

called upon to maintain from our parish resources their pauperised wives and children."

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P. 109. "No more convincing proof could be given of the imperfect state of that portion of our laws bearing upon desertion, than the fact that one firm only, engaged in the North American timber trade, that of Messrs. Pollok, Gilmour & Co., of Glasgow, have had upwards of 400 seamen deserters abroad from their ships, during the past year, and that the loss entailed on that firm by desertion had exceeded £3,000, simply in the differences of wages which they were compelled to pay to seamen to supply the places of the deserters. This is, to say the least of it, a monstrous state of things. A member of that firm whose name we have already mentioned, has taken a great interest in the working of the Mercantile Marine Act, and has used all his energies to put a stop to this serious evil. He has neither spared time nor money to bring the whole machinery of the law, as it stands, to work upon those who have openly violated the terms of their agreement, and what has been the result? "After all my labour," he writes, "we have only succeeded in arresting *eleven* seamen out of 400 who deserted, and that after some expense and much trouble. A very large portion," he further adds, "of our seamen are now sailing under fictitious names; and as they take very good care not to return to the port at which they were engaged, and as they can get register tickets so easily again when they want to go to sea, it is next to impossible to find them." When we consider the crude and imperfect clauses of the Act, we are not surprised at the difficulty which our friend has encountered, or the very few deserters, after all his exertions, he has been able to bring under its supervision."