

SHIPPING-MASTERS AND SHIPPING SEAMEN.

There are only two ports in the Dominion at which there are duly appointed shipping-masters, viz : at Québec and St. John, New Brunswick. At Québec, the shipping-master is also chief of the river police, and receives a salary of \$1,200 per annum for the performance of the duties of both offices. At St. John the Shipping-Master receives as remuneration all the fees of the office, out of which he has to defray his expenses, including office rent, assistant, stationery, &c., amounting to \$1,256 70. He is allowed by law 50 cents for shipping each man, and he reports that he shipped during last fiscal year 4,471 men, realizing \$2,235 50, from which his expenses are to be deducted, leaving him as the net proceeds of his office \$978 80. The number shipped the previous year was 4,020 men. He reports that the supply of men had been equal to the demand, only four crews having been imported from Boston since last spring. Wages by the *run* home had ruled high, sailors receiving \$55 against \$45 for the previous year. Monthly wages had increased in proportion. The *run* home is generally accomplished in a month, yielding the sailor a very high remuneration for his services. At Québec, Mr. Russell, the chief of the river police entered on his duties as shipping-master, on the 22nd of April, 1871, at the opening of navigation, and from the date to the close of the season he collected as fees of the office, the sum of \$1,881 35. Of this amount \$1,492 were received for shipping 1,492 men, at \$1 each, on board British vessels, but he charges no fee for shipping men on board colonial or new vessels. The balance of his fees collected, viz : \$389 35, was for discharging men and granting certificates. The amount expended by him on account of his office was \$144 90, including stationery, and \$100 paid to his clerk for arrears of salary, and the amount deposited by him was \$1,680 41, leaving a balance in his hands of \$56 64 to be accounted for by him during the current year.

Since the amalgamation of the offices of shipping-master and chief of river police, at Québec, much benefit has already ensued, as the shipping-master has now a competent force to enable him to look after deserters and keep the crimping business in check. A short act was passed during last session for the purpose of punishing crimps with imprisonment instead of by fines, and it has already had a most beneficial effect, as under it crimps have been arrested and punished for loitering in their boats alongside of ships, or going on board without permission. Although the crimps are now afraid to risk their personal liberty and go on board ships themselves for the purpose of enticing men away, still they have not abandoned the business which has hitherto been so lucrative, and from the large profits of which they could well afford to pay the fines formerly imposed for an infraction of the law, as they now employ runners, who go on board vessels and induce seamen to accompany them in their boats, not being aware of the severe punishment under the new law to which they render themselves liable, if arrested. The following is a list of cases which were brought last season before the notice of the Court, under the Act 31 Victoria, cap. 32, entitled "An Act for more effectually preventing the desertion of seamen in the Port of Québec."

JUNE 5th, 1871.—*William Lloyd* and *George, Franklin*, charged with loitering in a