

**CIHM/ICMH
Microfiche
Series.**

**CIHM/ICMH
Collection de
microfiches.**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

© 1984

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

- ☐ Coloured covers/
Couverture de couleur
- ☐ Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée
- ☐ Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- ☐ Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque
- ☐ Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur
- ☐ Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- ☐ Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- ☐ Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents
- ☐ Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion
along interior margin/
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la
distortion le long de la marge intérieure
- ☐ Blank leaves added during restoration may
appear within the text. Whenever possible, these
have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées
lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte,
mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont
pas été filmées.
- ☐ Additional comments:/
Commentaires supplémentaires:

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- ☐ Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur
- ☐ Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées
- ☐ Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- ☒ Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- ☐ Pages detached/
Pages détachées
- ☒ Showthrough/
Transparence
- ☒ Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression
- ☐ Includes supplementary material/
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- ☐ Only edition available/
Seule édition disponible
- ☐ Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata
slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to
ensure the best possible image/
Les pages totalement ou partiellement
obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure,
etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à
obtenir la meilleure image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
					✓						

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

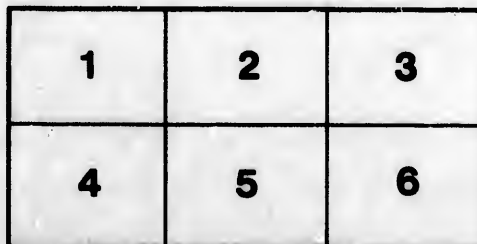
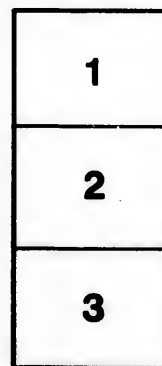
Library of the Public
Archives of Canada

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \longrightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

La bibliothèque des Archives
publiques du Canada

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \longrightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.

M

REMARKS
UPON THE DESERTION OF SEAMEN
AT THE
PORT OF QUEBEC,
WITH
EXTRACTS
FROM A WORK UPON
"OUR NAVIGATION
AND
MERCANTILE MARINE LAWS."

QUEBEC:
PRINTED BY THOMAS CARY,
1852.

R

M

TO HIS EXCELLENCY
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE
EARL OF ELGIN AND KINCARDINE,
GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA, &c. &c. &c.
THE HONORABLE THE MEMBERS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
AND
MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,
THIS PAMPHLET
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

m
t
o
S
v
C
fe

th
L
S
o
ra
d

a
ta
m
in
of
ov
v

P R E F A C E .

No better testimony in support of the "Seamen's Act," now in force in this Province, could be afforded than the fact that the Honourable Mr. Labouchère, President of the Board of Trade, was encouraged to bring in a Bill to establish Shipping Masters in the Mother Country, from the good effects which had been produced from the working of the Law in Quebec, where the evils of desertion had been most injuriously felt.

Another evidence of its efficiency is to be found in the fact that strong resistance is being made to the working of the Law, by those principally, whose interests are *adverse* to the Shipping interest, and whose pockets are filled at the expense of the Shipowner, by exorbitant exactions; and the demoralization of the Seamen, by all the vices which belong to desertion.

The object of these remarks is to inform the Government, and those whose pursuits do not bring them into close acquaintance with the interests of the Shipping, of the true state of matters; and it is to be hoped that a perusal of the following observations will facilitate in some measure the formation of a correct judgment as to whether the interests of the Shipowners should be supported and Crimping put down, or *vice versa*.

un
se
ex
ri
tis
th
gr
18
w
te
of
ex
pe
D
in
fr
M
op
th
w
of

sh
ac
to
na
st
af
w

REMARKS

UPON THE DESERTION OF SEAMEN, &c.

FOR many years the shipping interest has labored under grievous disadvantages arising from the desertion of seamen, and measures for its relief have engaged from time to time the attention of the Imperial Parliament and the collective wisdom of the British Colonies. The Government of Canada alive to the increase of desertion at Quebec, and of the disgraceful practices of the Crimps, passed a law in 1847,—Seamen's Act, 10 & 11 Vict. Cap. 25,—whereby the shipping interest received greater protection, desertions became less frequent, and the rate of wages was sensibly diminished. This Law was exceedingly obnoxious to the Crimps, who used every possible means to obstruct its successful working. Desperate attempts were therefore made to render it inoperative, and for this purpose insults were less frequent than threats upon the life of the Shipping Master. Acts of incendiarism were resorted to, and open destruction of the Shipping Office compelled that officer to seek for military protection, under which only he was enabled to maintain the efficiency of his office.

