

Werk

Titel: Report of the Secretary of state, on the subject of the cod and whale fisheries

Autor: Jefferson, Thomas

Verlag: Childs; Swaine

Ort: Philadelphia

Jahr: 1791

Kollektion: Bucherhaltung; Nordamericana

Werk Id: PPN621442852

PURL: <http://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?PID=PPN621442852> | LOG_0002

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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

THE Secretary of State, to whom was referred by the House of Representatives, the representation from the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, on the subjects of the Cod and Whale Fisheries, together with the several papers accompanying it, has had the same under consideration, and thereupon makes the following—

REPORT.

THE representation sets forth that, before the late war, about four thousand seamen, and twenty-four thousand tons of shipping were annually employed, from that State, in the whale fishery; the produce whereof was about three hundred and fifty thousand pounds lawful money a year.

That, previous to the same period, the cod fishery of that State, employed four thousand men, and twenty-eight thousand tons of shipping, and produced about two hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year.

That these branches of business, annihilated during the war, have been, in some degree, recovered since: but that they labour under many and heavy embarrassments, which, if not removed, or lessened, will render the fisheries every year less extensive and important.

That these embarrassments are, heavy duties on their produce abroad, and bounties on that of their competitors: and duties at home on several articles, particularly used in the fisheries.

And it asks that the duties be taken off; that bounties be given to the fishermen; and the national influence be used abroad for obtaining better markets for their produce.

The cod and whale fisheries, carried on by different persons, from different ports, in different vessels, in different seas, and seeking different markets, agree in one circumstance, in being as unprofitable to the adventurer, as important to the public. A succinct view of their rise, progress, and present state, with different nations, may enable us to note the circumstances which have attended their prosperity, and their decline, to judge of the embarrassments, which are said to oppress ours; to see whether they depend on our own will, and may, therefore, be remedied immediately by ourselves, or, whether, depending on the will of others, they are without the reach of remedy, from us, either directly or indirectly.

Their history, being as unconnected as their practice, they shall be separately considered.

Within twenty years after the supposed discovery of Newfoundland, by the Cabots, we find that the abundance of fish on its banks, had already drawn the attention of the people of Europe. For, as early as 1517, or 1519, we are told of fifty ships being seen there at one time. The first adventurers in that fishery, were

the Biscayans of Spain, the Basques and Bas-Bretons of France, all united anciently in language, and still in habits and in extreme poverty. The last circumstance enabled them long to retain a considerable share of the fishery. In 1577, the French had one hundred and fifty vessels there; the Spaniards had still one hundred; and the Portuguese fifty, when the English had only fifteen. The Spaniards and Portuguese seem, at length, to have retired silently, the French and English claiming the fishery exclusively, as an appurtenance to their adjacent colonies, and the profits being too small for nations surcharged with the precious metals proceeding from their mines.

Without materials to trace the intermediate progress, we only know that so late as 1744, the French employed there five hundred and sixty-four ships, and twenty seven thousand five hundred seamen, and took one million two hundred and forty-six thousand kentials of fish, which was three times the extent to which England and her colonies together carried this fishery at that time.

The English, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, had employed, generally, about one hundred and fifty vessels in the Newfoundland fishery. About 1670, we find them reduced to eighty, and one hundred, the inhabitants of New-England beginning now to supplant them. A little before this, the British parliament, perceiving that their citizens were unable to subsist on the scanty profits which sufficed for their poorer competitors, endeavoured to give them some advantage by prohibiting the importation of foreign fish: and, at the close of the century, they formed some regulations for their government and protection: and remitted to them some duties. A successful war enabled them in 1713 to force from the French, a cession of the island of Newfoundland. Under these encouragements, the English and American fisheries began to thrive. In 1731, we find the English take two hundred thousand kentials of fish, and the Americans two hundred and thirty thousand, besides the refuse fish not fit for European markets. They continue to gain ground, and the French to lose it, inasmuch, that about 1755, they are said to have been on a par: and, in 1768, the French have only two hundred and fifty-nine vessels of twenty-four thousand four hundred and twenty tons, nine thousand seven hundred and twenty-two seamen, taking two hundred thousand kentials, while America alone, for some three or four years before that, and so on to the commencement of the late war, employed six hundred and sixty-five vessels, of twenty-five thousand six hundred and fifty tons, and four thousand four hundred and five seamen, and took from three hundred and fifty thousand, to upwards of four hundred thousand kentials of fish, and England a still greater quantity, five hundred and twenty-six thousand kentials, as is said.

Spain had formally relinquished her pretensions to a participation in these fisheries, at the close of the preceding war: and, at the end of this, the adjacent continent and islands, being divided between the United States, the English and French (for the last retained two small islands merely for this object) the right of fishing was appropriated to them also.

France, sensible of the necessity of balancing the power of England on the water, and therefore, of improving every resource for raising seamen, and seeing that her fishermen could not maintain their competition without some public patronage, adopted the experiment of bounties on her own fish, and duties on that of foreign nations brought into her markets. But notwithstanding this, her fisheries dwindle, from a change taken place, insensibly, in the character of her navigation, which, from being the most economical, is now become the most expensive. In 1786, she is said to have employed but seven thousand men in this fishery, and to have taken four hundred and twenty-six thousand kentials; and in 1787, but six thousand men, and one hundred and twenty-

eight thousand kentals. She seems not yet sensible that the unthriftness of her fisheries proceeds from the want of economy, and not the want of markets; and that the encouragement of our fishery abridges that of a rival nation, whose power on the ocean has long threatened the loss of all balance on that element.

The plan of the English government, since the peace, has been to prohibit all foreign fish in their markets, and they have given from eighteen to fifty pounds sterling, on every fishing vessel complying with certain conditions. This policy is said to have been so far successful as to have raised the number of seamen employed in that business in 1786, to fourteen thousand, and the quantity of fish taken, to seven hundred and thirty-two thousand kentals. The table No. 1, hereto annexed, will present to the eye, this history more in detail.

The fisheries of the United States, annihilated during the war; their vessels, utensils, and fishermen destroyed; their markets in the Mediterranean and British-America lost, and their produce duties in those of France, their competitors enabled by bounties to meet and under sell them at the few markets remaining open, without any public aid, and indeed, paying aids to the public: such were the hopeless auspices, under which this important business was to be resumed. Yet it was resumed, and, aided by the mere force of natural advantages, they employed, during the years 1786,—7,—8,—9, on an average, five hundred thirty-nine vessels, of nineteen thousand one hundred eighty-five tons, three thousand two hundred eighty-seven seamen, and took two hundred fifty thousand six hundred fifty kentals of fish: (see No. 2) and an official paper (No. 3) shews that, in the last of those years, our exportation amounted to three hundred seventy-five thousand and twenty kentals, and thirty thousand four hundred sixty-one barrels, deduction made of three thousand seven hundred one kentals, and six thousand three hundred forty-three barrels of foreign fish received and re-exported. (See No. 4.) Still, however, the calculations in (No. 5) which accompany the representation, shew, that the profits of the sales in the years 1787,—8, were too small to afford a living to the fisherman; and on those of 1789, there was such a loss as to withdraw thirty-three vessels, of the town of Marblehead, alone, from the further pursuit of this business: And the apprehension is, that, without some public aid, those still remaining will continue to withdraw, and this whole commerce be engrossed by a single nation.

This rapid view of the cod-fishery, enables us to discern under what policy it has flourished or declined in the hands of other nations, and to mark the fact, that it is too poor a business to be left to itself, even with the nation the most advantageously situated.

It will now be proper to count the advantages which aid, and the disadvantages which oppose us in this contest.

Our advantages are——

1. The neighbourhood of the great fisheries, which permits our fishermen to bring home their fish to be salted by their wives and children.
2. The shore fisheries, so near at hand as to enable the vessels to run into port in a storm, and so lessen the risk, for which distant nations must pay insurance.
3. The winter fisheries, which, like household manufactures, employ portions of time which would otherwise be useless.
4. The smallness of the vessels, which the shortness of the voyage enables us to employ, and which, consequently, require but a small capital.

