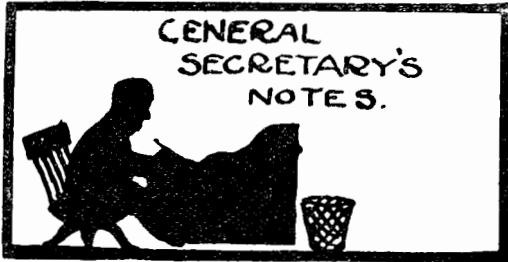


The Customs Journal.

No. 565.

June 19th, 1926.

Fortnightly.



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

The scantiness of the last "Journal" issue will no doubt have been duly noted by the members in general. What is unlikely, however, is that the reason for this will occur to the majority. It is a phenomenon which appears each year at this season, and is usually difficult to overcome. On this occasion happenings in the industrial world seem to have diverted interest even from the correspondence columns.

The reason is that those who can usually be relied upon for sustained material support are, during this period, occupied with Conference business and are too busy. Others, who can usually be looked to for occasional contributions, are concentrating on the prospects of good weather for holidays; and the result is a slump in copy for the "Journal."

I take this as an opportunity to give a reminder that the success of the "Journal" depends almost entirely on the members giving practical support. There is a certain reward for those who do give a helping hand by contributing to the pages of our little paper, and that is, the right to criticise other contributors. I am afraid there are some who languidly arrogate this "right" to themselves and who despise the more energetic method of earning it. This, of course, is (to use an expression much in evidence just now) decidedly un-English. Every good constitutionalist believes that no man has rights until he earns them by pulling his weight with his colleagues. Applied to the "C.J.," this principle means that members who criticise without contributing have not the interests of their colleagues at heart, and are a menace to harmony and good fellowship.

No greater mistake can be made than to imagine that the existence of our unpretentious little journal is of only third-rate importance.

If anyone doubt that it is of first-class importance, let him cast his mind back to the dismal period when publication was suspended in the early stages of the war. No further evidence is required to prove how vital is the part played in our affairs by the "Customs Journal."

* * * *

It is encouraging to note that some Districts have been seriously considering the development of the "Journal," and have gone so far as to pass resolutions for the Annual Council Meeting urging that more money should be spent in this direction. I would point out, however, that whilst money is always useful for such a purpose, the Districts could help matters in quite a different way by taking it upon themselves to ensure full expression of their respective aims and ambitions through the medium of the "Journal."

There could be no more appropriate time to strike out in this direction than will be afforded when the Council Agenda is circulated to the District Officers very shortly. District meetings will then be called at which Councillors will receive their instructions. It would be a most useful move if each District instructed its Council representatives to make a special point of fully co-operating with the Editor in any suggestions he should put forward at the Council for improving the "Journal." The usual appeal made by the Editor on these occasions is that each Councillor should undertake to contribute at least one item during a twelvemonth, and to encourage others to do likewise. I think that if action is taken such as I suggest, the appeal this year will be more fruitful than in the past. It is to be hoped that these words of mine will be taken seriously and will result in a greater appreciation by the members of the anxieties of our worthy Editor.

* * * *

A very interesting item appeared recently in the "New Civilian" in the shape of a report made by Mr. Sverdrop Holdt to Norwegian Civil Servants on the working of the Whitley system in England.

Mr. Holdt, who is a representative of an organisation of Civil Servants in Norway, visited this country a short while ago for the purpose of studying Whitley methods. He attended a meeting of the Departmental Council, and of the C. and E. Joint Committee, and was also present during the proceedings at other Whitley meetings in various Civil Service Departments. His report ought to be most instructive to those people who are not satisfied with Whitley as a method of negotiation. Mr. Holdt's description

of what he saw brings out clearly the valuable points we ourselves frequently overlook. He does not make the mistake of assuming that Whitleyism pretends to be a system of forcing concessions from people who don't want to give them, but he appears to have been greatly impressed by the maximum of opportunity afforded for reasonable and profitable discussion of all matters coming within the purview of Whitleyism. It is quite evident that the people in Norway are not afforded that means of free discussion, and that Mr. Holdt considers that we in this country are extremely fortunate for the reason alone that we can get proper discussion.

