

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

(The Merchant Seamen (Payment of Wages and Rating) Act, 1880.)

NOTIFICATION. No.16

Simla, the 5th November 1880.

No.16.-The following Statutes are published for general information:-

BE it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows (that is to say):-

43&44 Vic., CHAPTER 16.

An Act to amend the Law relating to the Payment of Wages and Rating of Merchant Seamen.

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as "**The Merchant Seamen (Payment of Wages and Rating) Act, 1880.**"

Construction.

This Act shall be construed as one with the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1854 to 1876; and those Acts and this Act may be cited collectively as the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1854 to 1880.

Conditional advance notes illegal.

2. (1) After the first day of August one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, any document authorizing or promising, or purporting to authorize or promise, the future payment of money on account of a seaman's wages conditionally on his going to sea from any port in the United Kingdom, and made before those wages have been earned, shall be void.

(2) No money paid in satisfaction or in respect of any such document shall be deducted from a seaman's wages, and no person shall have any right of action, suit, or set-off against the seaman or his assignee in respect of any money so paid, or purporting to have been so paid.

(3) Nothing in this section shall affect any allotment note made under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854.

Amendment of 17&18 Vic., c. 104, s.169, as to allotment notes.

3. (1) Every agreement with a seaman which is required by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, to be made in the form sanctioned by the Board of Trade shall, if the seaman so require, stipulate for the allotment of any part not exceeding one-half of the wages of the seaman in favour of one or more of the persons mentioned in section one hundred and sixty-nine of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, as amended by this section.

(2) The allotment may also be made in favour of a savings bank, and in that case shall be in favour of such persons and carried into effect in such manner as may be for the time being directed by regulations of the Board of Trade; and section one hundred and sixty-nine of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, shall be construed as if the said persons were named therein.

- (3) The sum received in pursuance of such allotment by a savings bank shall be paid out only on an application made, through a superintendent of a mercantile marine office or the Board of Trade, by the seaman himself, or, in case of death, by some person to whom the same might be paid under section one hundred and ninety-nine of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854.
- (4) A payment under an allotment note shall begin at the expiration of one month, or, if the allotment is in favour of a savings bank, of three months from the date of the agreement, or at such later date as may be fixed by the agreement, and shall be paid at the expiration of every subsequent month or of such other periods as may be fixed by the agreement, and shall be paid only in respect of wages earned before the date of payment.
- (5) For the purpose of this section, "savings bank" means a savings bank established under one of the Acts mentioned in the first schedule to this Act.

Rules as to payment of wages.

4. In the case of foreign-going ships-

- (1) The owner or master of the ship shall pay to each seaman on account, at the time when he lawfully leaves the ship at the end of his engagement, two pounds, or one-fourth of the balance due to him, whichever is least; and shall pay him the remainder of his wages within two clear days (exclusive of any Sunday, fast day in Scotland, or bank holiday) after he so leaves the ship.
- (2) The master of the ship may deliver the account of wages mentioned in section one hundred and seventy-one of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, to the seaman himself at or before the time when he leaves the ship, instead of delivering it to a superintendent of a mercantile marine office.
- (3) If the seaman consents, the final settlement of his wages may be left to the superintendent of a mercantile marine office under regulations to be made by the Board of Trade, and the receipt of the superintendent shall in that case operate as a release by the seaman under section one hundred and seventy-five of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854.
- (4) In the event of the seaman's wages or any part thereof not being paid or settled as in this section mentioned, then, unless the delay is due to the act or default of the seaman, or to any reasonable dispute as to liability, or to any other cause not being the act or default of the owner or master, the seaman's wages shall continue to run and be payable until the time of the final settlement thereof.
- (5) Where a question as to wages is raised before the superintendent of a mercantile marine office between the master or owner of a ship and a seaman or apprentice, if the amount in question does not exceed five pounds the superintendent may adjudicate, and the decision of the superintendent in the matter shall be final; but if the superintendent is of opinion that the question is one which ought to be decided by a court of law, he may refuse to decide it.

Penalty for being on boardship without permission before seamen leave.

5. Where a ship is about to arrive, is arriving, or has arrived at the end of her voyage, every person, not being in Her Majesty's service or not being duly authorized by law for the purpose, who-

- (a) goes on board the ship without the permission of the master before the seamen lawfully leave the ship at the end of their engagement, or are discharged (whichever last happens); or
- (b) being on board the ship remains there after being warned to leave by the master, or by a police-officer, or by any officer of the Board of Trade or of the Customs, shall, for every such offence, be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding twenty pounds, or, at the discretion of the Court, to imprisonment for any term not exceeding six months; and the master of the ship or any officer of the Board of Trade may take him into custody, and deliver him up forthwith to a constable to be taken before a Court or magistrate capable of taking cognizance of the offence, and dealt with according to law.

Provisions contained in section five to apply to ships belonging to foreign countries in certain cases.

6. Whenever it is made to appear to Her Majesty-

- (1) that the Government of any foreign country has provided that unauthorized persons going on board of British ships which are about to arrive or have arrived within its territorial jurisdiction shall be subject to provisions similar to the provisions contained in the last preceding section as applicable to persons going on board British ships at the end of their voyages, and

- (2) that the Government of such foreign country is desirous that the provisions of the said section shall apply to unauthorized persons going on board of ships belonging to such foreign country within the limits of British territorial jurisdiction,

Her Majesty may, by order in Council, declare that the provisions of the said last preceding section shall apply to the ships of such country; and thereupon, so long as the order remains in force, those provisions shall apply and have effect as if the ships of such country were British ships arriving, about to arrive, or which had arrived at the end of their voyage.