5. The cheapness of our vessels, which do not cost above the half of the Baltic fir vessels, computing price and duration.

6. Their excellence as sea boats, which decreases the risk, and quickens the returns.

7. The superiority of our mariners in skill, activity, enterprize, sobriety and order.

8. The cheapness of provisions.

9. The cheapness of casks, which, of itself, is said to be equal to an extra profit of fifteen per cent.

These advantages are of such force, that, while experience has proved that no other nation can make a mercantile profit on the Newfoundland fishery, nor can support it without national aid, we can make a living profit, if vent for our fish can be procured.

Of the disadvantages opposed to us, those which depend on ourselves, are—

Tonnage, and naval duties on the vessels employed in the fishery.

Impost duties on salt, on tea, rum, sugar, molasses, ~~hooks~~, lines } Used in the
and leads, duck, cordage and cables, iron, hemp and twine. } fishery.

Coarse woollens worn by the fishermen; and the poll-tax levied by the State on their persons. The statement, No. 6, shews the amount of these, exclusive of the State tax, and drawback on the fish exported, to be 5.25 dollars per man, or 57.75 dollars per vessel of sixty-five tons. When a business is so nearly in equilibrio, that one can hardly discern whether the profit be sufficient to continue it, or not, smaller sums than these suffice to turn the scale against it. To these disadvantages, add ineffectual duties on the importation of foreign fish. In justification of these last, it is urged that the foreign fish received, is in exchange for the produce of agriculture. To which it may be answered, that the thing given, is more merchantable than that received in exchange, and that agriculture has too many markets to be allowed to take away those of the fisheries. It will rest, therefore, with the wisdom of the legislature, to decide whether prohibition should not be opposed to prohibition, and high duty to high duty, on the fish of other nations: Whether any, and which of the naval and other duties, may be remitted, or an equivalent given to the fisherman in the form of a drawback or bounty; and whether the loss of markets abroad may not, in some degree, be compensated by creating markets at home; to which might contribute the constituting fish a part of the military ration, in stations, not too distant from navigation, a part of the necessary sea stores of vessels, and the encouraging private individuals to let the fisherman share with the cultivator, in furnishing the supplies of the table. A habit introduced from motives of patriotism, would soon be followed, from motives of taste: And who will undertake to fix limits to this demand, if it can be once excited, with a nation which doubles, and will long continue to double at very short periods?

Of the disadvantages, which depend on others, are—

1. The loss of the Mediterranean markets.
2. Exclusions from the markets of some of our neighbours.
3. High duties in those of others, and—
4. Bounties to the individuals in competition with us.

The consideration of these will find its place more aptly, after a review of the condition of our whale fishery, shall have led us to the same point. To this branch of the subject, therefore, we will now proceed.

The whale fishery was first brought into notice of the southern nations of Europe, in the fifteenth century, by the same Biscayans and Basques, who led the way to the fishery of Newfoundland. They began it on their own coasts, but soon found that the principal residence of the whale, was in the northern seas, into which, therefore, they pursued him. In 1578, they employed twenty-five ships in that business; the Dutch and Hamburgers took it up after this, and about the middle of the seventeenth century, the former employed about two hundred ships, and the latter three hundred and fifty.

The English endeavoured also to participate of it. In 1672, || they offered to their own fishermen a bounty of six shillings a ton, on the oil they should bring home, and instituted at different times, different exclusive companies, all of which failed of success. They raised their bounty in 1733 §, to twenty shillings a ton on the admeasurement of the vessel. In 1740, to thirty shillings, with a privilege to the fisherman against being impressed. The Basque-fishery, supported by poverty alone, had maintained but a feeble existence, before competitors, aided by the bounties of their nation, and was, in fine, annihilated by the war of 1745, at the close of which, the English bounty was raised to forty shillings. From this epoch, their whale fishery went on between the limits of twenty-eight and sixty-seven vessels, till the commencement of the last war.

The Dutch in the mean time, had declined gradually to about one hundred and thirty ships, and have since that fallen down to less than half that number: so that their fishery, notwithstanding a bounty of thirty florins a man, as well as that of Hamburg, is now nearly out of competition.

In 1715, the Americans began their whale fishery. They were led to it at first by the whales which presented themselves on their coasts. They attacked them there in small vessels of forty tons. As the whale, being infested, retired from the coast, they followed him farther and farther into the ocean, still enlarging their vessels, with their adventures, to sixty, one hundred, and two hundred tons. Having extended their pursuit to the Western Islands, they fell in, accidentally, with the spermacæti whale, of a different species from that of Greenland, which alone had been hitherto known in commerce; more fierce and active, and whose oil and head-matter was found to be more valuable, as it might be used in the interior of houses without offending the smell. The distinction now first arose between the northern and southern fisheries; the object of the former being the Greenland whale, which frequents the northern coasts and seas of Europe and America, that of the latter being the spermacæti whale, which was found in the southern seas, from the Western Islands and coast of Africa to that of Brazil, and still on to the Falkland Islands. Here again, within soundings, on the coast of Brazil, they found a third species of whale, which they called the black, or Brazil whale, smaller than the Greenland, yielding a still less valuable oil, fit only for summer use, as it becomes opaque at fifty degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer, while that of the spermacæti whale is limped to forty-one, and of the Greenland whale to thirty-six, of the same thermometer. It is only worth taking therefore, when it falls in the way of the fishermen, but not worth seeking, except when they have failed of success against the spermacæti whale, in which case this kind, easily found and taken, serves to moderate their loss.

In 1771, the Americans had one hundred and eighty-three vessels, of thirteen thousand eight hundred and twenty tons, in the northern fishery, and one hundred and twenty-one vessels, of fourteen thousand and twenty tons, in the

|| 25. Car. II. c. 7.

§ 6. G. II. c. 33.

southern, navigated by four thousand and fifty-nine men. At the beginning of the late war, they had one hundred and seventy-seven vessels in the northern, and one hundred and thirty-two in the southern fishery.

At that period, our fishery being suspended, the English seized the opportunity of pushing theirs. They gave additional bounties of five hundred, four hundred, three hundred, two hundred, one hundred pounds sterling, annually, to the five ships, which should take the greatest quantities of oil. The effect of which was such, as, by the year 1786, to double the quantity of common oil necessary for their own consumption. Finding, on a review of the subject, at that time, that their bounties had cost the government thirteen pounds ten shillings sterling a man annually, or sixty per cent. on the cargoes, a part of which went consequently to ease the purchases of this article made by foreign nations, they reduced the northern bounty from forty to thirty shillings the ton of admeasurement.

They had some little time before turned their attention to the southern fishery, had given very great bounties in it, † and had invited the fishermen of the United States, to conduct their enterprizes. Under their guidance, and with such encouragement, this fishery, which had only begun with them in 1784 or 1785, was rising into value. In 1788, they increased * their bounties, and the temptations to our fishermen, under the general description of *foreigners who had been employed in the whale-fishery*, to pass over with their families and vessels to the British dominions either in America or Europe, but preferably to the latter. The effect of these measures had been prepared by our whale oils becoming subject, in their market, to the foreign duty of eighteen pounds five shillings sterling the ton, which, being more than equal to the price of the common oil, operated as a prohibition on that, and gave to their own spermaceti oil a preference over ours to that amount. The particulars of this history are presented to the eye, more in detail, in the table No. 7.

The fishermen of the United States, left without resource by the loss of their market, began to think of accepting the British invitation, and of removing—some to Nova-Scotia, preferring smaller advantages in the neighbourhood of their ancient country and friends, others to Great-Britain, postponing country and friends to high premiums.

The government of France could not be inattentive to these proceedings. They saw the danger of letting four or five thousand seamen, of the best in the world, be transferred to the marine strength of another nation, and carry over with them an art, which they possessed almost exclusively. To give time for a counter plan, the Marquis de la Fayette, the valuable friend and citizen of this, as well as that country, wrote to a gentleman in Boston to dissuade the fishermen from accepting the British proposals, and to assure them that their friends in France would endeavour to do something for them. A vessel was then arrived from Halifax, at Nantucket, to take off those who had proposed to remove. Two families had gone aboard, and others were going. In this moment, the letter arriving, suspended their designs. Not another went aboard, and the vessel returned to Halifax with only the two families.

