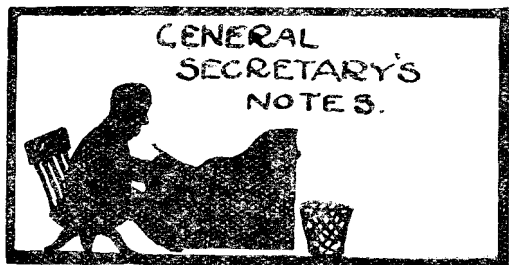


The Customs Journal.

No. 558.

March 13th, 1926.

Fortnightly.



Communications relative to this column should be addressed to Mr. J. Merron, 167, Clive Road, West Dulwich, London, S.E.21.

The Parliamentary debate on the Customs and Excise Supplementary Estimate created opportunity for some lively discussion on increased staff in connection with the new duties. The result was to show that the Customs and Excise Department is doing its work nobly and well despite the admittedly heavy burden placed upon its shoulders.

Failing to find any cause to criticise adversely the administration of the Department, some members showed a tendency to wander off the point by challenging the wisdom of the Government in developing the taxation of imports as a means to increase revenue. Firm action was needed, apparently, to keep the discussion within proper limits.

Of much interest to Waterguard Officers were the references to baggage examination at Dover and Victoria Station. Several M.P.'s described their experiences at the hands of the officers stationed at these places. Frequently nowadays high tribute is paid regarding the manner in which the Waterguard Staff perform baggage duties, and this occasion afforded further evidence of the appreciation that passengers have for the officers who so successfully carry out a really difficult task. There was nothing but praise for the staffs, and the complaints that were made were in connection with inadequate accommodation for the performance of the work. It was not overlooked that lack of accommodation was a handicap to officers, as well as adding to the discomfort of passengers.

* * * *

The growing volume of evidence, showing the splendid value the Waterguard Officer returns for his very modest salary, surely cannot have escaped the notice of the powers that be. Baggage examination is not by any means the most important of our duties, but it is, apparently, the only one on which we can get independent

and unbiassed opinion. We can do with any amount of that kind of opinion, but it will require a deal of it before the old-fashioned notions about the Waterguard Department are finally buried.

However, it must be fairly obvious that the manner in which the Department has handled the ad valorem and silk duties proves the contention (not accepted by the Official Side when re-organisation took place) that Waterguard work is of a much higher quality than is indicated in the salary scales. The whole point is that this successful handling of these new duties is not a mere flash in the pan, but is the direct result of an adaptability born of long acquaintance with the application of intricate regulations under circumstances that are difficult to anticipate, together with a shrewd knowledge of human nature.

Some day the Waterguard will, no doubt, come into its own. At the moment, however, the work suffers a lack of appreciation merely because its true value is not revealed by a superficial examination.

* * *

The P.S.A. has come to an agreement with the C. and E. Federation regarding the formula of a resolution for amending the regulations in connection with assessment of ad valorem duties in baggage and crews' effects. The proposal has yet to be debated on the C. and E. Joint Committee before a decision to take it to the Departmental Council can be reached.

It is gratifying to note that once the justice of the Waterguard case was clearly demonstrated the Federation used every effort of co-operation in order to find common ground for both Associations. It is an excellent example of the true Whitley spirit.

* * * *

The Customs and Excise Departmental Council has the reputation of being a model for the rest of the Service. For this reason it is not at all unlikely that its Staff Side will have nothing to do with the proposal emanating from the National Staff Side Co-ordinating Committee, which seeks to exclude from Departmental representation those Associations not affiliated with some duly recognised body having representation on the National Council Staff Side.

The proposal is intended to cure what is undoubtedly a serious defect in Staff Side organisation. Associations not represented on the N.W.C. are in the same position as non-members of an individual Association—they take all and pay nothing.

But the method suggested for removing the evil, by the very fact of its apparent ease and

simplicity, bears the hall-mark of a "quack" remedy—and is likely to be as poisonous.