* * * *

Just now there is a scarcity of interesting Association news. Somehow the industrial unrest has slowed down Staff Side activity throughout the Civil Service. Another reason is that many Associations are busy with annual meetings.

By the time these Notes appear, the Executive of the P.S.A. will have completed a very strenuous week. The Headquarters office will be the scene of much activity, and after the Executive members have departed the secretaries will have to get down immediately to the task of carrying decisions into effect, circulating Council literature to the Districts, and attending to the final preparations for the Conference, which, it is expected, the Executive will fix for July 14th. This date must not, however, be taken as final. Full details will appear in the next "Journal" issue.

J. MERRON.

PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION.

WEST HARTLEPOOL.

The annual meeting was held on May 28th, when Mr. Burke presided over a good attendance.

REPORT.—The District Secretary and the District Organiser reported that the District was in a sound condition.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.—The election of the officers resulted as follows:—Chairman, Mr. J. W. Roberts; Vice-Chairman, Mr. F. C. Marley; District Secretary, Mr. P. J. Donovan; District Organiser, Mr. H. C. Oak.

SENIORITY OF POST-WAR ENTRANTS.—The following resolution was passed: "That at the next Conference every endeavour be made to arrive at a satisfactory settlement of this question on the following lines: Seniority according to age in each entrance examination or date of entry into the Service."

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.—The meeting discussed and approved of the scheme as circulated by the Executive Committee.

PROMOTION BY MERIT.—The open competitive system was discussed, and the meeting expressed its strong disapproval, emphasising the fact that the proposed scheme will increase and not diminish the hardships now prevailing. The following resolution was passed: "That the present system of promotion by merit be changed, and that successful candidates receive promotion in order of seniority and not by merit."

FAILED A.P.O.'s.—After some discussion this subject was left in the hands of the members affected to prepare and submit a scheme.

CIVIL SERVICE CONFEDERATION.

REPORT OF ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING.

The Twelfth (Annual) Council Meeting of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Saturday, May 29th, 1926, at Caxton Hall, Westminster. Mr. W. H. James presided over an attendance of 84 representatives of constituent organisations, in addition to the officers and other members of the Executive Committee.

The morning session was occupied by the consideration of the Annual Report and matters arising therefrom. The consideration of the Report was resumed in the afternoon, when the Report was adopted, together with the Report on Parliamentary and Publicity work, the Hon. Treasurer's Report, and the Financial Statements for the year ended March 31st, 1926.

Arising out of the National Whitley Council Report, discussion took place on the action taken by the General Purposes Committee of the National Staff Side in regard to the recent industrial crisis, which had been endorsed by the General Purposes Committee of the Confederation. After a full debate, a resolution, moved by Mr. W. J. Brown, was adopted (with 12 votes against) in the following terms:—

"That this Council approves and notes with appreciation the action of the General Purposes Committee of the National Council and of the General Purposes Committee of the Confederation during the recent industrial dispute."

Certain cases were brought to the notice of the Council in which there appeared to be a possibility that Civil Servants might be adversely affected in their official careers owing to circumstances arising out of the industrial dispute, and it was resolved that the Confederation should give all assistance in its power, in such cases, in support of its affiliated members.

A letter was read from the Chairman of the National Staff Side, enclosing copy of a letter addressed to the Prime Minister asking that a Deputation from the Staff Side should be received by the Prime Minister on the subject of the continued refusal of the Official Side of the National Whitley Council to admit the right of

the Staff Side to discuss with the Official Side complaints regarding the Departmental application or interpretation of National Council agreements, and it was resolved:—

“That this meeting warmly endorses the terms of the letter addressed to the Prime Minister by the Staff Side of the National Whitley Council, and affirms the urgent necessity of a settlement on the points raised in the interest of the smooth and effective working of the Whitley system.”

At a later stage in the proceedings, a resolution, moved on behalf of the Executive Officers' Association: “That this Council accepts the action of the National Whitley Council Staff Side in proposing the Constitutional Amendments which were discussed at the meeting held on March 5th, 1926, but authorises the Executive Committee, if those amendments cannot be secured, to press for the establishment of a joint Executive Sub-Committee of both sides of the Council with power to secure the effective application of national agreements,” was referred to the Executive Committee of the Confederation for examination and action if necessary.