At certain seasons, and particularly when the new ships sought for men, the most determined means were adopted by the Crimps *to prevent seamen from going to the Shipping Office*, and the consequence was naturally an exorbitant rate of wages. In many instances shipmasters could not obtain their men, and after keeping loaded ships in the stream for days and weeks even, were actually compelled to *compromise*

with the Crimps, and beg as a particular favor to be provided with a few hands *at any price* !

Such a state of things begat a want of confidence in the Shipping Office, and many merchants and others who too readily lent an ear to the lamentations of the Crimps, and promised to support them in obtaining a repeal of the law, were more desirous of attributing blame to its inefficiency than to the illegal combinations of those who were working strenuously against it.

A petition was accordingly got up for a repeal of the Seamen's Act "*which was found after a fair trial to be totally unworkable,*" and every person who could make his mark as well as many who could not, signed this precious document, headed however by a few respectable merchants, some of whom found themselves in the unenviable position of having signed both *for* and *against* it. Some hundreds of persons, (all deeply interested in the shipping interest *of course,*) could not fail to obtain redress, but scores of those unfortunates who imagined probably that their names would be immortalized by signing an Act of independence,—were most shockingly mortified that the interest of a few shipowners and others should be all powerful to preserve the law in spite of them. Mirabile dictu ! the petition, bill, and all that thereunto pertained was consigned to oblivion, Government shewing its determination not only to support the law for the benefit of the shipping interest, but if need be to strengthen it.

As a renewed attempt is at this moment being made to restore as it were "the good old times," a petition has been presented this session of Parliament against the Act in question ; and a committee of the House is now engaged taking evidence in the matter, before which it is hoped that those who are truly engaged and deeply concerned in the shipping interest will be permitted to record their opinions as

well as those who wish to restore that "branch of industry," by which the Crimps used to pocket £50,000 a year.

These remarks were suggested upon perusal of various printed papers bearing upon our navigation and mercantile marine laws, but more particularly having reference to some scheme the better to prevent desertion,—and the object of this pamphlet is as much to shew the state of public feeling in England with regard to the shameful business of crimping which seeks to obtain the controul of our seamen, as to institute any inquiry into the causes of desertion, or to offer any suggestions for its remedy.

A very well written book from the pen of Mr. W. S. Lindsay, of Fulham, near London, who has proved himself practically conversant with the mercantile and marine laws,—published this year by Longmans, —speaks thus :—

EXTRACTS.

Page 95. "The social and moral condition of the British seamen employed in our merchant navy is a subject which can hardly fail to prove interesting. It is indeed, in so far as the maintenance of our position on the seas is concerned, one of paramount importance. Legislative measures, however equitable or however stringent, cannot elevate a people or make a nation happier, wiser or better. This must to a great extent rest with the people themselves. But well digested laws are essential in all countries; for though without order laws have proved of no avail, still without law order can hardly exist." Page 96. "Seamen are but the creatures of circumstances,—*the mere tools in the hands of a class of men known as 'Crimps,' who procure them employment, who discount their advance notes at most usurious rates, and too often*

"plunder them of all they possess at the termination of the voyage."

Speaking of Mr. Labouchère's Act, Mr. Lindsay says, p. 98. "The Mercantile Marine Act further requires that all agreements between master and men be upon one precise and established form, and executed at the Shipping Office, in the presence of the Shipping Master, by whom it is to be read and explained, *and without the intervention of those Crimps who under the garb of friends prove too often the Seamen's greatest enemy.*"

Again, in regard to the Mercantile Marine Act, p. 99. "In one essential point however it has signally failed. Of this Mr. Labouchère was sufficiently warned by various deputations of practical men, who waited upon him from the City of Liverpool and Glasgow. Mr. Allan Gilmour was, we remember, particularly clear upon this point, and the President of the Board of Trade seemed to feel the full force of his shrewd and practical remarks, *but feared to make the clauses for the prevention of desertion more simple and the punishment more severe*, for the extraordinary reason that the members of the opposition would raise a philanthropical clamour in the House and Kingdom against him."