The heroic method would be to first of all make these duly recognised national bodies become patterns of virtue themselves, and then probably those Associations whose affiliation is so eagerly desired would be attracted to affiliate voluntarily. If recruitment cannot be stimulated in this way, it is best left alone. Coercion or compulsion is rarely a satisfactory business, and in the case of Whitleyism, which owes its very existence to voluntary organisation, it is particularly undesirable.

Apart from all that, however, there are several other considerations that would cause the P.S.A. to oppose the idea. The Waterguard Association prides itself on taking a broad view of most things affecting the Service. It has never had to be pushed into the position it ought to be in. We are, quite rightly, affiliated to the Confederation, and we are not likely to come out of that position without adequate reason. But we are very jealous of our right to come out if necessary; and it is not difficult to foresee that if every Association were to be bound hand and foot to the Confederation—or to any other national body for that matter—the condition of "necessity" would arise soon enough. I have no doubt that many of the smaller Associations will realise the danger that would result from a loss of their freedom.

* * * *

The National Staff Side recently took to the Arbitration Court a claim: "That where an officer reaches a point in his salary scale which is less than one complete increment short of the maximum of the scale, he shall receive his final increment on the expiry of an appropriate fraction of a year, the fraction being the ratio of the amount of the final increment to a full increment."

The Staff Side put up a very sound case but were unable to convince the Court, and the claim was refused.

* * * *

At a recent meeting of the Staff Side of the National Council it was decided to endeavour to get from the Government a public statement that the £200,000 proposed for Civil Service sports was not asked for by any Civil Service Staff organisation.

* * * *

I have received many anxious inquiries from members desirous of becoming voluntary contributors under the new Pensions Scheme. It is very evident that there is a disinclination to await the possible advent of a better scheme such as I referred to in these columns some time ago.

In view of the circumstances I have made inquiries regarding the benefits offered by several approved societies, and have come to the conclusion that the Civil Service Approved Society is worthy of recommendation. An advertisement of the Society appeared in the "Customs Journal" for February 13th, stating that any

information could be had from the Secretaries at 59, Palace Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

Officers who are compulsorily insured are also advised to get into touch with the Society. I understand that full benefits under the Act can only be obtained, either for voluntary or compulsory contributors, by joining an approved society.

* * * *

The average figure for the cost-of-living for the last six months worked out at 75½. This small fraction over the 75 results in an increase of one fiftieth of the current bonus for the ensuing six months. The figure will now stand at 80.

J. MERRON.

PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION.

LEITH.

A Branch meeting was held on February 24th. Mr. Angus presided over an attendance of twelve members.

A.P.O.'s AND PROMOTION.

The scheme put forward by the E.C. was adopted by the meeting with certain amendments, one of which was that results of examinations should be issued to the individuals concerned in the usual Civil Service form, showing the marks obtained in each paper and at the oral test.

C.S. HOUSING SCHEME.

The meeting agreed that any available funds of the P.S.A. be invested in this scheme, and that it should be left to the E.C. to decide how such funds should be invested.

A proposal that the Assistant Preventive Officers' maximum be raised to the minimum of the Preventive Officers failed to find a seconder, and was not discussed.

A local matter was discussed and acted upon, and the meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chairman at 10 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆

LIVERPOOL.

A meeting was held on the 4th inst. in the Common Hall, with Mr. J. Sutton (Manchester) in the chair.