The plan adopted by the French ministry, very different from that of the first mover, was to give a counter invitation to the Nantucket men to remove and settle in Dunkirk, offering them a bounty of fifty livres (between nine and ten dollars) a ton on the admeasurement of the vessels they should equip for the whale fishery, with some other advantages. Nine families only, of thirty-three

† 26 G. III. c. 50.

* 28 G. III. c. 20.

persons, accepted this invitation. This was in 1785. In 1786, the ministry were led to see, that their invitation would produce but little effect, and that the true means of preventing the emigration of our fishermen to the British dominions, would be to enable them still to follow their calling from their native country, by giving them a new market for their oils, instead of the old one they had lost. The duties were, therefore, abated on American whale oil immediately, and a further abatement promised by the letter, No. 8, and in December, 1787, the arret, No. 9, was passed.

The rival fishermen immediately endeavoured to turn this measure to their own advantage, by pouring their whale oils into the markets of France, where they were enabled, by the great premiums received from their government, perhaps too by extraordinary indemnifications, to undersell both the French and American fishermen. To repel this measure, France shut her ports to all foreign fish oils whatever, by the arret No. 10. The British whale fishery fell, in consequence, the ensuing year, from two hundred and twenty-two to one hundred and seventy-eight ships. But this general exclusion had palsied our fishery also. On the seventh of December, 1788, therefore, by the arret No. 11, the ports of France, still remaining shut to all other nations, were again opened to the produce of the whale fisheries of the United States; continuing, however, their endeavours to recover a share in this fishery themselves, by the aid of our fishermen. In 1784,—5,—6, they had had four ships; in 1787, three; in 1788, seventeen in the two fisheries, of four thousand five hundred ton. These cost them, in bounty, two hundred and twenty-five thousand livres, which divided on one thousand five hundred and fifty tons of oil, the quantity they took, amounted to one hundred and forty-five livres (near twenty-seven dollars) the ton; and on about one hundred natives on board the seventeen ships, (for there were one hundred and fifty Americans engaged by the voyage) came to two thousand two hundred and fifty livres, or about four hundred and sixteen dollars and two-thirds a man.

We have had during the years 1787, 1788, 1789, on an average, ninety-one vessels, of five thousand eight hundred and twenty tons, in the northern, and thirty-one, of four thousand three hundred and ninety tons, in the southern fishery. See No. 12.

These details will enable Congress to see with what a competition we have to struggle for the continuance of this fishery, not to say it's increase. Against prohibitory duties in one country, and bounties to the adventurers in both of those which are contending with each other for the same object, ours have no auxiliaries but poverty and rigorous economy. The business, unaided, is a wretched one. The Dutch have peculiar advantages for the northern fishery, as being within six or eight days sail of the grounds, as navigating with more economy than any other nation in Europe, their seamen content with lower wages, and their merchants with lower profits. Yet the memorial No. 13, from a committee of the whale merchants to the States General of Holland in the year 1775, states that fourteen millions of guilders, equal to five millions six hundred thousand dollars, had been lost in that fishery in forty-seven years, being about one hundred and twenty thousand dollars a year. The States General thereupon gave a bounty of thirty guilders a man to the fishermen. A person intimately acquainted with the British whale fishery, and whose information merits confidence, has given assurance that the ships employed in their northern fishery in 1788, sunk eight hundred pounds each on an average, more than the amount of the produce and bounties. An English ship of three hundred tons and forty-two seamen in this fishery generally brings home, after a four months voyage, twenty-five ton of oil, worth four hundred and thirty-seven pounds ten shillings sterling; but the wages of the officers and seamen will be

four hundred pounds, there remain but thirty-seven pounds ten shillings, not worth taking into account towards the outfit and merchants profit. These then must be paid by the government ; and it is on this idea that the British bounty is calculated.

Our vessels for the northern fishery average sixty-four tons, and cost when built, fitted out, and victualled for their first voyage, about three thousand dollars. They have taken on an average the three last years, according to the statement No. 12, eighteen tons of oil, worth, at our market, nine hundred dollars, which are to pay all expences, and subsist the fisherman and merchant. Our vessels for the southern fishery average one hundred and forty tons, and cost, when built, fitted out, and victualled, for their first voyage, about six thousand five hundred dollars. They have taken on an average the three last years, according to the same statement, thirty-two tons of oil, each worth at our market three thousand two hundred dollars, which are, in like manner, to pay all expences and subsist the owners and navigators. These expences are great, as the voyages are generally of twelve months duration. No hope can arise of their condition being bettered by an augmentation of the price of oil. This is kept down by the competition of the vegetable oils, which answer the same purposes, not quite so well, but well enough to become preferable, were the price to be raised, and so well indeed as to be more generally used than the fish oils for lighting houses and cities.

The American whale fishery is principally followed by the inhabitants of the island of Nantucket, a sand bar of about fifteen miles long and three broad, capable of maintaining by its agriculture about twenty families : but it employed in these fisheries before the war, between five and six thousand men and boys ; and in the only harbour it possesses, it had one hundred and forty vessels, one hundred and thirty-two of which were of the larger kind, as being employed in the southern fishery. In agriculture then, they have no resource, and, if that of their fishery cannot be pursued from their own habitations, it is natural they should seek others from which it can be followed, and preferably those where they will find a sameness of language, religion, laws, habits, and kindred. A foreign emissary has lately been among them, for the purpose of renewing the invitations to a change of situation. But attached to their native country, they prefer continuing in it, if their continuance there can be made supportable.

This brings us to the question, what relief does the condition of this fishery require ?

1st. A remission of duties on the articles used for their calling.

2d. A retaliating duty on foreign oils, coming to seek a competition with them in or from our ports.

3d. Free markets abroad.

1st. The remission of duties will stand on nearly the same ground with that to the cod fishermen.

2d. The only nation whose oil is brought hither for competition with our own, makes ours pay a duty of about eighty-two dollars the ton, in their ports. Theirs is brought here too, to be re-shipped fraudulently under our flag into ports where it could not be received under theirs, and ought not to be covered by ours, if we mean to preserve our own admission into them. The

3d. And principal object, is to find markets for the vent of oil.

Portugal, England, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Prussia, Russia, the Hanse towns, supply themselves and something more. Spain and Italy receive supplies from England, and need the less as their skies are clearer. France is the

only country which can take our surplus, and they take principally of the common oil ; as the habit is but commencing with them of ascribing a just value to that of the spermacæti whale. Some of this, however, finds its vent there. There was, indeed, a particular interest perpetually solliciting the exclusion of our oils from their markets. The late government there saw well, that what we should lose thereby, would be gained by others, not by themselves. And we are to hope that the present government, as wise and friendly, will also view us, not as rivals, but as co-operators against a common rival. Friendly arrangements with them, and accommodation to mutual interest, rendered easier by friendly dispositions existing on both sides, may long secure to us this important resource for our seamen. Nor is it the interest of the fisherman alone, which calls for the cultivation of friendly arrangements with that nation. Besides five-eighths of our whale oil, and two-thirds of our salted fish, they take from us one-fourth of our tobacco, three-fourths of our live stock (No. 14.) a considerable and growing portion of our rice, great supplies occasionally of other grain ; in 1789, which, indeed, was extraordinary, four millions of bushels of wheat, and upwards of a million of bushels of rye and barley (No. 15.) and nearly the whole carried in our own vessels (No. 16.) They are a free market now, and will in time be a valuable one for our ships and ship-timber, potash and peltry.