P. 99. "Desertion is therefore, still as serious an evil and as little punished as ever it was. It is injurious to all connected with our maritime interests. By the pecuniary loss which the shipowner sustains the seaman who deserts rarely reaps any benefit. The repudiation of the contract with his first employer, while it always demoralises and often ruins the offender, seldom enriches him. The enhanced wages which he receives from the owners of the vessel in which he clandestinely engages are generally paid in advance and squandered before he commences duty on board, *and the CRIMPS who discount their advance notes at usu-*

rious rates are in most instances the only gainers by this dishonourable transfer. Formerly the evil was confined almost exclusively to the timber ports in our North American Colonies, and for many years at Quebec a lucrative trade has been carried on by a numerous class of men styling themselves shipping agents and lodging house masters. This however, it would appear is merely their ostensible employment. That from which all their profits flowed was the advance of wages to outward bound seamen. In the Lower Town of Quebec, THE STAPLE TRADE IS DESERTION, and on good authority we learn that during several seasons past, it has at that port yielded the nefarious traffickers in it, an average sum of £50,000 sterling a year. The number of vessels launched there, requiring crews to navigate them to this Country, tends materially to enhance the demand for seamen. Labor is besides, during the shipping season, of greater value in Quebec than in this Country ; and these two causes combined offer inducements often too tempting to seamen to resist. It is certainly not in the power of legislation to remedy the latter. But it has been proposed to remedy the former by compelling the owner of vessels built in the Colonies to import from quarters where labour is more abundant men to navigate them. It has further been proposed that instead of engaging seamen for the voyage, they should be engaged merely for the passage outwards. But we are at a loss to comprehend how any good results could follow from that mode of engagement, supposing all shipowners were to adopt it, which they would not, for various reasons, unnecessary here to mention. Lower wages might be paid for the passage out, as seamen would more readily engage to a port where their labour was usually in great demand ; but the shipowner would suffer in a proportionate ratio in the enhanced wages he would be obliged to pay on the return voyage, and the seamen

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

the imperfect machinery which has been employed to carry it into operation."

"On this account it has proved a failure, and in most cases, instead of producing any good, has offered encouragement and served as a cloak to desertion. The Law required that all men serving on board of our Merchant Ships must be provided with a register ticket; and as might naturally be supposed, the Law granted great facilities for procuring these tickets; but unfortunately, by granting too great facilities the very object which the Legislature had in view was defeated. Seamen change their names, and under false names, and by making a false statement, can procure a register ticket at any Custom House in the outports, or at the Office of the Registrar-General of Seamen in London."

"To remedy this evil Mr. Gilmour proposes that the clauses of the Act 7 & 8 Vic. chap. 112, respecting register tickets, should be materially altered. It is worthy of careful consideration, emanating, as it does, from a thoroughly sound and practical shipowner. Some such alterations as he proposes are essentially requisite. We are not of those who desire stringent Laws, much less Laws which are crooked, annoying, and vexatious, for such may drive our seamen to seek employment in the Merchant service of other countries, but we must have a Law which, while it protects the good, will punish the bad, and thus make desertion a crime of which our seamen would become ashamed. We would almost recommend that an endorsement of desertion should be made on the register ticket when re-issued to the seaman who had been convicted of that crime."

"The Legislatures of our Colonies should be requested to enact as has recently been done in this country, that all lodging house keepers and shipping

Agents be licensed, and that those who harbour deserters shall be liable to punishment. Such is now the Law here, and there seems to be no good reason why our Colonial Legislatures should not enact Laws the to same effect. When therefore it was found that from the improvement of the Laws desertion had become rare, and the occupation of the Crimps would be almost gone and the *shipbuilders in the Colonies would be compelled to devise legitimate means for obtaining the requisite crews, instead of depending on deserters from the various ships in harbour.*"

"Wherever labour is high, the seamen find advisers, and those of very different grades, who, having their own interest in view, prompt him to treat his articles of agreement as mere waste paper."

* * * * *

P. 108. "Desertion is now, in truth, so great an evil, and so detrimental to the best interests of our Maritime commerce in every part of the world, that the most prompt measures should be adopted to suppress it. It is in the power of the Legislature to do so; and while that is left undone all other laws for the maintenance of discipline on board are next to worthless; and, while the evil tends to overthrow all other enactments made for that purpose, it demoralises, in every sense of the word, the seamen themselves. Unfortunately it is a crime which is rarely committed alone, but is the first step towards others of a much worse nature. Even the seamen almost invariably repent of it when too late. They feel that they have broken faith, lost that self-respect which is essential to the maintenance of order, drown their feelings in intoxication, and thus become demoralised and worthless. The country loses in various ways. The standard of a class of men, alike valuable during periods of peace and war, is materially lowered, and we are

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

* * * * *

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."

"We have stated that ministers seemed to feel, when framing the Mercantile Marine Act, that they ought to have introduced more simple, prompt and stringent measures; but fearing the opposition of the professed philanthropists of the House, they contented themselves with the clauses which were adopted. These are, however, from the machinery with which they are clogged, of little value, and in many cases actually worse than worthless. It may be true, as has been remarked in an able article on desertion which recently appeared in the "Shipping and Mercantile Gazette,"—that the law now gives the shipowner the power, and that it is his own fault if he does not exercise it. We admit that it is the shipowner's duty to bring the offender to justice; but the difficulty, the labour, inconvenience, and expense in most cases overrule duty. What we advocate may not be in accordance with the views of professed philanthropists; but it is common sense; and they would do well to consider *that the best and surest way to suppress crime is to make the proof simple and void of all superfluous legal technicalities and quibbles, and the punishment severe*, more especially when the crime itself is injurious to the seaman, a heavy loss to the shipowner, seriously detrimental to the best interests of our commercial marine, and, considering our isolated position, dangerous to the State, and ruinous to all attempts at discipline and good government on board ships."

It will be readily observed by those previously unacquainted with the *system* under which the merchant navy has been plundered, that desertion is the bane of the shipping trade, and that all masters, owners, and consignees of vessels, should lend their aid in subduing the evil. He must be a heartless

being who can look without pity upon the demoralized and degraded position of British sailors at the port of Quebec, and who having the influence to aid in remedying the abuses by which it is promoted, not only refuses to assist in preserving the laws which have been framed for their protection, but actually aids and abets the very means to hasten their ruin, and embarrass the trade which yields them bread.

The following Petition to the Provincial Parliament *in favor* of the Act regulating the shipping of seamen at the Port of Quebec, in 1850, will shew how far it may be expedient to *repeal* it in 1852.

The Petition of the undersigned, Shipbuilders and Merchants of Quebec,

HUMBLY SHEWETH:—

That your Petitioners are engaged as Shipbuilders and Merchants in Quebec, and, as representing nearly all the large vessels trading to and from the Port, they are deeply interested in the preservation of those laws which protect the shipping interests.

That the 10th & 11th Vict. cap. 25, regulating the shipping of seamen, has been of great service to the trade, in putting down the combinations of Crimps, and of preventing, considerably, the desertion of seamen; and, although the Act met with opposition, at first, by the exercise of violent and illegal means, yet, that opposition was not caused by, or with the knowledge or consent of, your Petitioners, or from any objection, on their part, to the working of the law, but was raised solely by those persons whose nefarious practices the law was intended to put down; and in which it has been so far successful.

If any Petition has gone up to your Honourable

House, praying for a repeal of the present law, your Petitioners disclaim all knowledge of it, and, by reference to the document, it will be readily observed that the parties who sign it, do not represent the shipping interest of Quebec, neither are their interests identical with your Petitioners.

That your Petitioners do not approve of the measure, now introduced, for a repeal of the present law; and, at the same time, it is quite unnecessary, and is not calculated to be of the slightest benefit to the trade, but is considered to have a contrary effect, (*although the present law is susceptible of much improvement.*)

Your Petitioners earnestly pray, that your Honorable House will not entertain the Bill, but will permit the present law to continue in full force and effect.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Quebec, June 21, 1850.

SIGNED,

Edward Boxer,
A. Gilmour & Co.,
Pemberton Brothers,
Wm. Price,
G. B. Symes & Co.,
Wm. Stevenson,
J. E. Oliver,
W. G. Russell,
Sharples, Wainwright &
Co.
Gillespie & Co.,
Alex. Provan,
D. Burnet,
C. H. Ross,
W. J. C. Benson,
John S. Anderson.
Robt. McCord,

Lemesurier & Co.,
Anderson & Paradis,
Hamilton Brothers,
A. Gordon & Co.,
H. & E. Burstall,
C. E. Levey & Co.,
R. Peniston,
T. H. Oliver,
And. H. Young,
Arch. Campbell,
John Jamieson,
William Dawson,
Forsyth & Bell,
John Munn,
W. H. Baldwin,
Andrew Patterson.

Since the foregoing pages went to press the committee appointed by the House of Assembly to enquire into the subject has reported in favor of a *Repeal of the Seamen's Act*,—and it would be interesting to know upon what strong evidence such report was founded,—the more especially as not one of the partners connected with the largest shipowners engaged in the Quebec trade has been examined on the subject, whilst others perhaps as earnestly concerned in it, have not been consulted in a matter of such vital importance. There is not a *shipowner* in Quebec who would be bold enough to declare in favor of desertion ; and upon what grounds therefore has the recommendation been made to repeal the Act in question, and thereby give a *direct sanction* to the evil ?

In conclusion, the following letters from the old and highly respectable firm, Wm. Graves & Co., of New Ross, (copies of which we believe are in the hands of Government) will form a valuable compendium to these remarks, and will be read with interest, inasmuch as they bear directly upon the subject, and shew the disastrous effects which crimping has produced by their withdrawal from this trade of a large tonnage, which will be followed as a matter of course by other influential houses in the Mother Country, if the law for the protection of their interests as well as that of the seamen should be abolished.

New Ross, 23rd Sept., 1852.

ALFRED HAWKINS, Esquire,
Shipping Master, Quebec.

SIR,—We are this day favored with your letter of 28th ultimo with its enclosures.

Since we last addressed you we have not been idle on the subject of desertion at Quebec.

By last week's steamer we addressed a letter to the Quebec Board of Trade on the subject, and as it was on public business we think it quite in course to hand you the enclosed copy. We have sent a copy also to our friends, empowering them to use it as they deem best—in it you will see our views expressed pretty clearly.

We are glad to see the Governor General is desirous of amending the present Canadian Seamen's Act, or of introducing a new one with increased power—this is as it should be—as we think that the Home Government and the leading Shipowners of this country are reluctant to interfere in the internal affairs of your Province. We are therefore of opinion if the evils complained of so long, and which have rendered Quebec a terror to Shipowners and a disgrace to Canada, are to be redressed, it must mainly be done by the Canadian Legislature aided by the local authorities of Quebec—if they fail to provide remedies for the great evils of the present system, Canada and Quebec will be the real and permanent sufferers, as they are to no small degree at present.

We are in hopes your experience will enable you to submit to the Governor General full, clear and practical proposals for remedying the abuses so long prevalent,—unfortunately we have not with us the copy of your letter to the Attorney General to which you refer having forwarded it to Liverpool some time back.

We are informed the desertions at Quebec in 1851 amounted to over 1200 seamen, and that about this number of hands were required for the new Ships launched during the year—if this is correct, *cause and effect* are at once shown—and we fear no real and permanent improvement can be expected until Ship-builders are required by law to import say two men for every 100 tons of new shipping they lay down—if this is done the evil will soon cure itself, it will cost Ship-builders no more to do so than to pay from £8 to £12 sterling a man per month as they do at present for the voyage home; this will moreover have the effect of at once reducing Quebec freights considerably, and on their maintainance at low and moderate rates, depends the welfare of Canada, especially of Quebec—every shilling per ton, or load, added to, or taken off them—has the practical effect of bringing Canada nearer to or removing her farther from, by some hundreds of

the season, to aid in preserving order in the port and checking desertion.

This promise has not, however, been fulfilled, and we fear it will be hard to induce the Home Government to move in the matter, as there is a proper delicacy in interfering with the administration of laws in a colony like Canada, enjoying the privileges and powers of self-government—we therefore trust you will pardon our addressing you on the subject.

As Shipowners engaged in the navigation of the St. Lawrence for about 30 years, we feel we have some reason to complain of a state of *desertion*, *mutiny* and *insubordination* being allowed to continue year after year at Quebec, which would be a disgrace to a barbarous nation.