The scheme for "Promotion by Merit" as submitted by the Executive was fully discussed. The broad principle of competitive examination among A.P.O.'s for the post of P.O. appeared to be generally accepted by those present. It was on the suggestion that all A.P.O.'s could, upon attaining six years' service, apply to sit for examination that a difference of opinion arose. It was carefully explained by Messrs. Sutton and Thomson, who were members of the Executive Committee which framed the scheme, that it was well known to all that the next few years would see an unprecedented slump in vacancies in the P.O. Grade. So far as they knew, there was little prospect of increasing the number of vacancies. In that case the A.P.O.

was faced with a choice of two evils; the first and most obvious, that he must prepare himself for a wait of anything up to 20 years before the average of his Grade would have an opportunity to sit for the examination, or the second, that he could have his opportunity after a stipulated number of years' service by competitive examination. The six years suggested by the Executive would serve a double purpose—it would put an end to the contention over a seniority list which has treated some favourably and others adversely, and give all the ex-Service ex-Boy Messengers, etc., an opportunity of meeting on level terms in the examination room to fight it out among themselves. There was a strong feeling against giving men who had already failed twice any further opportunity. Senior A.P.O.'s who would be faced with greater competition, and juniors who saw an opportunity for earlier promotion under the scheme, made motions, but they fell before an amendment that a plebiscite of all the Grade should be taken on the scheme. Mr. Thomson expressed the opinion that the scheme was only a skeleton to be clothed by the opinions of the Districts. The completed scheme which would best serve all would be approved of by the next Conference (June).

The Secretary reported satisfactory agreements over Local Office Accommodation, and that the question of River Launches was held over temporarily.

Mr. Clayton, A.P.O., tendered his resignation as Organising Secretary, which was accepted with regret. Four candidates were nominated, and a ballot is being held to fill his place.

NEWCASTLE.

A meeting of the Branch was held at North Shields on February 18th, at 7 p.m.

There was a record attendance, and the lively interest taken in the proceedings adds further proof that the staff are fully alive to the interests and opportunities that the Association affords.

The agenda was rather a heavy one, the items being of more than ordinary importance, and the meeting adjourned at 10 p.m.

SENIORITY OR POST-WAR ENTRANTS.

A resolution was passed on this subject embodying the following scheme in lieu of the present system governed by G.O. 27/1923, par. 3:

The date of entry into the Waterguard Service shall be the determining factor; or failing this, as a further alternative, if age is to be regarded as the governing factor, that the application of age be restricted to yearly groups; or failing this again, that seniority should be governed by actual service, with an additional (6 months) assumed service for every year or part of a year war service.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

A very lively discussion took place with regard to Vocational Education, so that headway was a somewhat difficult problem. Eventually, however, a start was made, and two resolutions were carried. The first was that nominee for

the position of tutor be submitted for approval to the several District meetings, followed by the decision that a choice of tutor should be allowed the pupils. After further discussion it was apparent that there was insufficient time for the item to be got through, and the meeting was adjourned. A further meeting was arranged for in which to complete the agenda.

NORTHERN IRELAND.

A meeting was held at Belfast on Thursday, March 11th, with Mr. R. E. Dudley, P.O., in the chair.

The following proposals were passed unanimously:—

E.C.'s proposed scheme of "Promotion by Merit."—It was decided, after a lively discussion as to what would constitute "candidates' own expense," to support the E.C.'s scheme with the following amendments:—

Para. 1.—Candidates failing first time to be allowed a second chance at the Crown's expense; subsequent chances to be allowed at the candidate's own "personal" expense including any entrance fee.

Para. 5.—The Board to announce the date and number of vacancies "at least" six months prior to the day of the examination, and to invite applications.

Monthly Pay.—Resolved: "That this Branch of the P.S.A. is strongly in favour of receiving salary on a monthly basis for Asst. P.O.'s."

Vocational Education.—Mr. R. E. Dudley brought forward several points on this subject, but owing to information on the subject being rather limited, the following resolution was passed: "The Local Secretary be urged to obtain full particulars regarding Vocational Education, and to call a meeting at an early date to discuss the same."

After a discussion of local matters, the meeting concluded with a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman.

SOUTHAMPTON

At a meeting held at Southampton on March 11th, **PROMOTION BY MERIT** was keenly discussed, and the meeting decided to reject the scheme as it stands, but pressed that reconstruction entrants be eligible to sit for examination to the Preventive Officer Grade according to seniority of actual service, and that an official seniority list be published.