A resolution moved by Mr. S. Yates, on behalf of the C. and E. Federation, to the effect that the Confederation should consider the field of activity of the National Staff Side, including the Defence movement, and that a considered memorandum be presented for consideration of constituent organisations, was defeated.

Some discussion took place on the position of Civil Servants in relation to the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, and two resolutions were adopted in the following terms:—

(a) “That the advice previously tendered by the Confederation to its constituent organisations not to take part in the Contributory Pensions Act scheme be now withdrawn, and that members be advised to consider the desirability or otherwise of availing themselves of the Government's scheme, it being impossible between now and July 4th, 1926, the date of expiry of the option, to make any considerable progress with the proposed Civil Service scheme.”

(b) “That the Confederation take steps to endeavour to obtain for Civil Servants who are in receipt of salaries less than £250 per annum, and have been employed in an excepted occupation continuously since 1912, the right to become voluntary contributors under the Contributory Pensions scheme.”

It was reported that the terms of remit for arbitration submitted to the Official Side in regard to the proposed discontinuance of the super-cut had so far not been agreed, and it was resolved to communicate with the National Staff Side expressing profound dissatisfaction with the lack of progress made on this subject, and that the National Staff Side be requested to take every action practicable to obtain a settlement of this question by arbitration.

Mr. W. H. James and Mr. C. A. W. Sanders were re-elected unopposed as President and Hon. Treasurer respectively. Mr. George Chaso and Mr. Ross Wyld were elected as Vice-Presidents.

For the six seats on the Executive Committee filled by election from the whole Council, the following were elected: Mr. A. L. N. D. Houghton, Mr. W. J. Brown, Mr. W. E. Llewellyn, Mr. J. H. Macrae-Gibson, Mr. J. W. Chapple, Mr. F. C. Osgood.

For the eleven seats held by the Confederation on the Staff Side of the National Whitley Council the following were elected: Mr. G. R. Speed, Mr. G. Chase, Mr. A. L. N. D. Houghton, Mr. C. A. W. Sanders, Mr. R. D. Crook, Mr. W. J. Brown, Mr. R. McC. Beamish, Mr. W. E. Llewellyn, Mr. W. H. James, Mr. W. G. Boys, and Miss Rose Smith-Rose.

CIVIL SERVICE HOUSING ASSOCIATION, LTD.

It is encouraging to report that the Civil Service Housing Association continues to make steady progress. Several members have purchased houses through the Association; others have found houses to let suitable for their requirements, and advances amounting to £10,000 have been secured for members upon terms which compare favourably with those offered by any other organisation; indeed, it has saved one member over £50 in repayments over 15 years on a £500 loan, and another over £70 on a similar loan for 20 years. Members cannot be too strongly reminded that building society rates require expert analysis, and they should consult the Association before entering into mortgage arrangements.

A great deal of general assistance and advice has been given. A full legal service is now provided for members at extremely moderate fees, and one of the kindest of the many congratulatory letters which we have received thanked the Association for saving a member over £16 in law costs alone on one transaction.

The officers have seriously considered closing the lists of applications for share capital. There is, however, still time to become a member by payment of £1 for each share taken up. The minimum holding to secure membership is one share.

In any case, the Association has “come to stay,” and those who wish to get into it on the present favourable terms will have to look sharp. We want two kinds of members: first, those whom we can assist immediately to purchase or to sell a house, and second, those who will not only “sport a £,” but will also send us along some loan capital or deposit money to enable us to assist junior members of the Service.

George Middleton, Chairman.
Walter G. Boys, Secretary.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

URGENT.

At the Executive Meeting held in London on the 16th inst., the following resolution was passed:—

“That members of the P.S.A. be advised to consider the desirability of taking advantage of the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925.”

The closing date for application is July 4th, 1926. Forms of application can be obtained from the Civil Service Approved Society, 59, Palace Street, Westminster, London, S.W.1.

WIDOWS', ORPHANS' & OLD AGE CONTRIBUTORY PENSIONS ACT.

