

pain of forfeiting ten pounds to any person who shall inform or sue for the same; which provision in the said act cannot be complied with, without manifest inconvenience, as your petitioners are under a necessity of engaging a variety of men and boys, to whom they give from five pounds to thirty pounds, for the season; and if those who contract for the former sum were to receive no more than half of what may be due to them, after deducting what your petitioners are compelled (by the said act) to detain for their passage home, they could not possibly equip themselves with sufficient cloathing, without which their employers would be deprived of their service; and should the merchant furnish them with common necessaries, or the means of securing such necessaries, he not only subjects himself to the loss of the overplus so advanced, but to the penalty of ten pounds, which the very man, to whom he has generously advanced this overplus, may sue for and recover: That, by the said act, all fish and oil, which shall be taken and made by any person or persons who shall hire or employ seamen or fishermen, is subject and liable in the first place to the payment of the wages of every such seaman or fisherman, which provision (in case of insolvency) may subject the other creditors of the insolvent to very great loss, while the man who may have occasioned this insolvency, by their negligence or disobedience, can claim and receive the whole money due to them:

That, your petitioners apprehend, the penalty inflicted by the said act on seamen and fishermen for wilful neglect of duty (being only a forfeiture of two days pay for every day such seaman or fisherman shall wilfully neglect or refuse to work) affords impunity to offenders, instead of restraining the idle and dissolute; and beg leave to observe, that the absence of a boat's master for one day may probably occasion the loss of ten or fifteen pounds, while the only recompence the owner can obtain under this act is no more than six shillings.

And your petitioners apprehend, that this provision has produced effects very different from the intention of the legislature, and has repeatedly proved prejudicial to the interest of individuals.

That the said act has in other particulars been found inconvenient; and your petitioners apprehend, that, unless the same be

repealed