WIDOWS' & ORPHANS' PENSION SCHEME.

It was agreed that such a scheme to embrace all Civil Servants was essential, and a scheme submitted as a basis for discussion was debated. It was agreed that the scheme be submitted to the Association for discussion and general circulation, the object in view being to provide a scheme of pensions to widows and orphans of Civil Servants.

RE-ORGANISATION.

The meeting was of the opinion that the present time is opportune for reopening our case

for re-organisation on the grounds of increased importance and volume of work.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

The scheme was rejected in view of local facilities.

UNIFORM.

The subject caused great discussion, and a resolution was carried that the Board be approached with a view to obtaining a satisfactory allowance for the provision of uniform by officers themselves, of a standard cut and material. Local grievances were discussed, and a successful meeting closed at 10 p.m.

C. and E. DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL.

The seventy-first meeting of the Council was held in London on February 24th, 1926, the chair being taken by Sir H. P. Hamilton, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

SENIORITY.

Discussion was continued on the re-adjourned proposal of the Official Side that a joint seniority list be compiled of all members of the Treasury Junior Clerical Grade employed in the Department, the Official Side pointing out, in connection with a supplementary Staff Side proposal that a common seniority list for Higher Clerical Officers should simultaneously be prepared, that the major proposal was itself a great experiment, and that it was undesirable immediately to extend the experiment into a field where pooling for seniority purposes became more difficult.

DEPARTMENTAL MARKINGS.

The Staff Side proposal relating to the grant of facilities for representations by, or on behalf of, Temporary Clerks in this connection was again considered and adjourned.

UNATTACHED OFFICERS.

The Staff Side withdrew the reference concerning the reopening of opportunities of appointment of Unattached Officers to fixed stations in the Ports of London and Liverpool.

RELIEF OF CLERKS.

Arising out of a disagreement reported by a Local Committee on the proposed arrangements for relieving a Departmental Clerk in an isolated station, it was stated that the Official Side were giving the general question consideration and hoped to arrange for a joint discussion.

REMUNERATION.

A report was received from a Special Committee appointed to report on the facts as regards the comparison previously made between the work of the Office Keeper and Assistant in this Department and in certain other Departments. The Staff Side's claim, principally based on a comparison between the past and present conditions obtaining in this Department, was again developed, but a disagreement was registered.

WATCHER-CONSTABLES.

In connection with a re-adjourned disagreement reported by the Office Keepers' Committee, the Official Side stated that no development on the general question of Watcher-Constables was likely to mature for the time being.

OTHER MATTERS.

A number of Local and Office Committee decisions were considered, with results that have been communicated to the Committees concerned. On a report made by the appropriate Grade Committee, agreement was registered on the material and cut of future issues of uniform for Watchers.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on March 24th, 1926.

BOUQUET FOR CUSTOMS.

The following, which is distinctly refreshing and is in wonderful contrast to the attacks we have experienced in the Press, appeared recently in the "Southern Daily Echo":—

When they asked the old lady why she bowed whenever the name of the devil was mentioned, her reply was, "Politeness costs nothing—and you never know!" But our Customs officials, who have just been congratulated by Mr. Tom Shaw, M.P., on their politeness and efficiency, give their politeness without even that eye to the future which the old lady displayed. It is a widely recognised fact, in which we may take a little local pride, that in no port in the country does the reputation of the Customs officials for both these virtues stand higher than it does in Southampton. Travellers, with large quantities of luggage, have been known specially to choose Southampton as their port of landing owing to the reputation for courtesy and despatch earned by the local Customs. Another branch of the Civil Service to the politeness of whose representatives a public tribute has recently been paid is the Ordnance Survey. Representatives of the Survey are empowered to enter any enclosed ground to examine newly-erected structures, yet anything in the nature of friction is practically unknown; which is saying a good deal. While the bouquets are being handed round it would be unfair to omit the Post Office and, indeed, the Civil Service generally, which for the most part is "civil" in more senses than one, in addition to possessing a very high average indeed of efficiency.