A deputation from the National Whitley Council (Staff Side), together with representatives of the Post Office Approved Society, the Civil Service Clerical Approved Society, and the Civil Service Approved Society, was received by Sir Arthur Robinson, Sir Walter Kinnear, and other officials of the Ministry of Health, on April 30th. The list of points raised by the deputation was as follows:—

(1) That the Act be amended to provide that Civil Servants who have been continuously employed in excepted employment may, when retiring on pension, become voluntary contributors to the Widows' Pension part of the Act without the necessity of taking up National Health Insurance.

(2) Officers in receipt of less than £250 who have not two years' service in the Army or Navy, or compulsorily insured persons under the National Insurance Act for two years, are unable to become voluntary contributors for National Insurance benefits. They are unequally treated as compared with those over £250.

(3) The position of women under the Act is regarded as unsatisfactory, and it is proposed—

(a) That they should be granted total exemption, or alternatively,

(b) Accepted as voluntary contributors in order that their orphan dependents (if any) may benefit, and established women benefit under the Old Age Pension part of the Act.

(4) Overtime, Sunday pay and allowances in determining the salary limit are being included by the Post Office. This is not the practice in other Departments nor, so far as we are aware, is it the desire of the Ministry of Health. It is considered that these items, especially allowances, should not be included in arriving at the limiting salary figure.

(5) In connection with the present regulations bearing on the subject of the fluctuating bonus, it is requested that an exact definition of the present position be given.

(6) The reduction of the Old Age Pension in the case of voluntary contributors employed in excepted employment or ceasing to be so employed, entering at ages over 45, is considered unsatisfactory. A statement of the position is desired in connection with—

(a) legality of the regulations, and

(b) the persons who, relying on Memorandum 243/x, had become voluntary contributors.

(7) The arrangements in connection with the refundment of certain over-payments do not appear to be entirely satisfactory, and a statement on this position was also desired.

(8) The position of—

(a) Civil Servants now serving at home, but who may hereafter be sent for service abroad for the time being; and

(b) those who were serving abroad when the Act was passed, but who thereafter return to this country,

appears to be obscure, and a statement on this was also requested.

Sir Arthur Robinson promised that a reply would be communicated to the National Staff Side as soon as consideration had been given to the questions at issue.

EDITOR'S NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The G.S. has taken up the cudgels on our behalf, and has devoted a large portion of his notes in this issue to the subject of the annual slump. We certainly agree that we did look rather skinny last time, but unlike the brown cat, it was not through feeding on skimmed milk. We get the full cream all right, through various channels, but it is an unfortunate fact that there is not sufficient of it. Now, we can give excuses, and we can give reasons. There is a big difference between reasons and excuses. The stock excuse for being late at the office is that the train was late. We know what the reason is, as a rule.

The excuse for our shrinkage was that our contributors were touched by the tired and drawn expression on the Editor's face and thought that he ought to have a rest. He's had it.

* * * *

We won't give the reason.

* * * *

However, we've rolled our sleeves up and have settled down in earnest to gather our forces together, and future issues are going to brighten up once more. Of course, readers will take this as a promise, but we are coming to the readers themselves to make the promise good by taking a hand with the polishing.

WATERGUARD WISDOM



The mere sight of a fore-peak is enough to make some A.P.o.'s yawn -



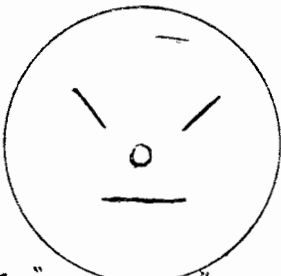
but to go into one !!!??-



Suspicion! - Has he got the "stuff"?



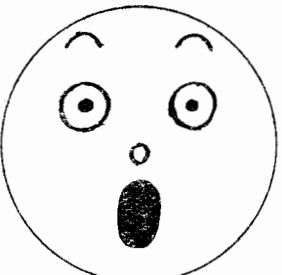
Speaking from the bridge.



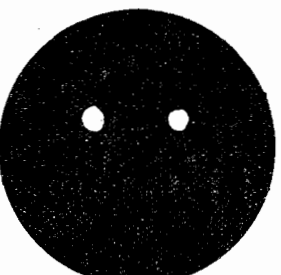
The "Blue Funnel" Line.