Rating of seamen.

7. A seaman shall not be entitled to the rating of A.B., that is to say, of an able-bodied sea-man, unless he has served at sea for four years before the mast; but the employment of fishermen in registered decked fishing vessels shall only count as sea service up to the period of three years of such employment; and the rating of A. B. shall only be granted after at least one year's sea service in a trading vessel, in addition to three or more years' sea service on board of registered decked fishing vessels.

Such service may be proved by certificates of discharge, by a certificate of service from the Registrar –General of Shipping and Sea-men (which certificate the Registrar shall grant on payment of a fee not exceeding six pence), and in which shall be specified whether the service was rendered in whole or in part, in steam ship or in sailing ship, or by other satisfactory proof.

Nothing in this section shall affect a sea-man who has been rated and has served as A.B. before the passing of this Act.

Power of Court to rescind contract between owner or master and seaman or apprentice.

8. Where a proceeding is instituted in or before any Court in relation to any dispute between an owner or master of a ship and a seaman or apprentice to the sea service arising out of, or incidental to their relation as such, or is instituted for the purpose of this section, the Court, if, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, they think it just so to do, may rescind any contract between the owner or master and the seaman or apprentice,

or any contract of apprenticeship, upon such terms as the Court may think just, and this power shall be in addition to any other jurisdiction which the Court can exercise independently of this section.

For the purposes of this section the term "Court" includes any magistrate or justice having jurisdiction in the matter to which the proceeding relates.

Licensing of sea-men's lodging-houses.

9. It shall be lawful for the sanitary authority of any seaport town to pass byelaws for the licensing of seamen's lodging-houses, for the periodical inspection of the same, for the granting to the persons to whom such licenses are given the authority to designate their houses as seamen's licensed lodging-houses, and for prescribing the penalties for the breach of the provisions of the byelaws: provided always that no such byelaws shall take effect till they have received the approval of the Board of Trade.

Desertion and absence without leave.

10. The following provisions shall, from the commencement of this Act, have operation within the United Kingdom:-

A seaman or apprentice to the sea service shall not be liable to imprisonment for deserting or for neglecting, or refusing without reasonable cause, to join his ship or to proceed to sea in his ship, or for absence without leave at any time within twenty-four hours of his ship's sailing from any port, or for absence at any time without leave and without sufficient reason from his ship or from his duty.

Whenever, either at the commencement or during the progress of any voyage, any sea-man or apprentice neglects or refuse to join or deserts from, or refuse to proceed to sea in, any ship in which he is duly engaged to serve, or is found otherwise absenting himself therefrom without leave, the master or any mate, or the owner, ship's husband, or consignee, may, with or without the assistance of the local police-officers or constables, who are hereby directed to give the same, if required, convey him on board: provided that, if the seaman or apprentice so requires, he shall first be taken before some Court capable of taking cognizance of the matters to be dealt with according to law; and that if it appears to the Court before which the case is brought that the seaman or apprentice has been conveyed on board or taken before the Court on improper or insufficient grounds, the master, mate, owner, ship's husband, or consignee, as the case may be, shall incur a penalty not exceeding twenty pounds; but such penalty, if inflicted, shall be a bar to any action for false imprisonment.

If a seaman or apprentice to the sea service intends to absent himself from his ship or his duty, he may give notice of his intention, either to the owner or to the master of the ship, not less than forty-eight hours before the time at which he ought to be on board his ship; and in the event of such notice being given, the Court shall not exercise any of the powers conferred on it by section two hundred and forty-seven of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854.

Subject to the foregoing provision of this section, the powers conferred by section two hundred and forty-seven of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, may be exercised, notwithstanding the abolition of imprisonment for desertion and similar offences and of apprehension without warrant.

Nothing in this section shall affect section two hundred and thirty-nine of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854.

Extension to seamen of 38&39 Vie., c.30.

11. The thirteenth section of the Employers and Workmen Act, 1875, shall be repealed in so far as it operates to exclude seamen and apprentices to the sea service from the said Act, and the said Act shall apply to seamen and apprentices to the sea service accordingly; but such repeal shall not, in the absence of any enactment to the contrary, extend to or affect any provision contained in any other Act of Parliament passed, or to be passed, whereby workman is defined by reference to the persons to whom the Employers and Workmen Act, 1875, applies.

Repeal of enactments in second schedule.

12. The enactments described in the second schedule to this Act shall be repealed as from the commencement of this Act within the United Kingdom:

Provided that this repeal shall not affect-

- (1) anything duly done or suffered before the commencement of this Act under any enactment hereby repealed; or
- (2) any right or privilege acquired, or any liability incurred, before the commencement of this Act, under any enactment hereby repealed; or
- (3) any imprisonment, fine, or forfeiture, or other punishment incurred, or to be incurred, in respect of any offence committed before the commencement of this Act, under any enactment hereby repealed; or
- (4) the institution or prosecution to its termination of any investigation or legal proceeding, or any other remedy for prosecuting any such offence, or ascertaining, enforcing, or recovering any such liability, imprisonment, fine, forfeiture, or punishment as aforesaid, and any such investigation, legal proceeding, and remedy may be carried on as if this repeal had not been enacted.

D. FITZPATRIOK,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

[ATTACH LIST 1] 01 SCHEDULES. First Schedule.