England is the market for the greater part of our spermacæti oil. They impose on all our oils, a duty of eighteen pounds five shillings sterling the ton, which, as to the common kind, is a prohibition, as has been before observed, and as to that of the spermacæti, gives a preference of theirs over ours to that amount, so as to leave in the end, but a scanty benefit to the fisherman ; and not long since, by a change of construction, without any change of the law, it was made to exclude our oils from their ports, when carried in our own vessels. On some change of circumstance, it was construed back again to the reception of our oils, on paying always, however the same duty of eighteen pounds five shillings. This serves to shew that the tenure by which we hold the admission of this commodity in their markets, is as precarious as it is hard. Nor can it be announced, that there is any disposition on their part, to arrange this or any other commercial matter, to mutual convenience. The exparte regulations which they have begun for mounting their navigation on the ruins of ours, can only be opposed by counter regulations on our part. And the loss of seamen, the natural consequence of lost and obstructed markets for our fish and oil, calls in the first place, for serious and timely attention. It will be too late when the seaman shall have changed his vocation, or gone over to another interest. If we cannot recover and secure for him these important branches of employment, it behoves us to replace them by others equivalent. We have three nurseries for forming seamen ;——

1. Our coasting trade, already on a safe footing.
2. Our fisheries, which in spite of natural advantages, give just cause of anxiety.
3. Our carrying trade, the only resource of indemnification for what we lose in the other. The produce of the United States, which is carried to foreign markets, is extremely bulky. That part of it now in the hands of foreigners, and which we may resume into our own, without touching the rights of those nations who have met us in fair arrangements by treaty, or the interests of those, who, by their voluntary regulations, have paid so just and liberal a respect to our interests, as being measured back to them again, places both parties on as good ground, perhaps, as treaties could place them : the proportion, I say, of our carrying trade, which may be resumed without affecting either of these descriptions of nations, will find constant employment for ten thousand seamen, be worth two millions of dollars annually, will go on augmenting with the popu-

lation of the United States, secure to us a full indemnification for the seamen we lose, and be taken wholly from those who force us to this act of self-protection, in navigation.

Hence too would follow that their Newfoundland ships, not receiving provisions from us in their bottoms, nor permitted (by a law of their own) to receive in ours, must draw their subsistence from Europe, which would encrease that part of their expences in the proportion of four to seven, and so far operate as a duty towards restoring the level between them and us. The tables No. 2, and 12, will shew the quantity of tonnage, and consequently the mass of seamen whose interests are in distress; and No. 17, the materials for indemnification.

If regulations, exactly the counterpart of those established against us, would be ineffectual from a difference of circumstances, other regulations equivalent can give no reasonable ground of complaint to any nation. Admitting their right of keeping their markets to themselves, ours cannot be denied of keeping out carrying trade to ourselves. And if there be any thing unfriendly in this, it was in the first example.

The loss of seamen unnoticed, would be followed by other losses in a long train. If we have no seamen, our ships will be useless, consequently our ship-timber, iron and hemp; our ship-building will be at an end, ship carpenters go over to other nations, our young men have no call to the sea, our produce carried in foreign bottoms, be saddled with war-freight and insurance in times of war; and the history of the last one hundred years, shews that the nation which is our carrier has three years of war for every four years of peace. (No. 18) We lose, during the same periods, the carriage for belligerent powers, which the neutrality of our flag would render an incalculable source of profit; we lose at this moment the carriage of our own produce to the annual amount of two millions of dollars, which in the possible progress of the encroachment, may extend to five or six millions, the worth of the whole, with an increase in the proportion of the increase of our numbers. It is easier as well as better, to stop this train at its entrance, than when it shall have ruined or banished whole classes of useful and industrious citizens.

It will doubtless be thought expedient that the resumption suggested should take effect so gradually as not to endanger the loss of produce for the want of transportation; but that, in order to create transportation, the whole plan should be developed, and made known at once, that the individuals who may be disposed to lay themselves out for the carrying business may make their calculations on a full view of all circumstances.

On the whole, the historical view we have taken of these fisheries proves they are so poor in themselves as to come to nothing with distant nations, who do not support them from their treasury. We have seen that the advantages of our position place our fisheries on a ground somewhat higher, such as to relieve our treasury from the necessity of giving them support, but not to permit it to draw support from them, nor to dispense the government from the obligation of effectuating free markets for them, that for the great proportion of our salted fish, for our common oil, and a part of our spermacæti oil, markets may perhaps, be preserved by friendly arrangements towards those nations whose arrangements are friendly to us, and the residue be compensated by giving to the seamen thrown out of business the certainty of employment in another branch of which we have the sole disposal.

Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State.

An historical View of the COD - FISHERIES of France, England and the United States.

	FRANCE.					ENGLAND.					UNITED STATES.				
	Vessels.	Tonnage.	Seamen.	Kentals.	Value Dollars.	Vessels.	Tonnage.	Seamen.	Kentals.	Value Dollars.	Vessels.	Tonnage.	Seamen.	Kentals.	Value Dollars.
1577	150	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1615	—	—	—	—	—	150	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1626	—	—	—	—	—	150	—	8,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1670	—	—	—	—	—	80	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1676	—	—	—	—	—	102	—	9,180	—	1,738,800	—	—	—	—	—
1731	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	200,000	540,000	—	—	—	230,000	621,000
1744	564	—	27,500	1,441,500	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1764	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1765	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1766	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1767	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1768	259	24,420	9,722	200,000	861,723	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1769	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1770	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1771	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1772	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25,000	486,561	—	—	—	—	—	—
1773	264	24,996	10,128	—	—	—	—	—	516,000	—	—	—	—	—	—
1774	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	516,000	—	—	—	—	—	—
1775	—	—	—	—	—	400	36,000	20,000	600,000	2,250,000	—	—	—	—	—
1785	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1786	—	—	7,000	426,000	—	—	—	—	470,000	—	—	—	—	—	—
1787	—	—	6,000	128,000	—	—	—	14,000	732,000	—	—	—	—	—	—
1788	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1789	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1790	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

	State of Cod-Fishery of Massachusetts, from 1765, to 1775.				From 1786 to 1790, inclusive.					
	Vessels annually.	Tonnage.	Seamen.	Kentals to Europe, a 3-5 Dols.	Kentals to West-Indies, a 2-6 Dols.	Vessels annually.	Tonnage.	Seamen.	Kentals to Europe, a 3 Dols.	Kentals to West-Indies, a 2 Dols.
MARBLEHEAD,	150	7,500	1,200	80,000	40,000	90	5,400	720	50,000	25,000
GLOUCESTER,	146	5,530	888	35,000	42,500	160	3,600	680	19,500	28,500
MANCHESTER,	25	1,500	200	10,000	10,000	15	900	120	3,000	7,500
BEVERLEY,	15	750	120	6,000	6,000	19	1,235	157	5,200	10,000
SALEM,	30	1,500	240	12,000	12,000	20	1,300	160	6,000	10,000
NEWBURYPORT,	10	400	60	2,000	2,000	10	460	80	1,000	5,000
IPSWICH,	50	900	190	8,000	5,500	56	860	248	3,000	6,000
PLYMOUTH,	60	2,400	420	8,000	16,000	36	1,440	252	6,000	12,000
COHASSET,	6	240	42	800	1,600	5	200	35	1,000	1,500
HINGHAM,	6	240	42	800	1,600	4	180	32	800	1,200
SCITUATE,	10	400	70	1,000	3,000	2	90	16	400	600
DUXBOROUGH,	4	160	28	400	1,200	9	360	72	1,500	3,000
KINGSTON,	6	240	42	800	1,600	4	160	28	700	1,300
YARMOUTH,	30	900	180	3,000	6,000	30	900	180	2,000	10,000
WELLFLEET,	3	90	21	300	600					
TRURO,	10	400	80	1,000	3,000					
PROVINCETOWN,	4	160	32	500	1,100	11	550	88	3,000	5,200
CHATHAM,	30	900	240	4,000	8,000	30	900	240	3,000	9,000
NANTUCKET,	8	320	64	1,000	2,200	5	200	40	500	1,500
MAINE,	60	1,000	230	4,000	8,000	30	300	120	1,000	3,500
WEYMOUTH,	2	100	16	200	600	3	150	24	1,000	1,250
	665	25,630	4,405	178,800	172,500	539	19,185	3,287	108,600	142,050

ABSTRACT of the Produce of the FISHERIES, exported from the United States, from about August 20th, 1789, to September 30th, 1790.