"Where's she from, Captain?"



Surprise of P.O. on hearing his crew have found the stuff.



In the bunkers.



"You know, - never let on."



That not-on-Sunday feeling.



Where the f--- --!! have my crew got to?



That on-the-note feeling.

DEPARTMENTAL CONFERENCE.

The bi-monthly conference of the Departmental Staff Side representatives was held recently in the Upper House, Church House, Great Smith Street, Westminster, Mr. A. J. C. Edwards, of the National Staff Side, presiding.

Messrs. Chase and Winyard, of the National Staff Side, were in attendance, together with 24 representatives of the Departments.

(1) SECURITY OF TENURE.—The Secretary stated that further conferences and negotiations with the President of the Board of Education had taken place in connection with the retirement of certain officers in that Department before the normal age limit. Correspondence had also taken place with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the general service issues involved.

Some discussion took place, and the meeting unanimously endorsed the action of the National Staff Side in endeavouring to prevent an infringement of what were regarded as the statutory rights in connection with the Superannuation Acts. It was stated that, in all probability, a deputation to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would very shortly discuss the whole question.

(2) ARBITRATION.—The Secretary stated that a number of difficulties still existed in connection with the transmission of cases to the Court, the Official Side still adopting the attitude that certain types of cases did not come within the terms of the agreement and were therefore not suitable for arbitration. The Staff Side of the National Council were extremely dissatisfied with the attitude adopted, and it was thought that this question should be one for the forthcoming discussion with the Prime Minister when the proposed deputation took place.

(3) WAR BONUS (SINGLE MEN).—The Secretary stated that a letter had been received from the Treasury acceding to the suggestion that an independent adjudicator should be appointed, subject to certain reservations. The Joint Committee considered that these reservations were not acceptable, and had replied to the Treasury agreeing to the appointment of an adjudicator and specifying certain alterations in the conditions which could be accepted by the Treasury on behalf of the Government. In the Treasury letter it was stated there were 3,700 claims which had not been settled. The meeting endorsed the action of the Joint Committee, and it was intimated that when the appointment of the adjudicator had been finally agreed, an announcement of procedure would be circulated in the Civil Service Press.

(4) AMENDMENT OF NATIONAL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION.—It was stated that the amendment to the constitution of the National Council proposed by the Staff Side at the last Council meeting had not been accepted by the Official Side. In consequence, the Staff Side had

decided to table this as a subject in connection with the deputation to the Prime Minister.

(5) WIDOWS', ORPHANS' AND OLD AGE CONTRIBUTORY PENSIONS ACT. -- The Secretary announced that a deputation from the National Staff Side would be received by Sir Arthur Robinson at the Ministry of Health in connection with this subject to discuss questions arising from the operation and administration of the Act.

C. & E. DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL.

The seventy-fourth meeting of the Council was held in London on June 2nd, 1926, the chair being taken by Sir Horace P. Hamilton, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

MEMBERSHIP OF ASSOCIATIONS.

At the Official Side request the Council again adjourned the Staff Side proposal that the terms of paragraph 6 of General Order 79/1919 be reiterated by General Order.

VOLUNTEERING DURING GENERAL STRIKE.

The Staff Side enquired if the fact of volunteering or not volunteering during the recent strike emergency would be noted on an Officer's record. At the Official Side request the question was adjourned.

CONTRIBUTORY PENSIONS.

The Official Side undertook, in response to a Staff Side request, to announce in an early General Order that all certificates of eligibility of C. and E. Officers for voluntary insurance under the Act would be obtainable from the Accountant and Comptroller-General's Office.

POSTAL DRAFTS.

The Staff Side proposed that the practice of giving on postal drafts details of the headings under which the payment was made should be discontinued. After explanation, it was agreed that informal discussions should be held with a view to effect changes, if possible, in this direction.

MATCH FACTORIES.

Arising out of the consideration of a Local Committee decision it was agreed that the Staff Side should be furnished with a draft of the proposed instructions to Watchers in connection with the contemplated changes in the system of staffing certain match factories.

