

there are thousands of sailors in our merchant service of a character just mentioned, it follows that they are entitled to the same kind of deference, in their sphere, as landsmen, particularly if they discharge their duty agreeably to contract. That they are bound to do so, and also to conform to any course of discipline, there can be no question; and when these obligations are fulfilled, it becomes the imperious duty of the commander and officers to discharge the high obligations which devolve upon them towards seamen. And it does appear to me, after an attentive observation of many years, in regard to the character of seamen, that if a judicious line of conduct were instituted with them on ship board, not only would many of the hardships and privations consequent upon a sea life be ameliorated, but, also, they would have a more just conception of moral responsibility; or, in other words, their duty towards God and man would be sensibly enhanced.

It does not require the depth of a casuist to see that, if this were the general character of our seamen, they would not only command that respect on shore to which their condition entitles them, but, as they must be the vehicles by which the glad tidings of salvation are to be carried to the heathen, and the standard of the cross must be planted in the dark corners and habitations of idolatry, — I say, as they must be the channels of communication by which this glorious event is to be consummated, how infinitely better must they be prepared to discharge this duty, when their characters are influenced by morals and religion!

When we look at the great good which may be effected by the influence and deportment of seamen in foreign lands, — not only as it regards the establishing of our national character as good or evil, but also as disseminating the seeds of virtue and religion in the minds and in the hearts of the heathen, and among those where the blessed light of Christianity hath not shed its benign rays, — I say, when the importance of these things is considered, is it not wonderful, that the Christian com-