	Fish dried.		Fish pickled.		Oil Whale.		Oil spermaceti.		Whale-bone.		Candles sper.		Total value.
	Quantity	Value.	Quantity	Value.	Quantity	Value.	Quantity	Value.	Quantity	Value.	Quantity	Value.	
France,		Dollars.	Barrels.	Dollars.	Barrels.	Dollars.	Barrels.	Dollars.	Pounds.	Dollars.	Pounds.	Dollars.	} 749,497
French West-Indies,	543	1,086	12	20	9,914	73,767	1,403	17,523	108,807	17,917	1,200	480	
	251,116	518,288	29,294	90,818	1,756	13,685	80	1,029	—	—	38,754	14,884	} 749,497
Amount of first class,	251,659	519,374	29,306	90,838	11,670	87,452	1,483	18,552	108,807	17,917	39,954	15,364	
Spain,													} 203,276
Spanish West-Indies } and Florida,	72,300	194,457	280	813	593	4,174	—	—	—	—	2,896	1,256	
Great-Britain,	824	978	300	886	5	38	—	—	—	—	1,685	674	} 89,859
British West-Indies,	5	10	—	—	1,738	21,048	3,840	60,000	1,075	215	—	—	
Nova Scotia,	1,970	4,114	795	3,075	15	124	—	—	—	—	756	353	} 79,404
Holland,	—	—	13	40	1	10	100	870	—	—	—	—	
Dutch West-Indies,	23,822	48,631	15	45	807	5,683	—	—	5,220	1,950	23,162	9,274	} 55,137
Portugal,	18,594	41,306	4,778	13,404	179	1,317	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Portuguese Islands,	5,432	11,307	292	801	4	60	—	—	—	—	148	58	} 4,220
Germany,	—	—	—	—	139	1,243	8	120	—	—	—	—	
Danish West-Indies,	1,180	2,386	803	2,421	470	2,990	—	—	6,150	1,230	—	—	} 4,834
African Isl. & C. Africa	613	1,324	147	564	3	27	—	—	—	—	165	66	
Mediterranean,	2,314	4,628	6	36	135	700	—	—	29	5	238	150	} 5,519
Sweden,	8	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
East-Indies,	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,285	529	} 444,790
Amount of second class	127,062	309,157	7,498	22,327	4,095	37,456	3,948	60,990	12,474	2,500	30,425	12,360	
Amount of both classes,	378,721	828,531	36,804	113,165	15,765	124,908	5,431	79,542	121,281	20,417	70,379	27,724	1,194,287

—No. IV.—

ABSTRACT of articles imported into the United States from British colonies, for one year, commencing the 15th August, 1789, and ending on the 14th August, 1790, as far as the accounts have been rendered.

6,343 barrels of pickled fish.
Cwt. 3,701.2. 20 lbs. of dried fish.

NOTE.—Oil and lumber imported, paying a duty *ad valorem*, the quantity of each can only be ascertained by the several collectors having reference to the original entries.

JOSEPH NOURSE, *Register*.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
Register's Office, 23d November, 1790.

—No. V.—

WE the subscribers, being a Committee appointed by the owners of fishing vessels, in the town of Marblehead, to take into consideration the many grievances and burdens the cod fishery now labours under, and to make a statement of them; which statement so made, to be handed to Col. Glover, by him to be laid before the Committee of the General Court, appointed to consider the same, do report the said statement as follows, viz.

1. Impost duties on salt.
2. duties and excise on rum, sugar and molasses.
3. on hooks, lines and leads.
4. on coarse woollens.
5. on duck, cordage and cables.
6. on hemp, iron and twine.
7. Tonnage and naval duties.
8. The ineffectual duties on foreign fish.
9. The duties our fisheries pay at foreign markets, while the fisheries of France and England receive large privileges and bounties from their governments.
10. The heavy poll-tax laid on the fishermen.
11. Excise on New-England rum.

It appears to the committee from an exact investigation, that the earnings and expences of the fishing schooners of this town, for the years 1787,—8,—9, were to the earnings of each schooner, viz.

For the year 1787,	-	-	-	£. 145
For the year 1788,	-	-	-	137
For the year 1789,	-	-	-	82
And that the annual average expences of these vessels, inclusive of insurance,				} 124

It also appears, that the number of schooners employed in the grand bank fishery for the year 1789, were one hundred and twenty-four, nineteen of which were property of persons not belonging to the town, and of which number thirty-three sail have been taken out of the fishery from the declension of the business, exclusive of the aforementioned disadvantages.

That the bounty granted to the fishery by Congress, as a compensation for the duty on salt, this Committee humbly conceive will not operate to that purpose so effectually, as if paid direct into the hands of the owners of the vessels, instead of the shippers of the fish.

MARBLEHEAD, Feb. 1st, 1790.

JOHN GLOVER,
ISRAEL FOSTER,
EDWARD FETYPLACE,
WILLIAM KNIGHT,
SAMUEL HOOPER,
ROBERT HOOPER, jun.
WILLIAM R. LEE,
RICHARD PEDRICK,
KNOTT PEDRICK,
SAMUEL R. GERRY,
RICHARD JAMES,
JOSHUA ORNE,
MARSTON WATSON.

A true Copy. Attest,
JOHN AVERY, jun. Secretary.

—No. VI.—

AN estimate of the duties paid by the proprietors and navigators of a fishing vessel of sixty-five tons and eleven hands.

Duty on Salt,	-	-	-	80. 25
Rum,	-	-	-	14
Tea,	-	-	-	2. 64
Sugar,	-	-	-	3. 3
Molasses,	-	-	-	99
Coarse woollens,	-	-	-	7. 33
Lines, lead and hooks,	-	-	-	2. 9
Sail cloth,—yearly average,	-	-	-	2. 5
Cordage, cables, do.	-	-	-	20
Tonnage,	-	-	-	3. 9
Iron,—yearly average,	-	-	-	1

138 divided on eleven men,
is 12. 5 cents per man.

But deducting the drawback of the duty on salt, it remains 57. 75 dolls. on the whole, or 5. 25 dolls. on each man.

—No. VIII.—

M. JEFFERSON, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States.
Fontainebleau, October 22, 1786.

SIR,

AS it is the intention of the King to favor, as much as possible, the commerce of the United States, I have the honor to communicate to you the measures that have been taken on this subject.

By a letter of the 9th January, 1784, to the Marquis de la Fayette, I informed him that instead of two free ports promised by the treaty with the United States, the King had determined to grant them four, which has been done; and I promised him that I would direct my attention to the custom-houses and duties which are prejudicial to commerce, observing however that this object demanded long investigations, which are not yet completed. By another letter I informed him, that his Majesty had suppressed the duties upon the exportation of brandy, and I expected this suppression would be useful to the American commerce; I likewise promised him that the duties of the King and the admiralty, payable by an American vessel on her arrival in a French port, should be diminished and reduced to a single duty, and regulated according to the number of masts and draught of water, and not by the uncertain estimation of measurement. This reduction requires a perfect knowledge of all the duties paid in our ports; and as they are of various kinds, the statements which I have ordered to be made are not ready.

You know, sir, that the King has appointed a Committee for the particular purpose of examining our commercial connections with the United States, and that the Marquis de la Fayette has presented a project conformable to the ideas contained in your letter to the Count de Vergennes; but you will consider how imprudent it would be to hazard by a change of system, the product of a branch of revenue which amounts to twenty-eight millions, upon an article which is not of the first necessity—after a long discussion of every means that can be at present adopted to encourage the importation of American tobacco, it has been resolved not to break the agreement made with Mr. Morris, but that after the expiration of this contract, no similar one shall be made, and that in the mean while, the farmers general should be obliged to purchase, annually, about fifteen thousand hogheads of American tobacco imported directly from the United States, in French or American vessels at the same price, on the same conditions which have been stipulated by the contract with Mr. Morris.

