

sensibly declined from the Time that the Order for removing the Planters was revoked.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