We have before us reports from two of our masters written this season from that port, one of which states that "desertion is worse than ever this year—men walk away from their ships in open day, with the Captains and officers looking at them but afraid to interfere, as some masters who did interfere to stop the desertion of their crews, were marked men, and nearly murdered when caught on shore." The remarks of the other master confirm this statement, but as such occurrences take place annually, we fear they will strike you as they did us, less strongly than they really deserve owing to their frequency.

We observe from time to time with deep regret that when the Shipping Master of the Port endeavours to have the ringleaders in such scenes rendered amenable to law, he usually falls from the favor the crimps and deserters find on and off the Bench in Quebec,—this is more than plain from a printed report before us of a trial, which took place in the Police Court, on the 11th August last—*Hawkins vs. Wilson*—in which an offence against the Act *was proved*, but the case was dismissed on account of the information being informal in substance, though the very "Act" under which proceedings were taken provides that no information or complaint shall be dismissed for any want of form.

We bring these matters before you in the hope that they have hitherto escaped your notice, and we would earnestly implore of you to endeavour to support the parties who have the administration of the law, and aid in having such legal and municipal ordinances passed as will be necessary to check so deplorable a state of things, as for long has existed in Quebec—and which is as injurious to the true interests of Canada as to the shipowners of this country.

The effects of desertion is to raise inward and outward freights, and this tells directly on Canada, especially in her lumber trade, as the uniform low rates of freight to north of Europe will

miles, the great consumer of her produce—the United Kingdom.

We would like to see a larger and more efficient Water Police force organized, even if necessary—by an increased rate on shipping—the present force seems useless and is therefore a very dear one. We think the Shipping Office should be placed, on a more independent footing than at present, and all engagements and discharges of crews and seamen, before the Shipping Master *only* should be made compulsory under increased penalties.

The whole crimping system should be put down by a *proper administration* of the law—which was wanting in some of the late proceedings, under the Seamen's Act in Quebec. You will see in last week's London Shipping Gazette, and also in this week's, some articles bearing strongly on the subject, and you will observe we have its valuable aid. You need not trouble yourself to send us a list of those who have signed the petition for the repeal of the present Seamen's Act, but we will be glad to be advised from time to time, of the movements relative to the matter, both in and out of the Legislature.

We hope there is no danger of a repeal of the Seamen's Act, and have written strongly to some influential parties on the subject.

We cannot help expressing regret and surprise at the treatment you, as a public officer, have received from the Board of Trade and the Magistracy at Quebec,—instead of support and co-operation, you have received opposition and annoyance in the discharge of your duties.

We remain, Sir,

Your most obedt. servant,

WM. GRAVES & SON.

Copy.

New Ross, 15th Sept., 1852

Ireland.

To the President and Council of the Board of Trade, Quebec.

GENTLEMEN,—We take the liberty of addressing you on a subject which is no less important to the interests of Canada than to us Shipowners—namely, the disgraceful and *demoralising* desertion of Seamen at the Port of Quebec every season.

We have taken for years much pains to induce the Home Government to interfere, as we look on the evil as affecting Imperial as well as Colonial interests, but have hitherto laboured in vain, though we supposed that this spring we had in part gained our object, by the conditional promise of a vessel of war being placed at Quebec, during

tend to turn the consumption of the United Kingdom more and more to European woods, unless freights to Quebec can be maintained at a moderate rate.

And this can only be done by enabling shipowners to retain their crews for the return voyages.

We have ships engaged in the commerce of various ports of the world, including Australia, and in no place do we find, so much trouble and loss from desertion as at Quebec.

This fact has aided in inducing us to withdraw the greater portion of our tonnage from the Quebec trade, and as we find many other owners acting on the same policy, we doubt not that Canada will ere long feel severely a pressure, which, no doubt, many supposed would fall only on *Shipowners*.

We are induced to trouble you at this time with these remarks, by observing that Mr. Lee and other parties are endeavouring to have the Seamen's Act, 10th and 11th Victoria, repealed.

We trust you will see the necessity of resisting such a movement.

We know the Shipowners of this country have taken alarm about it, and think we may say in their name—we urge on you to prevent as you best can the repeal of the Act; rather should it be extended and strengthened, as well as properly administered—so as if possible to save further loss to the interests of commerce and further *demoralisation* to British seamen.

Praying your pardon for this trespass,

We are, Gentlemen,

Your very obedient servants,

Signed, WILLIAM GRAVES & SON.