You will remember, sir, that before a regulation could be made in favor of the importation of whale oil, the Marquis de la Fayette had taken a particular arrangement with Mr. Sangrain for the sale of this article, to the amount of eight hundred thousand livres, and that I had granted him passports in order to render this first importation, free from all duties whatsoever. The same Mr. Sangrain, afterwards made an agreement with some merchants of Boston, to the yearly amount of four hundred thousand livres, to last during six years, for which his Majesty has granted the same favors which are enjoyed by the Hanse Towns.

This matter having been lately more extensively examined, the administration to whom the Committee communicated their wish, agreeable to the Marquis de la Fayette's demand and your opinion, entirely to abolish all duties upon oil, have found that at present, they could not consent to it, on account of the engagements made with other powers. All that could be done was to grant, during ten years, to the whale oil, spermacæti, and whatever is compre-

hended within these denominations, imported from the United States in French or American vessels, the same favors, the same diminution of duties which the Hanse Towns enjoy.

His Majesty hopes that the commercial connections between the United States and France, will become so considerable as to engage him to continue the effect of this provisional determination; and as it has been observed by the Committee, that a great duty of fabrication has been hitherto paid upon the most favored whale oil, and even upon the national, his Majesty consents to abolish the duty of fabrication with respect to the whale oil and spermacæti, directly imported from the United States in French or American bottoms, so that this oil and spermacæti shall not pay, during ten years, any other duty but seven livres ten sols, and ten sols per livre; this last augmentation of ten sols per livre, shall cease in 1790.

It has also been determined that particular informations be taken concerning the consumption of Carolina rice in France, and that means be devised to encourage the importation of this article.

Representations having been made concerning the considerable duties laid upon the importation of pot-ash and pearl-ash, also upon beaver-skins and hair and raw leather, his Majesty has suppressed all duties whatsoever upon those articles, if imported of the growth of the United States in French or American vessels. He is likewise desirous of encouraging every article of American fur.

His Majesty has moreover consented to abolish all duties upon masts, yards, keels for ships, red cedar, green oak, and in a word, all kinds of wood fit for ship-building imported from the United States in French or American vessels.

The Committee having likewise represented, that there was a duty of five per cent. on the purchase of foreign built ships, and that this duty was prejudicial to the sale of American vessels, his Majesty has been pleased to exempt from all duties, the purchase of ships which shall be proved to be built in the United States.

Great duties having formerly been laid upon all shrubs, trees and feed, his Majesty has abolished these duties, when the above articles shall be imported in French or American vessels.

It having been represented that the state of Virginia had ordered the arms for her militia to be made in France, an order is passed, that the prohibitions which hitherto have prevented the exportation of arms and gunpowder, as well as the duties laid upon these articles when exported by permission, shall be abolished; and that whenever the United States shall think it expedient to export from France, arms, guns and gunpowder, they shall have full permission, provided these articles are exported in French or American vessels, and they shall be liable only to a very small duty, in order to facilitate the calculation of exports.

Lastly, his Majesty has received with the same favor, the applications made to the Committee for the suppression of the heavy duties actually paid upon books and papers of all kinds: the King abolishes all these duties when the above articles shall be exported to the United States in French or American vessels.

It is with great pleasure, sir, that I inform you of the dispositions of his Majesty; they are a new testimony of his great desire to establish the most intimate commercial connection between the two nations, and of the favorable

attention he will always pay to any proposal made in the name of the United States of America.

I have the honor of being, with sincere attachment,

S I R,

Your most humble, and

Most obedient servant,

De COLONNE.

P. S. Your nation will undoubtedly receive with pleasure, the information of the facilities which the King has just granted to the exportation of the wines of Bourdeaux, Guienne, and Touraine, and the suppression of the duties granted by different arrets of Council, of which the Marquis de la Fayette will give you notice.

—No. IX.—

An ACT of the King's Council of State, for the encouragement of the commerce of France with the United States of America.

December 29th, 1787.

Extract from the Records of the Council of State.

THE King desirous of encouraging the commerce of his subjects, with the United States of America, and of facilitating between the two nations connections reciprocally useful : Having heard the report of the Sieur Lambert, Counsellor of State, and of the Royal Council of Finance and Commerce, Comptroller General of Finance, his Majesty being in his Council, has ordained and does ordain as follows :

ARTICLE I.

Whale oils and spermacæti, the produce of the fisheries of the citizens and inhabitants of the United States of America, which shall be brought into France directly in French vessels, or, in those of the United States, shall continue to be subjected to a duty only of seven livres ten sols the barrel of five hundred and twenty pounds weight, and whale-fins shall be subject to a duty of only six livres thirteen sols four deniers the kental, with the ten sols per livre on each of the said duties ; which ten sols per livre shall cease on the last day of December one thousand seven hundred and ninety ; his Majesty reserving to himself to grant further favors to the produce of the whale fisheries carried on by the fishermen of the United States of America, which shall be brought into France in French vessels, or in those of the United States, if, on the information which his Majesty shall cause to be taken thereon, he shall judge it expedient for the interest of the two nations.

II.

The other fish oils, and dry or salted fish, the produce in like manner of the fisheries of the citizens and inhabitants of the United States, and brought also directly into France, in their, or in French vessels, shall not pay any other nor greater duties than those to which the oils and fish of the same kind, the produce of the fisheries of the Hanseatic Towns, or of other the most favored nations, are or shall be subject in the same case.

III.

The manufacture of candles and tapers of spermacæti, shall be permitted in France, as that of other candles and tapers.

IV.

Corn, wheat, rye, rice, peas, beans, lentils, flax-seed and other seeds, flour, trees and shrubs, pot-ash and pearl-ash, skins and fur of beaver, raw hides, furs and peltry, and timber brought from the United States directly into France in French vessels or in those of the United States, shall not be subject but to a duty of one eighth per cent. on their value.

V.

Vessels built in the United States and sold in France, or purchased by Frenchmen, shall be exempt from all duties, on proof that they were built in the United States.

VI.

Turpentine, tar and pitch, the produce of the United States of America, and brought directly into France in French vessels or in those of the United States, shall pay only a duty of two and a half per cent. on their value; and as well the duties mentioned in this as in the fourth article, shall be exempt from all addition of sous per livre.

VII.

The exportation of arms of all sorts, and of gunpowder, for the United States of America, shall be always permitted in French vessels, or in those of the United States, paying for the arms a duty of one-eighth per cent. on their value; and gunpowder in that case shall be exempt from all duty, on giving a cautionary bond.

VIII.

Papers of all sorts; even paper hangings and coloured papers, paste-board and books, shall be exempt from all duties on their embarkation for the United States of America, in French vessels or in those of the United States, and shall be entitled in that case to a restitution of the fabrication duties on paper and paste-board.

IX.

The admiralty duties on the vessels of the United States entering into, or going out of the ports of France, shall not be levied but conformably with the edict of the month of June last, in the cases therein provided for, and with the letters-patent of the tenth of January, one thousand seven hundred and seventy, for the objects for which no provision shall have been made by the said edict: his Majesty reserving to himself moreover to make known his intentions as to the manner in which the said duties shall be levied, whether in proportion to the tonnage of the vessels or otherwise: as also to simplify the said duties of the admiralty, and to regulate them as far as shall be possible, on the principle of reciprocity, as soon as the orders shall be completed which were given by his Majesty according to the twenty-sixth article of the said edict of the month of June last.

X.

The entrepot (or storing) of all the productions and merchandize of the United States, shall be permitted for six months, in all the ports of France, open to the commerce of her colonies; and the said entrepot shall be subject only to a duty of one-eighth per cent.

XI.

