

# The Customs Journal.

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Fortnightly.



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

With the appearance of the first issue of the "Journal" in the New Year it is singularly appropriate that I am able to announce that an important step has been taken towards putting Association affairs on a more business-like footing.

By the time these Notes are being read the Association officials at headquarters will be busy "moving in." A small office has been acquired, near to the Custom House, London, and henceforth this will be regarded as the central office of the P.S.A. We can quite conscientiously make a New Year resolution to increase efficiency in Association activity.

The address of the office is THAMES CHAMBERS, BEER LANE, E.C.3, and before I go further it might be well to mention that all the facetious remarks capable of any bearing on the title of the lane have already been made locally, and any additional quips will be hopelessly stale.

It should be borne in mind that the address for correspondence will remain as above, i.e., Clive Road, until further notice. The moment is not opportune for any alteration.

The office is eminently suitable for the work of our Association, and before long it is hoped that the members will have reason to realise the great benefit of the new conditions. Few people are aware of the vast amount of literature that is dealt with at headquarters. In these days of Whitleyism, when so many Committees of all kinds are in existence, the accumulation of the relative documents is enormous. Not only is there the Joint Committee of Customs and Excise Associations, but also all the Local Whitley Committees throughout the kingdom, whose agreements and disagreements are discussed on this Joint Committee before being finally dealt with on the Departmental Council. In order that the minutes of these meetings can be of real use, adequate filing systems are very necessary. Then, again, the literary output of

the National Whitley Council, with its Sub-Committees, would be surprising to the ordinary member who has had no experience of these things. The Civil Service Confederation also contributes a substantial portion; and now that it is obvious to everyone that the different interests of Civil Service Departments are very much interwoven, all these documents are of vital interest to our own organisation.

Finally, we come to the P.S.A. literature itself. In spite of complaints that not enough information is given to the members, the number of documents dealt with is very great. So great indeed that it would be physically impossible to have a larger output under the old conditions.

The Waterguard Sectional Committee alone is responsible for an extensive amount of written, typed, and printed matter, all of which must be ready for reference at a moment's notice. This is the most important Committee to the Waterguard Department, and, in order to obtain a full measure of benefit from it, all information, statistics, and relative documents must be properly filed and easy of access.

The most difficult documents to handle are communications from the districts, and they are no small item. This is to a great extent unavoidable, and it is not my intention to blame the District officers. The material sent to headquarters in this way is not easy to classify, for many reasons. On receiving correspondence relating to more than one subject it is frequently necessary to analyse each communication and to make abstracts for purposes of filing. It is a tedious business, and, should immediate attention to such documents be impossible, the arrears become formidable.

It will be seen from the very sketchy description I have given of Association operation at headquarters that properly equipped office accommodation has become a necessity. In future the two Secretaries will be able to co-operate fully, and, with considerably less labour, should produce much more satisfactory results than have been possible in the past. It is hoped to be able to pay more attention to the needs of the Branches in the way of helpful information on Civil Service affairs generally; and in organising better means for discussion at Branch meetings of the more important matters affecting the Service.

I would take this opportunity to inform all members that the proper and most effective method for communicating with the Association is through the Councillor for the area. There are, of course, exceptional cases, but if this rule were observed much congestion would be avoided, and the Councillors would be afforded a chance

to become better acquainted with affairs within their constituencies. The District Secretary should supply the Councillors with the names of non-members.

The Councillors, of course, are the persons responsible for fixing Association policy, and should be in possession of all information necessary to enlighten enquiring members; and should they be unable to impart necessary information, much good accrues from their discovery of this fact.

Considering that the Civil Service has recently had to put up a fight against certain sections of the Press, it is very interesting to note that Mr. Baldwin has been forced to make an attack in the same quarter. He complains of having been cleverly misrepresented by some of the leading newspapers; and most of us who have studied things can quite believe the charge—no matter what the motive might be.

It is also very interesting to note that the Premier's most active opponent is the gentleman who has recently published a small book entitled "Politicians and the Press." It is a delightfully interesting little publication, and perhaps it is most interesting because of its candour. But the candour is not only interesting—it is the warning of danger. It is an indication that the gentlemen of the Press feel sufficiently powerful to come into the open, and to inform all and sundry of their intention to rule the country, and to control Parliament if possible.

True enough, Lord Beaverbrook says in the book that he merely wishes Parliament to consult the Press, and that he aims only at moulding public opinion. The only comment one can make upon this is, that if he succeeds in both these aims simultaneously he will become a sort of Mussolini.

There might not, of course, be a great deal of harm in that; but what of the time when some other affluent and forceful individual succeeded to the position? Some person who had not Lord Beaverbrook's benevolent attitude towards humanity, and without his keen interest in the moral and spiritual welfare of mankind. What then?

The time has come when every man who dislikes Press control worse than Parliament control should carefully consider his choice of a morning paper. The sentiments contained in "Politicians and the Press" are a very good reason why the Civil Service should have possession of a publication with which to mould its own opinion. The "Civilian," appearing this week under new management, is admirably suited to the task.

A case of much interest to officers on pension, and to those nearing the mark, will at an early date come before the English Court of Appeal. The case refers to a claim for the full cost-of-living bonus to be regarded as salary for purposes of assessing pension. The appeal arises

from a decision of the Irish Free State Supreme Court.

The A.P.O. Grade will no doubt receive with feelings of great disappointment the news that the Association has once more failed to secure agreement on the question of floor-coverings for the rooms occupied by Assistant Preventive Officers. It is a great pity that so small a matter must continue to cause irritation and dissatisfaction amongst the officers concerned. There is nothing unreasonable about the request, and what rankles most is that the A.P.O. Grade alone has been specially selected for the honour of having bare boards to walk upon.

It must be admitted that the Official Side gave every consideration to Staff Side arguments, and a great deal of investigation was made throughout the kingdom with a view to ascertaining whether floor-covering should be supplied within reasonable cost. An honest attempt was made to settle the question, but the Staff Side had to bow to the fact that in these hard times it requires something more urgent than a claim for floor-coverings to extract authority from the Treasury for increased expenditure.

However, the day will dawn when A.P.O.'s will be treated as ordinary human beings, and the Association will continue to do all it can to hasten that day.

Complaints regarding the ambiguous position of the Preventive Officer in the matter of assessing duty on Ad Valorem goods and silk goods are steadily streaming in. The chief complaint is against paragraph 13, G.O. 36-1925. Preventive Officers strongly resent the inference in this paragraph that the assessment of the duty by this Grade is exceptional, and that the rule is for a Landing Officer or a C.P.O. to do the work.

The wording of the paragraph is most unfair in face of the fact that all Preventive Officers must always be prepared to deal with these duties, and do actually deal with the bulk of them—frequently at a time when the people credited with the responsibility are tucked away in their little beds.

The Association is taking steps to have the matter fully thrashed out, and in due course members will be informed of the result.

Waterguard Officers will be interested to hear that a separate Grade Committee is to be established for the Coast and Land Preventive Staff. This event has been anticipated for some time past. The business of the Waterguard Sectional Committee had become so heavy as to be quite unwieldy.

It was due to the efforts of Mr. A. E. Howell that the Coast and Land Preventive Staff Association came into existence, and since that time they have had representation on the Waterguard Sectional Committee. On the new Grade Committee there will be three Staff Side members, one of whom will be a Waterguard official.

J. MERRON.

## "SPIRITS — AND NIGHT CAPS."

By "WEMS."

IN the last issue of "C.J." the question of the interpretation of pars. 62 and 63 of Vol. II., Part X., again arises, and appears to be troubling the minds of some students. It is quite clear that under par. 63, Geneva, Liqueurs and Perfumed Spirits are amongst the exceptions under the Inmature Spirits Act, 1915, the purpose of which is to prevent the delivery of new spirits for consumption. Geneva and Liqueurs require the use of matured spirit in the process of manufacture, and there is, consequently, no point in applying the provisions of the Act to them; perfumed spirits are not potable spirits and, ipso facto, do not come under the Act. On this reasoning, therefore, it can be seen why these classes of spirits are specifically mentioned amongst the exemptions.

It has been stated, in fact it is mentioned at the commencement of Part X., in indicating the G.O.'s cancelled by that Part, that it refers only to the work of Landing Officers. But we must bear in mind that the General Orders cancelled in connection therewith included instructions to Warehouse and some Distillery Officers, as well as Officers dealing with the landing of goods. By removing quantities of the spirits mentioned to the Baggage or King's Warehouse, where the quantity exceeds 1 gall (or  $\frac{1}{2}$  gall, as the case may be), we are merely shifting the responsibility in the matter of receiving and accounting for the duty—not for production of evidence of age, because if the officer is satisfied they are as represented, that is not required. In other words, the officer at the warehouse would only do what the P.O. might have done, viz., assess and receive duty—this is clearly permissible under par. 63 of Vol. II., Part X. When it comes to an interpretation of the provisions of the Regulations, the Preventive Officer is "as good as" a Landing Officer—unless he "ain't gwine to reign no mo'."

In view of the controversy which arose on this point in 1923, the writer secured a ruling from London, and this ruling was again confirmed in August this year. The official view is that Geneva, liqueurs and perfumed spirits may be released to passengers and others in reasonable quantities, i.e., in excess of the quantities specified for other sorts of spirits. Therefore, unless it is put in black and white to the contrary, and carefully annexed to the Codes, there is one P.O. at least who will fall in with the work of the Landing Officer. That's that.

### SILK GOODS, ETC.

It might not be out of place to emphasise the necessity for students going to the exam. to note the following points in connection with the new duties.

The question of dutiable goods in transit might very probably arise at the exam. The

limit of £20 for assessment of duty on deposit in such a case (bond over that amount) is well known, but par. 11 of G.O. 36-1925 requires careful study in this connection. It introduces certain special rules applicable only to silk and artificial silk goods, lace and embroidery goods, and now cutlery, gloves, and gas mantles, the property (for personal use) of passengers and members of ships' crews in transit. It is noticed that one is inclined to rattle off the ordinary duty-on-deposit regulations, but in questions of baggage in transit the special rules above must not be overlooked, particularly as they apply to common possessions of any passenger.

Under par. 12 of the same Order, we find that the duty (limit, when duty may be waived on goods produced for personal use or wear, is £3 for silk and artificial silk goods; 10s. for lace and embroidery goods; 5s. for cutlery; 5s. for gloves; and 5s. for gas mantles. This, it should be noted, applies to the duty chargeable on all of any of those classes of goods produced. Now, under par. 13, where duty is to be assessed, the limit is £10 duty, but this refers to "the article"—not in the aggregate. In other words, any number of articles (provided, of course, they are not merchandise) produced by a passenger, may be cleared on payment of duty till we come to an article on which the duty exceeds £10—that must go to the warehouse.

(In addition to the waiver of duty stated in par. 12 of G.O. 36-1925, it should be noted that one pair of fur gloves may be passed without question, and this applies to each of several members of a family.)

In conclusion, it might be as well to draw the attention of students to the fact that I have a copy of a local order, issued in London by the Waterguard Superintendent, that aquavit, without test, should be taken at the liqueur rate. In fact, the order states it is a liqueur. This may doubtless surprise some of the older officers amongst us, for the genuine aquavit, I believe, has always been regarded as u.n. spirits. However, as the order has not been made general by way of the G.O.'s (a very necessary course, one might say), it would be as well for students to note this point, and do the "safety first" stunt by applying the high rate without test, but with the option of test.

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There was great excitement on Deeside. A boy had fallen into the river and had been rescued just in time by a passer-by. When things had calmed down a bit, the hero was approached by the boy's father and questioned.

"Are you the man who saved ma laddie?"

"Yes."

"Weel, whaur's his bonnet?"

## Civil Service Confederation.

### REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Monday, December 21st, 1925, at Caxton Hall, Westminster. Mr. W. H. James presided over an attendance of twenty-six.

On the subject of House Purchase, it was reported that the National Staff Side had decided to form a Civil Service Housing Society. Information concerning this is being circulated to constituent organisations.

Mr. G. F. Putterill and Mr. R. E. Elkington have been appointed to fill vacancies in the representation of the Post Office and Customs and Excise Groups respectively on the Executive Committee.

Attention was drawn to the Government Committee on legal actions by and against the Crown, and it was resolved that the Confederation tender to the Committee evidence regarding the unsatisfactory legal position of Civil Servants, particularly in regard to tenure of office, the enforcement of pledges given by responsible officials, and the conduct of actions under the cumbersome process of Petition of Right.

The forthcoming publication of "The Civilian" as a general Civil Service organ, in a new form and under new management, as from January 2nd, 1926, was announced.

A resolution on the Duties of Higher Officers was adopted in the following terms:—

"That the Confederation representatives on the National Whitley Council should move the Staff Side to propose on the National Whitley Council that a special Committee of the Council be appointed to consider the scope of the duties at present allotted to the Officers in the higher ranges (over £500 basic salary) of the Clerical, Executive and Administrative establishments of the Civil Service; to report on the organisation most appropriate to secure the effective performance of those duties; and to make recommendations as to the scales of salary."

It was agreed that endeavours be made to obtain an extension, from two to five years, of the qualifying age limit for examinations held by the Civil Service Commissioners in so far as that limit applies to temporary and permanent Civil Servants.

A scheme of Confederation policy in regard to the reduction of Pembroke and Rosyth Dockyards was adopted as follows:—

(i.) That the Officers of the Civil Service Confederation take every action necessary to protect the interests of established men employed in H.M. Dockyards and Naval Establishments in view of the probability of discharge and transfer, and arrange an interview with the Admiralty officials if necessary.

(ii.) Suspension of the order concerning retirement at age 65 instead of 60, so as to ensure that compulsory retirement of all established men at age 60 is carried out at all dockyards.

(iii.) Optional retirement on compulsory terms with added years at all the yards within the limit of the reduction of personnel required.

(iv.) Transferees to be subject to usual subsistence regulations, consideration to be given to the wishes of transferees.

(v.) Failing the obtaining of a sufficient number of retirements under paragraphs (ii.) and (iii.) above, compulsory retirement before usual retiring age; and in those cases "added years" in respect of abolition of office to be claimed, for gratuities as well as pensions.

In accordance with the resolution adopted by the Half-yearly Council on November 28th, 1925, a Committee, consisting of Mr. G. Chase, Mr. J. Farmer, Mr. C. W. Gibson, Mr. H. S. Judge, and Mr. G. R. Speed, was appointed to explore the possibility of hastening the settlement of the question of increasing the retiring gratuity of Unestablished Civil Servants.

Some account was given of recent proceedings of the National Whitley Council, in the course of which it was announced that the National Staff Side proposed to table at the Annual Meeting of the National Council an amendment to the Constitution of the Council to provide that when an agreement has been reached, and when subsequently complaints arise that the agreement is not being properly applied in the Departments affected, and where Departmental representations prove ineffective in solving the dispute, it shall be competent for the National Council effectively to discuss and determine such complaints.

The Confederation representatives on the Superannuation Committee of the National Staff Side presented a report on the subject of widows' pensions for Civil Servants. It was stated that a considered scheme would be prepared by the National Staff Side and submitted in due course to constituent organisations.

A memorandum on Provincial Differentiation was discussed, and it was agreed that steps be taken fully to co-ordinate the case for permanent and temporary staffs in its presentation to the Arbitration Court.

The Chairman reported that the Civil Service Equal Pay Committee proposed to take steps early next Parliamentary session to move for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the application of the principle of Equal Pay.

A resolution was adopted on the motion of the Civil Service Clerical Association declaring that questions regarding service with the Colours, in connection with applications for appointments within the Service, are odious and unnecessary, and that steps should be taken to eliminate such questions from future application forms.

The following members were present at the meeting of the Executive Committee:—

Mr. W. H. James (President), in the chair, Mr. W. G. Boys, Mr. H. C. Bridgman, Mr. W. J. Brown, Mr. Herbert Bryan (Assistant Secretary), Mr. G. Chase (Vice-President), Mr. W. H. R. Collins, Mr. Reg. D. Crook, Mr. Alfred

Dashwood, Mr. E. S. Evans, Mr. W. G. Green, Mr. A. L. N. D. Houghton, Mr. H. S. Judge, Mr. W. E. Llewellyn (Vice-President), Mr. J. H. Macrae-Gibson, Mr. Philip Millwood (General Secretary), Mr. F. C. Osgood, Mr. J. F. B. Richards, Mr. D. O. L. Robertson, Mr. E. Rogers, Mr. E. P. Rundle, Mr. C. A. W. Sanders (Honorary Treasurer), Mr. G. R. Speed, Miss Rose Smith-Rose, Mr. W. Edward Thomas, Mr. Ross Wyld—26 in all—and Mr. Charles Watney (Publicity Officer).

### C. and E. Departmental Council.

The sixty-eighth meeting of the Council was held in London on November 18th, 1925, the chair being taken by Sir H. P. Hamilton, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

It was agreed that the senior member of the Board present should take the chair at meetings of the Council during the ensuing year. Mr. T. Morton was elected Vice-Chairman, and Messrs. E. H. Kenney and C. A. W. Sanders Official and Staff Side Secretaries respectively.

All standing Committees were re-appointed, with the exceptions of the Preventive Officer Grade Committee and Assistant Preventive Officer Grade Committee, the continued existence of which was agreed to be unnecessary.

#### SENIORITY.

It was agreed that in the case of Surveyors who have gained "priority" under the Agreement of July 26th, 1918, but who have not yet been interviewed and declared successful, any men selected for the Controlling Grade shall be promoted, in relation to other Surveyors selected from the same series of interviews, by reference to their original seniority as Surveyors.

Subject to two provisos, to which the Official Side promised to give consideration, the Staff Side intimated their readiness to accede to the proposal that a joint seniority list be compiled of all members of the Treasury Junior Clerical Grade employed in the Department, with a view to securing, so far as may be consistent with efficiency, equality of opportunity of promotion from that Grade.

It was provisionally agreed that the Special Committee to which the task of preparing this list would be referred should consider forthwith the procedure to be followed in connection with the compilation of the list.

#### INCOME TAX ASSESSMENTS.

In view of the statement made on the subject at a previous meeting by the Official Side, the Staff Side now withdraw the proposal that particulars of Income Tax Assessments be supplied not later than December 31st annually.

#### OLD AGE PENSION QUESTIONS.

The Staff Side enquired why effect had not been given to the agreement reached on March

29th, 1922, delegating authority to Surveyors and Officers to raise questions without reference to the Board in Old Age Pensions "means" cases in which there is no fraud on the part of the pensioner. The Official Side stated that they would reconsider the proposal in the light of existing conditions and would make a statement on the subject at the next meeting.

#### SHIPS' FILES.

It was agreed that the time limit for sending in ships' files be extended from five weeks to two calendar months, the agreement to cover both the Outdoor Service and the Waterguard.

#### DISTURBANCE ALLOWANCE.

At the request of the Official Side, further consideration of the Committee disagreement concerning the cessation of any unexpired period of allowance when an Unattached Officer is removed at his own request and expense was adjourned.

#### ACCOMMODATION.

The question of the floor covering of Assistant Preventive Officers' rooms was again discussed, and re-adjourned by the desire of the Official Side.

#### DESPATCH CASES.

In reply to a question, it was stated that over 1,000 cases had been requisitioned by Officers, and that delivery would probably begin on November 21st.

#### SUGGESTIONS.

It was stated that the Board would be prepared to consider the notation of Officers' records in cases where the Suggestions Committee, although unable to recommend a suggestion for adoption, recommended for notation the name of the Officer responsible for the suggestion. In this connection the Staff Side undertook to examine suggestions already rejected, and inform the Suggestions Committee which of them were, in their opinion, sufficiently meritorious to justify notation of the Officers' records.

#### OTHER MATTERS.

A number of Local and Office Committee decisions were considered, with results that have been communicated to the Committees concerned.

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The sixty-ninth meeting of the Council was held in London on December 16th, 1925, the chair being taken by Sir W. P. Hamilton, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

#### GRADE COMMITTEE.

The Council agreed to a Staff Side proposal to appoint a new Grade Committee for the Coast and Land Preventive Staff.

#### LOCAL COMMITTEES.

The Official Side intimated their intention to appoint a Surveyor to the Official Side of every Local Committee, and to select for the pur-

pose the senior Surveyor on duty in the Collection at the time of the meeting. It was agreed that action be stayed pending Staff Side consideration of the proposal.

#### COLLECTORS' OFFICES.

It was agreed that the terms of reference of the Committee appointed originally to consider all agreements and disagreements reached in Local Committees on the subject of staffing Collectors' Offices should be extended to cover the decisions reached in Local Committees on proposals for altering the staffing arrangements in those offices, until further notice.

#### SENIORITY.

On considering an agreement reported by the Accountant and Comptroller-General's Office Committee on the relative seniority of Executive Officers employed in that Office, the Council decided to appoint a Special Committee to investigate the matter further, it being understood that the subject would be dealt with comprehensively, i.e., in relation to all the Branches concerned.

Resuming discussion of the Official Side proposal to establish a joint seniority list for all Treasury Junior Clerical Officers in the Department, it was agreed, on a modification of a suggestion from the Staff Side, that in order to facilitate the successful attainment of the object of such a list, transfers of Junior Clerical Officers who so desire should be made from time to time between the various offices in sufficient time to enable the senior men eligible for promotion to obtain general experience, and for their fitness to be more readily appraised before their turn comes to be considered for promotion, subject always to the existence of a suitable opportunity, to the transfers being consistent with due regard to efficiency, and to the ultimate right of the Board to make or withhold any transfer as and when they consider it desirable. Applications for transfer from Junior Clerical Officers not yet approaching the promotion zone would be considered on their merits as at present.

Consideration of the Staff Side's further proposal in this connection, i.e., to establish a similar list for Higher Clerical Officers, was re-adjourned, and in respect of the principal proposal it was agreed that a special inter-area meeting of the three Office Committees concerned should be convened to consider the question of a seniority list for the Junior Clerical Officers in the Secretaries' Office group.

#### DEPARTMENTAL MARKINGS.

The Official Side undertook to give prompt consideration to a Staff Side proposal that facilities be given for representations to be made by or on behalf of Temporary Clerks in respect of Departmental markings, and that such representations, if successful, be made effective.

#### FIXED OFFICIATORS.

The Council ratified an agreement reached in the Officer Grade Committee to extend the list of places to which Fixed Officiators may be appointed to all places (subject to certain conditions), from which it will be possible, by daily

travelling by public conveyance between habitation and Station headquarters, to work conveniently a group of stations, schemed for six fixed Officers included in one leave roster. Full details of the agreement will be officially announced at an early date.

#### " SILK " STATIONS.

A Local Committee disagreement on a Staff Side proposal immediately to create fixed appointments for this work in a certain area was referred back on the understanding that proposals would be made by the Official Side, and it was stated that similar action would be taken in three other Collections.

#### SPECIAL REMUNERATION.

On the Council considering the disagreement report by the Outdoor Service Sectional Committee on the rates of special remuneration for work in connection with the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925, the Staff Side made new proposals with a view to effecting a compromise, if possible, and the disagreement was referred back to the Committee for further consideration and report.

#### DISTURBANCE ALLOWANCE.

In view of the fact that in the original agreement there was no reservation in terms bearing on the particular point of the cessation of the unexpired period when an Unattached Officer is removed at his own request and expense, the Official Side now indicated their readiness to agree to the payment of the unexpired balance of allowance in cases of voluntary removal, it being understood that the decision was not retrospective except in regard to the actual instance upon which the general claim was based, and that it was without prejudice to the merits of the question, which would be considered in relation to the discussions now proceeding on the general question of Disturbance Allowance.

Agreement in these terms was registered.

#### WEEKLY PAYMENT OF ANNUAL SALARIES.

In response to the claim made on behalf of the Warehousemen in the Stores Branch, upon which a disagreement had been reported by the Office Committee, the Official Side stated that they were prepared to make proposals for an approximately equivalent weekly wage-scale. Further consideration of the matter was adjourned.

#### O.A.P. " MEANS " QUESTIONS.

The Official Side intimated that immediate steps would now be taken to give effect to the agreement that authority to raise questions without reference to the Board in these cases, provided no fraud was alleged, should be delegated to Surveyors and Officers.

#### ENTERTAINMENTS DUTY.

Agreement was registered on a definition of the work to be performed by the Officer in connection with verifying certified returns.

#### ACCOMMODATION.

Among numerous items dealt with, the last of the instances from London Port specially retained on the Council agenda (E. and G. Jetty,

Victoria Dock) was now disposed of, the new office being in occupation. Disagreement was recorded on the general question of the floor-covering of rooms occupied by Assistant Preventive Officers.

#### OTHER MATTERS.

A number of other Local and Office Committee decisions were considered, with results that have been advised to the Committees concerned.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on January 27th, 1926.

### Whitley Agreements.

Some agreements come to on the National Council have been found to have had a different effect to that intended, through misinterpretation. The following correspondence has passed between the Staff Side and the Treasury on the subject:—

(Copy).

November 27th, 1925.

Dear Sir Russell,—

I have been thinking about our conversation arising out of the discussion on the National Council on our resolution on Whitley agreements. It would be helpful to me in getting the matter clear in my mind if you could find it possible to help me on the following specific points:—

(1) In the event of a National Council agreement affecting more than one Department being in the view of the Staff Side misinterpreted by one or more of the Departments concerned, and representations on the part of the staffs having failed to satisfy the Staff, how could a review of the case be secured as would make it possible for effective action to be taken?

(2) In the event of the Treasury accepting responsibility in a specific case of Departmental application, where and how could the National Staff Side secure joint consideration of an effective nature?

(3) In the event of the Treasury issuing a general interpretation of an agreement, or of a portion thereof, whether in writing or otherwise, which in the view of the National Staff Side is contrary to the intentions of the signatories of the agreement, where and in what way can the National Staff Side secure consideration of an effective nature?

(4) Does the suggestion of "a review of results" imply the right of the National Staff Side to secure discussion of specific charges of Departmental misinterpretation of the terms of a National Council agreement?

I am sorry to trouble you at such length, but I am, as I know you are, anxious to find a satisfactory way out of what is felt to be a real difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) G. MIDDLETON.

Sir R. R. Scott, K.C.B., C.S.I.

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(Copy.)

Treasury Chambers,  
Whitehall, S.W.

December 3rd, 1925.

Dear Mr. Middleton,—

Your letter of November 27th, relative to our recent discussion on the National Council resolution on the application of Whitley agreements.

I think I can best answer your questions by premising that the mere fact that disagreement may be registered on a Departmental Council does not mean that the matter is one for discussion on the National Council. There are some subjects which can only be discussed departmentally, even when the application of a general agreement may be in question.

This answers your first question. Your second question appears to be based on a misapprehension of the constitutional relation between the Treasury and other Departments. On this point I would venture to draw your attention to the last paragraph but one of my remarks at the last meeting of the Council.

Perhaps I may take your last two questions together. If the Staff Side (or for that matter, either side) thought that an agreement had worked out in general as was not intended, or had been generally applied in a manner different from that contemplated, it would be open to either side to raise the question as a matter of general principle on the National Council, and they would, by way of illustration, if they thought fit, cite actual instances in support of their view.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) R. R. SCOTT.

G. Middleton, Esq.

### Imperial Service Medal.

An interesting ceremony took place at the Customs Waterguard Office, Minerva Pier, Hull, recently, when Mr. Whiteside, late P.O., was invested with the Imperial Service Medal.

Mr. E. Marrable, Collector, in making the presentation, referred to the long service of the recipient over a period of 40 years, and expressed the pleasure it gave him to be present.

Mr. Johnson, Superintendent, Mr. Baker, C.P.O., and other Officers extended their congratulations.

Mr. Whiteside suitably responded emphasizing the difference in the conditions at the present day compared with those existing when he entered the Service.

#### FIGURES IN 1925.

P.O. to A.P.O.: This figure "five" looks more like a "three."

A.P.O.: It is a "three."

P.O.: Well, it looks like a "five."

## Gravesend Sports Club and Staff Dinner.

The Customs and Excise Sports Club and Staff Dinner, which was held at the Masonic Hall on Wednesday, December 2nd, proved to be an extremely enjoyable and successful function.

Mr. W. Donaldson, I.S.O., was in the chair, and was ably supported by Mr. W. P. Shearman in the capacity of Toast Master. The occasion was remarkable in that practically every service connected with the operation of shipping in the Port of London had its representative—H.M. Customs and Excise, Home Office (Aliens Branch), Metropolitan Police (Special Branch), Port of London Medical Officers, Trinity House, Southern Railway, P.L.A. Constabulary (Tilbury Docks), and a number of shipping companies contributing to the quota.

The Loyal Toasts having been honoured, "Staff and Sports Club" was proposed by Mr. W. J. Blake, and responded to by Mr. G. W. E. Grace.

In the course of his remarkably clear and concise speech, Mr. Blake touched on the chief points of interest on staff duties past and present at this port, and the splendid co-operation with other Departments.

Mr. G. W. E. Grace traced the origin of the Sports Club, remarking on the value to the Crown and to the Staff of the advantages of physical exercise in sport.

The Sports Club (Rowing Section) Challenge Shield and Medals were then presented to the winner, Mr. H. Palmer, and the runners-up medal to Mr. E. Thomas.

"The Visitors" was proposed by the Chairman, who paid tribute to the courtesy invariably shown the Service by the organisations with which they came in close and frequent contact in the course of their duties.

Mr. W. Haldane Porter, C.B.E., H.M. Chief Inspector, Home Office (Aliens Branch), replying, mentioned the great pleasure it gave him and the Immigration Staff at Gravesend to enjoy such cordial relations with H.M. Customs and Excise, for, in his opinion, nothing was to be more deplored than friction between Departments of H.M. Civil Service, and he attributed the good feeling and co-operation met with, in a large measure, to the experience gained by the ex-Service men, who on their return to the Departments had greatly increased the benefit given by the various Civil Service Sports Associations, a sentiment which met with marked approval.

Dr. Willoughby, Medical Officer of Health (Port of London), related past and present experiences, and endorsed the previous speaker's remarks.

"The Chairman" was ably proposed by Mr. A. B. Cubitt, who pointed out the good luck of the Gravesend Sports Club in having such a sympathetic President as Mr. Donaldson, who never failed them in practical service, and to whose hearty assistance in every way the success of the Club was due.

"Artists and Committee," proposed by the Chairman, was responded to by Mr. E. T. Howcroft and Mr. E. L. Sharrock.

The Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. E. L. Sharrock, carried out their duties in an extremely efficient manner, and consisted of Messrs. P. Ash, G. E. Camburn, J. Herring, J. De Mora, C. J. Priestley (Treasurer), W. Reader, E. L. Sharrock (Chairman), R. V. Wilson, T. Yeldham, and W. P. Shearman (Secretary).

The programme of music was under the able directorship of Mr. D. H. Young, who, with Mr. