

This part of the Bill follows closely the lines of the Merchant Shipping Act.

Sections 21 to 32 relate to the granting of certificates to masters, officers, and engineers.

Sections 33 to 37 relate to apprenticeship to sea service, and do not call for remark.

Sections 38 to 50 relate to the engagement of seamen, which, subject to the remarks contained in the above report, follow very closely the corresponding provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act.

Sections 51 and 52 deal with the rating of seamen. Of these :—

Section 51, subsection (1), requires service for four years at sea before the mast or as an apprentice as a qualification for the rating of A.B., subject to the proviso that service in decked fishing vessels or cutters shall only count as sea service for three years of the employment.

Subsection (2) enables any seaman to be rated an A.B. for the purpose only of serving on a steamship engaged in the home trade, who has served as an ordinary seaman on any vessel, or as an apprentice in a square-rigged sailing-vessel for a period of two years, but the nature of his rating must be entered on his discharge.

By subsection (3), where the service has been on a steamship only, the discharge must be so indorsed.

By subsection (4) the service may in all cases be proved by a certificate of discharge or by a certificate of service from the superintendent stating the nature of the service.

Subsection (5) provides that a seaman who is carried as part of the required complement of a vessel under section 54, (1), and Schedule III. of the Bill, must not, except in the case of emergency, be employed in any capacity other than that for which he was engaged, provided that where one or more boilers on a steamship are not in use a proportionate part of the greasers, firemen, and trimmers may be employed in another capacity in the same department.

Section 52, subsection (1), provides that every seaman signing articles must produce a discharge in respect of the capacity in which he wishes to engage, or furnish proof that he is entitled to ship in such capacity. The superintendent may, however, on proof by the sailor by statutory declaration that he is entitled to ship in any capacity, allow him to do so. A false declaration renders the seaman liable to imprisonment for three months.

Subsection (2) provides that when any seaman has signed articles he is to hand his discharge for his last ship to the superintendent, who is to cancel the discharge and stamp the word re-engaged over the name of such ship.

Subsections (4) and (5) are dealt with in the report.

Section 53 deals with the rating of greasers and firemen. The qualification for rating as a greaser is service of three months as a fireman in a steamship engaged in the home or foreign trade, or three months in a similar capacity on land. The qualification for rating as a fireman is service of three months as trimmer in a steamship plying within restricted limits, or three months on land as engine-driver or fireman. The penalty for giving a discharge as fireman or greaser to any person who has not served in that capacity is, as in the case of an A.B., £50.

Section 54 relates to the complement of the crew, and is dealt with in the report.

Sections 55 to 57 relate to the discharge of seamen, and are, subject to the observations in the report, in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Act.

Sections 58 to 67 relate to the payment of wages. These sections, generally speaking, are identical with sections 131 to 139 of the Merchant Shipping Act. Observations on section 63 will be found in the report.

Sections 68 to 71 deal with advance and allotment of wages, and correspond to sections 140 to 144 of the Merchant Shipping Act.

Sections 72 to 74 provides for seamen's money-orders. Section 73 provides for payment of orders not in payee's possession, and section 74 deals with the fraudulent issue of money-orders.

Sections 75 to 83 deal with the rights of seamen in respect of wages. Full observations on section 75 will be found in the report. The other sections correspond with sections 155 to 163 of the Merchant Shipping Act. Section 79 is noted in the report.

Sections 84 to 87 deal with the mode of recovering wages, and are in accord with sections 164 to 168 of the Merchant Shipping Act.

Section 88 deals with the power of the court to rescind contracts between the owner and any seaman or apprentice in any proceeding arising out of any dispute incidental to their relations.

Sections 89 to 100 relate to property of deceased seamen, and are generally in accord with the Merchant Shipping Act. It is to be noticed that sections 89, 90, 91, and 92 apply to the death of a seaman on a voyage which is to terminate in New Zealand. Section 94, dealing with the mode of recovery of wages, is applicable to all voyages.

Sections 101 and 102 deal with re imbursement of relief to seamen's families, and are identical with sections 182 and 183 of the Merchant Shipping Act.

Sections 103 to 107 deal with leaving seamen abroad, and follow sections 186 to 189 of the Merchant Shipping Act. Sections 103 and 106 apply, it will be noticed, only to ships registered in New Zealand. Other ships would, however, come within the similar provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act.

Section 108 deals with distressed seamen abroad and provides a machinery for recovering sums expended or incurred by or on behalf of the Crown in maintenance, &c., "or otherwise in accordance with this Act," which under the Bill are to be a charge on the ship and may be recoverable as a debt due from the owner or master of a ship by ordinary process of law or in the same manner as wages are recovered by seamen. The section corresponds to section 193 of the Merchant Shipping Act, which provides a remedy for the recovery of such expenses, but it is somewhat curious that the provisions of sections 190 to 192, which provide the right to recover in respect of the relief and maintenance of distressed seamen, are not included in the Bill, and there is not in the Bill itself any provision entitling distressed seamen, as such, to maintenance and passage