To favor the exportation of arms, hardware, jewellery, bonnetery* of wool and of cotton, coarse woollens, small draperies and stuffs of cotton of all sorts, and other merchandizes of French fabric, which shall be sent to the United States of America in French vessels, or in those of the United States, his Majesty reserves to himself to grant encouragements which shall be immedi-

* This term includes bonnets, stockings, socks, under waistcoats, drawers, gloves and mittens, as sold by the bonnetiers.

ately regulated in his council, according to the nature of each of the said merchandizes.

XII.

As to other merchandizes not mentioned in this act, brought directly into France from the United States in their or in French vessels, or carried from France to the said United States in French vessels, or in those of the United States, and with respect to all commercial conventions whatsoever, his Majesty wills and ordains that the citizens of the United States enjoy in France the same rights, privileges and exemptions with the subjects of his Majesty : saving the execution of what is provided in the ninth article hereof.

XIII.

His Majesty grants to the citizens and inhabitants of the United States, all the advantages which are enjoyed, or which may be hereafter enjoyed by the most favored nations in his colonies of America ; and moreover his Majesty assures to the said citizens and inhabitants of the United States, all the privileges and advantages which his own subjects of France enjoy, or shall enjoy, in Asia and in the seas leading thereto : Provided always that their vessels shall have been fitted out and dispatched in some port of the United States.

His Majesty commands and orders M. le duc de Penthièvre, Admiral of France, the Intendants and Commissaries de parti in the provinces, the Commissaries de parti for the observation of the ordinances in the admiralties, the Officers of the admiralties, Masters of the ports, Judges des traites, and all others to whom it shall belong, to be aiding in the execution of the present regulation, which shall be registered in the offices of the said admiralties, read, published and posted wherever shall be necessary.

Done in the King's Council of State, his Majesty present, held at Versailles the twenty-ninth of December, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven.

(Signed)

Le Ct. De La LUZERNE.

—No. X.—

ARRET of the King's Council of State, prohibiting the importation of foreign whale and spermaceti oil into his kingdom, 28th September, 1788.

Extract from the Registers of the Council of State.

THE King having taken information on the success attending the whale fishery, and the prospect of its greater prosperity within his kingdom, and his Majesty being willing to grant a special protection to this important fishery which has just commenced in France, and which may become an abundant source of riches, while at the same time it affords to the marine a nursery for seamen of great consequence to the service of the state—his Majesty has conceived that the prohibition of foreign oil would be the most beneficial encouragement that could be granted to this branch of industry. Being willing to provide accordingly, and having heard the report of the Sieur Lambert, Counsellor of State and Ordinary to the Council of Dispatches, and to the Royal Council of Finances and Commerce, the King being present in his Council, has ordained, and does ordain, that, computing from the day of publishing the present arret, the introduction of foreign whale and spermaceti oils shall be prohibited throughout his dominions. His Majesty commands and orders the Duke de Penthièvre, Admiral of France, the Intendants and Commissaries throughout the provinces, the Commissaries deputed for the observation of the ordinances in the Admiralties, the officers of the Admiralties, Masters of Ports, Judges of Treaties, and all others whom it may concern, to assist in the execu-

tion of the present arret, which shall be registered in the offices of the said Admiralties, read, published and posted wherever it shall appear necessary.

Done in the King's Council of State, his Majesty being present, held at Versailles, 28th September, 1788.

(Signed) La LUZERNE.

—No. XI.—

ARRET of the King's Council of State, excepting whale and other fish oil, and also whalebone, the product of the fisheries of the United States of America, from the prohibition contained in the arret of the 28th of September last.

December 7th, 1788.

Extract from the Registers of the Council of State.

THE King having taken information on the arret pronounced in his council the 28th December last, prohibiting the importation of whale oil and spermacæti, the produce of foreign fisheries, into the kingdom, observing that oil made from sea calves and other fish, and sea animals, not being comprehended in the said arret, a fraudulent importation of whale oil might take place under the name of the aforefaid oils; and that on the other hand it might be inferred from the tenor of the said arret, that oils the produce of the fisheries of the United States were prohibited: And his Majesty wishing to remove every doubt on this head, to provide therefore for the same, having heard the report of the Sieur Lambert, Counsellor, of State in ordinary, and of the Council of Dispatches and royal Council of Finances and Commerce, the King being present in his council, has ordained and does ordain, that reckoning from the first day of April next, oil made from sea calves, and from fish and other sea animals, produced from foreign fisheries, as well as whale-bone produced in like manner from the said foreign fisheries, shall be prohibited from importation into the kingdom, without permitting the said prohibition nevertheless to extend either to the said kinds of oils, or to the said whale oils and spermacæti, or the whale-bone produced from the fisheries of the United States of America, and imported directly into France in French vessels, or those belonging to the subjects of the said United States; which shall continue to be provisionally admitted, agreeable to the first and third article of the arret of the 29th of December last; on condition however, that the captains of the said vessels belonging to the United States, bring with them certificates from the Consuls of France residing in the ports of the said United States, or where these cannot be obtained, from the Magistrates of the places where the embarkation of the said oil shall be made, for the purpose of proving that the cargo of the said vessels is the produce of the fisheries carried on by the citizens of the United States; which certificates shall be presented to the Officers of the Admiralty, also to the Commissioners of the Farms, in the ports of France where it shall be landed, to be mentioned in the report of their arrival.

His Majesty commands and orders the Duke de Penthièvre, Admiral of France, the Intendants and Commissaries throughout the provinces, the Commissary appointed to observe the ordinances of the Admiralty, the Officers of the Admiralty, Masters of Ports, Judges of Treaties, and all others whom it may concern, to assist in the execution of the present Arret, which shall be registered in the offices of the said Admiralties, read, published and posted wherever it may appear necessary.

Done in the King's Council of State, his Majesty being present, held at Versailles the seventh of December, 1788.

(Signed) La LUZERNE.

State of the WHALE-FISHERY in *Massachusetts*, from 1771 to 1775.

PORTS from which the equipments were made.	The number of vessels fitted out annually for the northern fishery.	Their tonnage.	The number of vessels fitted out annually for the southern fishery.	Their tonnage.	The number of seamen employed.	Barrels of spermaceti oil taken annually.	Barrels of whale oil taken annually.
Nantucket, - - -	65	4,875	10	10,200	2,025	26,000	4,000
Wellfleet, - - -	20	1,600		1,000	420	2,250	2,250
Dartmouth, - - -	60	4,500	20	2,000	1,040	7,200	1,400
Lynn, - - -	1	75	1	120	28	200	100
Martha's Vineyard,	12	720	—	—	156	900	300
Barnstable, - - -	2	150	—	—	26	240	—
Boston, - - -	15	1,300	5	700	260	1,800	600
Falmouth in the county of Barnstable, -	4	300	—	—	52	400	—
Swansey, - - -	4	300	—	—	52	400	—
	183	13,820	121	14,020	4,059	39,390	8,650

STATE of the WHALE-FISHERY, from 1787 to 1789, both inclusive.

Nantucket, -	18	1,350	18	2,700	487	3,800	8,260
Wellfleet and other ports at Cape-Cod,	12	720	4	400	212	—	1,920
Dartmouth, -	45	2,700	5	750	650	2,700	1,750
Cape-Ann, -	—	—	2	350	28	—	1,200
Plymouth, -	1	60	—	—	13	100	—
Martha's Vineyard,	2	120	1	100	39	220	—
Boston, - - -	6	450	—	—	78	360	—
Rocheſter & Wareham,	7	420	1	90	104	800	—
	91	5,820	31	4,390	1,611	7,980	13,130

True Copy,
Atteſt, JOHN AVERY, jun. Sec'ry.

N. B. About one quarter of the ſpermacæti is head-matter, one quarter of which was exported to Great-Britain, the remainder manufactured into candles. The ſpermacæti oil, previous to the revolution, was moſtly exported to Great-Britain. The average price in that market for five years previous to the war, about forty pounds ſterling for the ſpermacæti oil, and fifty pounds for head. The whale oil was formerly about one half exported to the French and Engliſh Weſt-India iſlands, the other half fold in the United States. The average price of this oil, about ſeventy dollars per ton. A whale producing one hundred and twenty barrels whale oil, will generally produce two thouſand pounds bone, which was chiefly exported to Great-Britain, the price about half a dollar per pound : a whale producing fifty to ſixty barrels, will generally produce neareſt ten pounds of bone to a barrel of oil.—The average price of oil for three years paſt, as follows, viz.