GRAVESEND DEBATING SOCIETY.

A very interesting debate was held at the Liberal Club, Gravesend, on February 16th, when the following resolution was discussed:—"That Scotsmen are not mean." Proposed by Mr. A. Brown, and opposed by Mr. A. Woodford. The ballot resulted in a majority vote in favour of the resolution. Mr. A. Keeble occupied the chair.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE NOTES.

Whilst I have heard Whitleyism blamed for the disaster that overtook our Reconstruction Claim, I have never heard it explained just how and where Whitleyism failed us. The one rock that wrecked our hopes was the delay in taking our case. When the Board announced that it was not intended to deal with the Reorganisation of the Waterguard and the Outdoor Service at the same time, our troubles commenced. This decision was resisted, but it could not be shaken. I cannot think it was prompted by anything but purely administrative considerations, because at that time none could foresee the coming storm. The Outdoor Service's desire that their case should be taken first was legitimate. As the more numerous body, their claim to precedence in the matter could not reasonably have been challenged. Our claim was lodged in September, 1920, but it was not until July, 1921, that any move was made towards negotiations. By then the country's financial outlook had undergone a complete change. Economy was the order of the day. The Geddes Committee was on its rounds, and a request for new money was bound to be fiercely opposed. We were left trying to secure increases of pay when all except ourselves were talking about reductions. It was altogether a heart-breaking business, and particularly so for those who had spared no pains in preparing a case which, with ordinary luck and in ordinary times, must have brought substantial improvements. In those ten months, during which the claim was waiting attention, the position was carefully watched by our Whitley representatives and every opportunity taken of the facilities afforded by Whitleyism of worrying the Board into making a start on the claim. Direct questions were put to the Chairman of the Board at the monthly meetings of the Departmental Council, and ultimately things were brought to a head by the Staff Side of the Departmental Council moving the adjournment of the June, 1921, meeting of the Council as a protest against the delay in taking the Waterguard case. On the 7th of the following month the Chairman of the Board sent for Mr. Howell and handed him the statement that commenced the first negotiations. But for the pressure exercised through Whitleyism it is a matter of some doubt whether negotiations would have commenced as soon as they did. I do not think much would have resulted from Parliamentary action. Members of Parliament were all talking economy at the time, and our cause would not have been popular with them. Railway employees and miners had just put up with reductions. So much for the delay in taking our case.

As to the negotiations themselves, it was like looking for roses in December. The presentation of the case left nothing to be desired. As far as I could see the most was made of every fact and argument that could be brought forward in our

favour, but the call for economy was too big and powerful for us. We were too late! I cannot see that anybody was to blame. It was just sheer bad luck. Dame Fortune played us a nasty trick. The storm that caught us in Whitleyism would have caught us had we been negotiating by any other way; in fact, I believe that anything approaching public negotiation would not have brought the little progress that was eventually effected.

If any of my readers can show me how and where Whitleyism let us down, I shall be glad to hear from them. As it is, my opinion is that Whitleyism served us well.

M. P. O'FLYNN.

CIVIL SERVICE ARTS COUNCIL.

The 1926 Arts and Crafts Exhibition will be held in the North Court of the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London, from Saturday, March 20th, to Monday, April 5th (Good Friday excepted).

There will be music by the Civil Service Orchestra, the Civil Service Choir, the Whitehall Music Society, etc., on Sunday at 3.30 p.m., Thursday at 6 p.m., and Saturday at 3 p.m., and Folk Dancing on Thursday, March 25th, at 6 p.m.

Admission to the Exhibition will be free, on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; on Thursday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and on Sunday, 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

A catalogue of exhibits, including programme of music, can be obtained for sixpence.

A LONDON DISTRICT COMMITTEE.

