

That the pernicious Consequences which evidently ensued upon the diverting the Course of the Fishery into this new Channel, were the only Motives that induced King Charles the Second (after every Circumstance relating to the Trade had been strictly examined and seriously considered) to order the Commander of the Convoy in 1675 to admonish the Planters to return Home, and to grant in the same Year a new Charter, which provided and guarded against every Inconveniency and Abuse that had interrupted the Adventurers in the Prosecution of their Fishing Trade.

That when these Regulations were settled there was a fair Prospect of retrieving and reviving the Trade; but that the Indulgence shewn to the Planters in 1677, by permitting them to remain in the Country, rendered the Charter ineffectual, reduced the Fishery to the lowest Ebb, and favoured both the French and New Englanders in carrying on their Fishing Trade.

And that the unhappy State of the Trade from that Time to this (which is upwards of Forty Years) is an undeniable Argument that it cannot flourish under the present Regulations; which will be farther demonstrated by examining and comparing the Rules and Methods that were formerly observed by the Western Adventurers, with the extravagant and irregular Measures and Practices that of late Years have been introduced and pursued in the Management of the Fishery. For Instance:

Before the Fishing Ships became Transports to the Planters and Bye Boat Keepers, the usual Complement of a Ship containing 100 Tons fitted out for a Fishing Voyage, was 50 Men and 10 Boats, and this Practice was continued until 1677; in which Year, according to Sir William Poole's Accounts, there were employed in the Fishery 109 Fishing Ships, containing 9,035 Tons and 4,475 Men which amounted to upwards of 49 Men for every 100 Tons; but upon a Medium of Four Years, since the Peace of Utrecht, the 86 Fishing Ships Annually employed in the Trade as aforesaid contained 9,010 Tons and but 1,839 Men, which is little more than 20 Men for every 100 Tons. The present Adventurers have therefore Annually wanted 2,666 Men to complete the Number their Predecessors maintained formerly on the same Tonnage in the Fishery; and had their Ships been fully manned, the aforesaid 2,666 Men would have taken to the Value of at least £. 20 each, that is in the Whole £. 53,320 per Annum, over and above what they have now gained, and whatsoever is taken by the Fishing Ships entirely belongs to and is a certain Addition to the Stock of Your Majesty's Subjects residing in this Kingdom.

Whereas all the Advantages that the Inhabitants enjoy at present by the Fishery (unless the Season proves exceeding favourable) never answers their Charge; for as they are in general very idle, indigent, and necessitous, they are always indebted and enslaved to the Traders from New England and other Parts, by whom they are supplied with Provisions for their Subsistence, and with vast Quantities of strong Liquors, Molasses, and Tobacco for Sale; and many of them not having wherewithal to satisfy their said Creditors, they are in course stript of all they have taken before the Fishery is well over, and the rest when their Debts are discharged have seldom enough left to secure a sufficient Stock for their own and their Servants Support and Debaucheries in the Winter; so that New England reaps all the Fruit of their