

and navigated by British subjects in the British dominions in Europe: but if he had been sincere, why was he not explicit? The act is positive, as all laws ought to be, lest those, who are entrusted with the execution of them, should have an interest in explaining them. This provision would have created neither trouble nor difficulties; but Sir Hugh Palliser was apprehensive, perhaps, that, if the bill came under a particular and critical examination, an opposition would be made to it, and his regulation and advice totally rejected.

That the fishery is considerably reduced, is a truth not to be disputed. It has certainly suffered from the calamities of war, as well as from the act passed in the year 1774; yet the one is only a temporary evil; but the other, unless repealed, remains, and must eventually and finally destroy it, by rendering the prosecution of it dangerous and unprofitable to those who are qualified to conduct it.

From a state of the fishery, which I have subjoined to this publication, it appears, that upwards of one hundred sail of banking vessels were fitted out from the port of St. John's in 1772; and the last year only eleven sail were equipped for the banks, most of which were taken or pillaged by privateers. A decrease of one hundred sail of vessels at one port is an alarming circumstance, especially as the outfit of each vessel, exclusive of the hull, appears by the following estimate to amount to two hundred and seven pounds, fifteen shillings, and four-pence; to which may be also added, the necessaries and manufactories requisite for the seamen and fishermen, allowing each man, at the lowest calculation, the sum of four pounds ten shillings for boots, shoes, linen and woollen cloathing, which he consumes every season.