We hear of a suggestion that a Standing Committee of the London Branch should be appointed. This would be a decided move in the right direction. London has, of late, been showing signs of increased interest and activity, and the need for the District Officers to keep in more personal touch with the members is becoming increasingly evident. It is claimed that the proposed Committee would facilitate a better co-ordination of work and ideas. The suggestion is that the Committee should be composed of members from each of the main stations. Each member elected would be responsible for his respective station to the extent of collecting data for representation to the Committee. The District meetings would ultimately benefit by the fact that the Committee would be in possession of first-hand knowledge of questions arising from time to time.



By "SEAGULL."

"Anything to declare, madam?"
 "Oui, je l'aime!"
 "Anything to declare, sir?"
 "Nowt!"

* * * *

Police statistics show that a murder a day is committed in Chicago. Evidently the natives there believe that a murder a day keeps the doctor away.

* * * *

That the man behind the megaphone is free from worry is discounted by the following apologia left on the P.O.'s pad:

"Sir, S.S. Marinette passed the Boarding Station this morning, but I don't know where she is from. I hailed the vessel three times and silence was the stern reply."

* * * *

A writer in the "New Civilian," commenting upon the vast number of Civil Service Associations and kindred bodies, wonders why this sort of unity is not extended to include separate associations for people who have red hair or a squint in the left eye!

* * * *

Bad handwriting sometimes leads to trouble. The other day an almost illegible requisition for stationery lost its bearings, but was eventually returned to the sender with the following endorsement by the searcher: "Ship sailed. No account."

* * * *

BLAME IT ON THE SILK-WORM.

A piece of silk becomes a dress;
 A dress becomes a woman;
 A woman becomes a mother;
 A mother becomes a mother-in-law;
 A mother-in-law becomes a d--- nuisance.

* * * *

IN THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT.

In the House of Parliament on February 15th, Viscount Sandon waxed eloquent and furious against the extravagant use of official stationery in Government Offices. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury gave a fitting reply, and also mentioned that a number of scribbling pads had been placed in the House for the use of members who were going to make a speech, but instead of being used for that purpose, the pads had all disappeared from the precincts of the House, not leaving even so much as the trace of the cardboard backs!

CIVIL SERVICE CONFEDERATION.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Monday, March 1st, at the Church House, Westminster, S.W.1. Mr. W. H. James presided over an attendance of thirty-one.

Mr. R. E. Elkington, the recently-appointed representative of the Customs and Excise Group, and Mr. G. M. Wilkinson, the recently-appointed representative of the Post Office Group, attended the Executive Committee for the first time.

In response to the request made by the Confederation for a special meeting of the National Staff Side to consider the question of withdrawing the Staff Side representatives from the Civil Service Dinner Committee, a letter was read from the Chairman of the National Staff Side to the effect that he had come to the conclusion that a special meeting was not warranted and that the request of the Confederation could not be complied with. Some discussion having taken place, it was agreed that further consideration of the question of Staff Side participation in the Civil Service Dinner be postponed for six months.

Correspondence was read from the Customs and Excise Federation on the subjects of (i.) Selective Recruitment and (ii.) Enlistment without Permission. It was reported that a meeting of the National Staff Side Committee on Selective Recruitment had recently been held and that this Committee was now proceeding with its work. Appreciation was expressed of a grant of £5 made by the Customs and Excise Federation towards the cost of obtaining legal opinion on the question of Enlistment without Permission, and further action in connection with this matter was left in the hands of the Parliamentary and Publicity Committee.

An invitation was received from the Dutch Civil Service Association to attend the Congress of that organisation to be held at the Hague on May 31st and June 1st next. It was agreed to reply expressing appreciation of this invitation, but regretting that it could not be accepted.

Mr. Philip Millwood, General Secretary, reported that correspondence was taking place with the Admiralty on matters arising out of the reduction of Pembroke and Rosyth Dockyards, and that the question of the discharge of established workmen at Lodge Hill Laboratory, Chatham, had also been taken up with the Admiralty.

