

ſenſibly declined from the Time that the Order for removing the Planters was revoked.

And in 1682 and 1684 it was reduced to

32	43	Fiſhing Ships,
1,012	1,489	Seamen,
183	294	Boats,

though the Inhabitants employed in the ſame Years

299 304 Boats.

But this Decay of the Fiſhing Trade was not the only Loſs this Kingdom ſuſtained on this Occaſion ; for as Captain Jones, One of the Commanders of the Convoy in 1682, hath affirmed of his own Knowledge, the Traders from New England to Newfoundland Yearly *made Voyages for the Sake of ſpiriting away the Fiſhermen* ; ſo that the Newfoundland Fiſhery, which was formerly the great Nurſery for breeding up ſtout and able Mariners, was now become a mere Drain, that carried off very many of the beſt and moſt uſeful of all the Britiſh Sailors ; and it is too notorious that this Practice has prevailed ever ſince.

Neither can we omit obſerving, from the Accounts tranſmitted to the Lords of the Committee by Sir Francis Wheeler, the Commander of the Convoy in 1684, that the Planters carried on their Fiſhing Trade with great Diſadvantage, their extraordinary Charge of Wages and Proviſions amounting to One Third Part more than was expended by the Weſtern Adventurers ; and although their ſelling of Strong Liquors to the Fiſhermen at dear Rates did ſomewhat help them, yet this was ſuch an apparent Prejudice and Diſcouragement to the Adventurers, that it was no Wonder ſo many of them were driven away from the Fiſhery in 1682 and 1684, as has been already mentioned.

Nor doth it appear to us that the Fiſhing Trade was afterwards, during the Reign of King James the Second, upon a better Foot, or that the leaſt Care was taken to remove the aforeſaid Obſtructions, much leſs to retrieve Trade ; but, on the contrary, notwithstanding the French Fiſhery was prodigiouſly increaſed both at Placentia and to the Northward of Cape Bonaviſta, and that the Value of the Fiſh taken by the Engliſh Adventurers after the Year 1682 fell ſhort of the Value of what was taken in 1676 at leaſt £. 100,000 per Annum ; nevertheleſs the Subjects of this Kingdom were reſtrained, by the Treaty concluded between Great Britain and France in 1686, from fiſhing in ſuch Places as were held or poſſeſſed by his Moſt Chriſtian Maſteſty in America ; which ſeems derogatory to the Charter, and to the Statute 15 Car. II. Chap. 16. whereby ſeveral Regulations are preſcribed and ordained to be obſerved in any of the Harbours in Newfoundland.

Moreover, the ſucceeding War with France in 1689 ſtill added to the Miſfortunes of the ſaid Trade, not only as it was thereby rendered impracticable to purſue ſuch Meaſures as were neceſſary to reform the aforeſaid Diſorders and Miſmanagement, but from the Difficulties and Hazards that unavoidably attended the Adventurers in proſecuting the ſame. How-

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