

themselves would not generally be benefited, as much of their earnings would be expended in their expenses on shore."

"It may be easier to point out the evil than provide an efficient remedy. That however, is far from being impracticable. The same Law which now very properly affords protection to the seamen, in giving them security to the extent of the value of the Ship in which they are engaged to serve for the payment of their wages, may surely be made to give to the owner like security, or an equivalent, for the due and proper performance of those services on which the seamen have voluntarily entered. That legislation must be very imperfect which does not afford like protection and like security to both parties to an agreement, and such is the case with the clauses bearing upon wages, agreements, and desertion in our Mercantile Marine Act. The seaman's remedy against his employer is at present simple and easy, and the security perfect. It is as it ought to be. But unfortunately the owner's remedy against the seaman is circuitous, cumbrous, and difficult, and particularly in Scotland, very expensive. The owner has, besides no security. Of course it is not to be expected that a man in the position of a common seaman can give other security than that of his own person and for this reason the Law ought to afford to the shipowner some equivalent, such as a more simple and ready mode of conviction, and a punishment in itself almost sufficiently severe to deter him from committing the crime of desertion. We would much sooner prevent than punish; and with this object in view, we would propose that the whole system of registering seamen be in the first place thus carefully revised. The object of the Legislature in introducing this system was praiseworthy, but the object has been, we might say, totally defeated by