnesses, to prove, that unless some aid is afforded to the Merchants before this House separates, the Fisheries will be most materially injured; the Capitals embarked in it by degrees withdrawn; and the Nursery for Seamen, hitherto so justly valued, almost entirely lost.

26 June 1817.