SPECIAL REMUNERATION.

The Official Side now made an offer, consideration of which was adjourned by the Council, concerning cases where an Officer (a) performed all the work in connection with new claims arising out of the Old Age Pension Act, 1924, or (b) performed all the work in connection with such claims with the exception of the delivery of the Pension Order Book, but re-

ceived no extra remuneration under the terms of Part V. of General Order 52/1924, owing to deductions made in respect of assistance rendered to his successor in the station.

ALLOWANCES.

As a result of Staff Side representations, the Official Side agreed to waive the retrospective application of an over-riding maximum to the allowances paid for cycling to Coast Preventive Men in a certain Collection.

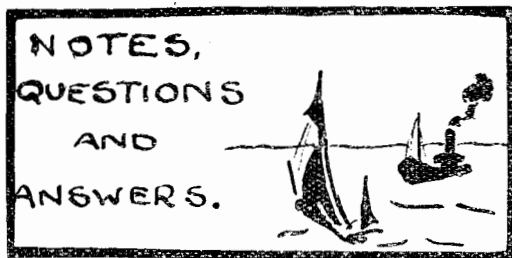
OFFICIATORS' JOURNEYS.

Subject to the proviso that the Local Committees concerned should consider in each case the construction of a schedule of journeys to which the definition of "exceptionally long journeys" should apply, it was agreed that the Collectors of Inverness, Aberdeen, Greenock and Weymouth, be informed, with regard to paragraph 8 of General Order 15/1926, that two days may be allowed for exceptionally long journeys when the additional allowance is practicable, and is necessary for the completion of the travelling and "taking over" in the new station.

OTHER MATTERS.

A number of other Office and Local Committee decisions, including various agreements on fixed officiatorships, were considered, with results that have been communicated to the Committees concerned.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on June 20th, 1926.



All contributions relative to this column should be addressed to "Scrutator," c/o The Editor, 91, Tressillian Road, Brockley, London, S.E.4.

Answers to questions given at examination held February 9th, 1926.

FIRST PAPER.

Question.

7.—(a) What is the action to be taken when a discrepancy is discovered between the quantities of stores produced to the Boarding Officer on arrival and the quantities borne on the ship's report?

(b) What is the procedure to be observed when duty falls to be charged on silk garments brought and produced by a passenger as private effects?

(c) Describe fully what action you would take on the master of a vessel, which had arrived coastwise from a Naval port, producing to you a perique of Tobacco (1 lb.) which he states he had obtained from a Navy man on shore at the Naval port.

Answer.

7.—(a) Call upon the master for an explanation. If the explanation is satisfactory and the discrepancy is not serious, a note of the fact is to be made at the foot of the Rummage Account. Otherwise a written explanation is to be obtained and the circumstances reported to the C.P.O. for directions. The written explanation is to be attached to the ship's file.

(b) When duty falls to be charged on silk garments brought and produced by a passenger, the following procedure is to be adopted:—

The duty is to be assessed and received by a C.P.O. or Landing Officer or Officer of higher rank present, if he is fully satisfied that the duty chargeable does not exceed £10. If none of the above officers are available, this procedure may be followed by the senior P.O. present.

Care must be taken that the correct value is available, particularly when the 10 per cent. or 2 per cent. rate is claimed.

The passenger is to be informed that the goods may be sent to the Baggage or King's Warehouse for assessment and that, if he elects to pay the duty on the value fixed by the officer, no subsequent reference can be made to the transaction.

When duty cannot be satisfactorily assessed as above, goods are to be removed to the Baggage or King's Warehouse for assessment.

(c) Question the master fully as to where he obtained the tobacco with a view to discovering particulars of the man and ship whence the goods came, and whether the master had had any previous opportunity of producing the perique to an Officer of Customs. If the master apparently had had this opportunity I should deal with the case under the General Rules of Smuggling, issuing the approved Forms 480/3.

Otherwise the tobacco would be detained only.

Full particulars of the case would be reported to the Board on Form 458.

"SCRUTATOR."

Customs and Excise Orphans', Widows' and War Memorial Fund.

ESTABLISHED 1866.

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