Spermacæti, one hundred dollars per ton.

Whale oil, fifty dollars per ton.

Head-matter, one hundred and fifty dollars per ton.

Bone, about fifteen cents per pound.

—No. XIII.—

Extract from a Memorial presented to the States General in 1775, by a Committee of the Merchants engaged in the Whale Fishery.

THE whale fishery is of great importance to Holland, as the produce yielded by the sea may properly be considered as our country produce, which furnish employ for thousands of hands; all the apparatus being made, and the vessels fitted out in our own country.

A new vessel from 110 to 116 feet, including anchors, cables, rigging, &c. cost from	Guilders. 32 to 36000
Sixty or seventy lines, six or seven <i>sloops</i> , casks, harpoons, and other materials,	8 to 9000
Store rent, lighters, victualling, &c. for 42 to 48 men,	4 to 5000
	<hr/>
Total,	44 to 50,000

From these outfits the country evidently derives real advantages, whereas those immediately concerned risque their property, as has formerly been represented, that during a period of forty-seven years, fourteen millions have been lost in this traffick, besides the loss arising from the decrease of capital.

The instances which have proved profitable to the owners are but few; greater losses are to be apprehended from the present high prices of all the necessaries and materials. To clear the expences of a voyage, each vessel must at least bring a return of fifteen thousand guilders, exclusive of one thousand guilders for insurance, besides the yearly decrease of capital, which may be calculated on an average, at thirty thousand guilders for every vessel completely equipped, making the sum of three million eight hundred and seventy thousand guilders for one hundred and twenty-nine vessels which have been fitted out this present year, and which must each fetch out of the sea twenty tons of net goods to clear themselves. The prospect of doing this is very unfavorable, as all our neighbours use greater exertions in that trade than ever; to which they are encouraged by the aid of their respective governments, in particular the British, who allow forty shillings sterling per ton to each vessel which is employed in the whale fishery; by which means the number of their whaling vessels have, since the year 1749, (when the bounty was granted) increased from two to one hundred and nine vessels, which in the spring 1775, failed from England and Scotland, measuring in the whole thirty-three thousand three hundred and eighteen tons, and amounting, at forty shillings per ton, to sixty-six thousand six hundred and thirty-six pounds, equal to seven hundred and thirty-two thousand nine hundred and ninety-six guilders, which amounts upon an average to six thousand seven hundred and twenty-five guilders for each vessel.

The fisheries in Sweden and Denmark have also received additional strength from the encouragements offered by their governments, without which they would have but little inducement to that trade; so that instead of Holland formerly exceeding all the other nations together in the whale fishery, *they* at present exceed the Dutch by one third in the number of vessels—nay, England alone now sends out nearly as many vessels as Holland.

Another obstacle presents itself with regard to the whale-bone trade. Of this article Holland formerly shipped five-eighth parts to Great-Britain, of which sale we are now deprived, on account of the high duty imposed on all foreign whale-bone imported into that kingdom, and which may be considered as an additional premium on the fishery of that nation, amounting commonly to fifty guilders per one hundred weight. Our exportation of whale oil is also on the decline. Hamburgh and Bremen receive great supplies, partly from their own fisheries and partly from England and Russia, so as to be able to

furnish the greatest part of Germany with that article. France and Spain are mostly supplied from England; and as it has been always computed, that three-fourths of the product of our fisheries are exported, the competition of those and other rival nations will scarcely leave a foreign market for us: our own provinces and the river Rhine, will be our limits.

Another disadvantage ought not to pass unnoticed, which is, that the prices of the produce of the fisheries are considerably reduced; the whale-bone of the latest voyage having already been sold as low as ninety guilders or less, which gives a loss. Oil may also in case of a successful season, fall from sixty to forty guilders per twelve stecken (sixty-three gallons); and in that case, vessels that return with one half or two thirds of their cargo, must sink money.

These are the most material circumstances that impede the progress of our fisheries. The effect of the premium granted by the British parliament has already been severely felt by our Greenland fleets, having, since that period, decreased one third in number.

—No. XIV.—

ABSTRACT of LIVE STOCK exported from the United States, from about August 20th, 1789, to September 30th, 1790, from returns in the Treasury-Office.

	French W. Indies.		All other countries		Total.	
	Heads.	Value.	Heads.	Value.	Heads.	Value.
Horned Cattle,	3,573	66,915	1,833	33,045	5,406	99,960
Horses, -	6,970	263,281	1,658	76,235	8,628	339,516
Mules, -	22	833	215	8,013	237	8,846
Sheep, -	5,379	8,502	4,679	8,537	10,058	17,039
Hogs, -	4,185	9,580	1,119	4,901	5,304	14,481
	20,129	349,111	9,504	130,731	29,633	479,842

—No. XV.—

GRAIN and FLOUR imported from the United States of America, into the ports of France, in the year 1789,—from an official statement.

	Fr. Kentals.	lbs.	
Rice,	123,401	69	} equal to {
Flour,	256,545	94	
Wheat,	2,015,297	3	
Rye,	307,390	96	
Barley,	260,131	52	
			24,680 tierces of 500 Fren. pounds each.
			140,959 American barrels.
			3,664,176 } American bushels.
			558,891 }
			520,262 }

—No. XVI.—

Office of the balance of Commerce of France. } Statement of the VESSELS entered in the ports of France, from the United States of America, in the year 1789.

	Vessels.	Tons.
French,	— 13	— 2,105
Imperial,	— 3	— 370
English,	— 43	— 4,781
Dutch,	— 1	— 170
Hanseatic,	— 1	— 200
American,	— 163	— 24,173
	224	31,799

—No. XVII.—

ABSTRACT of the Tonnage of foreign Vessels entered in the Ports of the United States, from Oct. 1st, 1789, to Sept. 30, 1790.

France,	-	-	13,435
Holland,	-	-	8,815
Sweden,	-	-	311
Prussia,	-	-	394
Spain,	-	-	8,551
Portugal,	-	-	2,924
Denmark,	-	-	1,619
Germany,	-	-	1,368
British dominions,			<u>225,495</u>
			262,912

—No. XVIII.—

That the encouragement of our carrying business is interesting, not only to the carrying states, but in a high degree also to the others, will result from the following facts.

	Dollars.
The whole exports of the United States may be stated at	25,000,000
Great-Britain carries two fifths of these in value, that is to say,	10,000,000
Freight and insurance on this in times of peace, are about twenty-two and one half per cent.	2,250,000
The same charges in war are very various, according to the circumstances of the war, we may say, however, fifty-five per cent.	5,500,000
The difference between peace and war freight and insurance, then is annually	3,250,000

Taxed on our agriculture by British wars, during their continuance, and our dependance on British bottoms.

Of the last one hundred years, Great-Britain has had *forty-two years of war and fifty-eight of peace, which is three of war to every four of peace, nearly.

In every term of seven years then, we pay three times three million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, or nine million seven hundred and fifty thousand, which, averaged on the years of peace and war, are annually and constantly one million three hundred and ninety-two thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven more than we should pay, if we could raise our own shipping to be competent to the carriage of all our productions. Besides this, many of our bulky articles, not bearing a war freight, cannot be exported if exposed to that; so that their total loss is to be added to that before estimated.

	* Y. M.	1689.	May.	Y. M.			
PEACE.	4	8	{	1697.	Sept.	8 4 WAR.	
				1702.	May.		
				1712.	Aug.		10 3
				1718.	Dec.		2 6
				1721.	June		
				1727.	Mar.		0 2
				1727.	May.		
				1739.	Oct.		8 7
				1748.	May.		
				1755.	June		7 5
				1762.	Nov.		
				1778.	June		4 9
				1783.	Mar.		
				1789.	May.		<u>42 0</u>