Considerable discussion took place on the proposed grant of £200,000 for Civil Service sport, now postponed by the Government, and a resolution was carried in the following terms:

"That this meeting of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Confederation, representing 60,000 Civil Servants, having carefully considered the proposal of the Government to provide £50,000 per annum for four years for

sports purposes, places on record its satisfaction that the fulfilment of the proposal has been deferred. It is of opinion that the original proposal was an undesirable one for the following reasons:—

(a) That the moment for taking this step is inopportune and inappropriate, and is likely to be used to prejudice the just claims of the Service for reasonable and adequate treatment in other directions.

(b) That, before proposing to make provision for sports purposes for Civil Servants, the Government should first have regard to the necessities of life of its employees, of whom 76 per cent. receive less than 80s. per week, including bonus, and 50 per cent. less than 60s. 6d.;

(c) That the provision of sports grounds cannot be regarded as a substitute for the honouring of agreements arrived at with the Staff in regard to Arbitration and conditions of service;

(d) That the proposal would have been a more gracious one had the Government shown itself more ready to assume its responsibility of defending the Civil Service against unwarranted criticisms to which the Service itself is prevented from replying.

The Executive Committee further instructs the Secretary to transmit this resolution to the Prime Minister, the Civil Service Sports Council, the National Staff Side, and the Press."

A memorandum by Mr. W. J. Brown on the subject of the resumption of open competition, setting forth the view that vacancies in Grades above the basic Grade should not be filled by persons from outside the Civil Service while there are existing Civil Servants available and qualified for promotion, was, after a lengthy discussion, adopted as the policy of the Confederation and referred to the General Purposes Committee of the Confederation for action.

The position I showed is that in force in London, and is recognised as correct.

REPLY TO "CHUBB."

I do not know of any special regulation applicable to a corpse in transit from the Irish Free State to Northern Ireland.

Regarding the disposal of a Home Office Licence and Schedule for imported explosives, see Volume IV., Part II., paras. 16 and 19. The Licence is the property of the Importer and the Schedule will be returned to the Home Office.



Answers to questions given at the examination held February 9th.

FIRST PAPER, QUESTION 1 (a).

Question.

1.—Write a report to your Superior Officer on one of the following incidents, stating fully your proceedings and what you, as a Preventive Officer, considered it necessary to do:—

(a) At 8 p.m. you intercept at landing the master of a local tug. In reply to questions he produces a pound of Cavendish Tobacco, stating that it had been given to him by the master of a certain vessel he had been assisting into harbour on her arrival from Foreign. He informs you that the tug must leave for another port during the night and he is anxious to avoid any delay in departure.

Answer.

Port of
Station.

Date.

Sir,—

I beg to report that whilst patrolling the station at 8 p.m. to-day, I intercepted Mr. John Jones, master of the tug "Spray," landing from his vessel.

In reply to my questions regarding dutiable goods he produced 1 lb. of Cavendish tobacco, which he stated he had received from the master of the s.s. "Rouen," British, 1,475 tons, after mooring the vessel on her arrival from Hamburg on this station.

I requested Mr. Jones to return to his vessel, where I further questioned him and his crew fully regarding further dutiable goods.

Together with Mr. A. Thomas, A.P.O., I had the tug carefully rummaged, nothing further being discovered.

I then requested Mr. Jones to accompany me to the s.s. "Rouen" to verify his statements.

Mr. William McDonald, master of the s.s. "Rouen," admitted having given the tobacco to the tug boat master as a present for the careful mooring of his vessel. He also stated he had not declared or produced the tobacco on arrival. The vessel was also carefully rummaged without result.

No other irregularity was observed or learned of in this case.

Both offenders were offered the option and elected to deposit treble duty-paid value, i.e., £2 1s. 6d., each.



All contributions relative to this column should be addressed to "Scrutator," c/o The Editor, 59, Etta Street, Deptford, London, S.E.8.

Thanks to "Ness" for his interesting letter.

I do not think any useful purpose can be served by publishing the authorities he quotes. They are very old and one of them is not official.

Forms 480 and 482 were issued to the masters of the tug and steamer respectively.

As the tug was under orders to leave the port during the night, I accepted a further deposit of £2 from the master, gave him a receipt on Form 480, and released the vessel from detention.

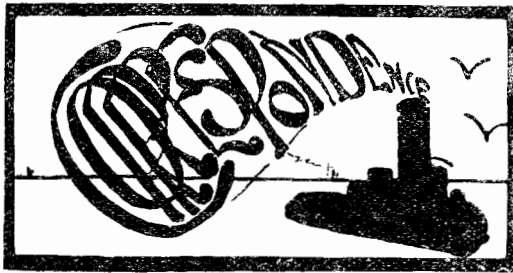
The tug is locally owned by the Haulage and Lighterage Company, Mercantile Chambers, Quayside.

Form 481, suitably endorsed, and Form 483 are attached herewith.

The three deposits will be paid in to-morrow morning.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant
No. 21, P.O.



The name and address of the writer (not necessarily for publication) should be given in all letters to the Editor, who accepts no responsibility for the views expressed.

THE A.P.O. AND THE EXAMINATION.

Sir,—The new scheme for calling A.P.O.'s for the P.O.'s examination is supposed to alleviate stagnation. I cannot discover that this is the case. The scheme will cause great injustice, and will considerably jeopardise the careers of many Officers. Conversely, it will give a great lift in the Service to the gifted few. It therefore resolves itself into this: that the effects of stagnation are to be removed from a few and distributed amongst many. Those who will receive the greatest blow are the ex-Service, ex-Boy Messengers. These men have a definite right to priority, both in seniority and in being called for examination.

I would remind the Executive that this "negligible" minority must be given fair treatment and not swamped. They (the Executive) must remember that minorities have their lawful

rights equally with majorities. It is up to the Association to be fair and play the game.—Yours, etc.,

AV. IN.

METHOD OF PROMOTION.

Sir,—In view of the divided opinion as to the present method of promotion in the Waterguard, and the admitted fact that there must come a time when promotion will become stagnant, I would submit the following proposals for the consideration of the Preventive Service, which, by the way, appear to have been accepted in regard to salary by the Board in 1926, but not carried out owing to too much expenditure on other Departments.

By the proposed scheme more responsibility would be placed on each officer, with payment bearing relation to his worth. Under this system it is maintained that it would tend to both efficiency and contentment. It will be seen that any apparent increase in expenditure would be, to a great extent, counter-balanced by the following economies:—

Saving of all travelling and subsistence caused by absence of any officer on leave, sickness, etc., by relief being provided on each station;

Acting allowance would become non-existent, and also the saving of calling numbers of men to London for examination at the Crown's expense;

Transfers could be reduced to a minimum, and there would be a better opportunity of equal distribution of emoluments.

The scheme suggested is as follows:—

Entrance by competitive examination as A.P.O.'s on lines similar to those of the late Outdoor Officer Class, 19-24 years.

(1) Salary commencing at £100 per annum, by £5 increments for 8 years to £140 at commencement of ninth year of service.

After satisfactory report as to ability and character by Waterguard Superintendents, to become Preventive Officers, at a salary commencing at £150, rising by £7 10s. to £200, at which a further report is to be made as to fitness, etc., and if satisfactory to be placed on a scale from £210 by £10 to £250. In this connection it may be necessary to grade ports and station.

(2) All present A.P.O.'s with over 10 years' service, after satisfactory report, to be placed on a commencing salary of £150, and designated Preventive Officers.

(3) Preventive Officers, after 18 years' service, and not under 38 years of age, may apply for permission to sit for examination for Chief Preventive Officer. Examination to be on the lines of that for Surveyors of Customs.—Yours, etc.,

OBSERVER.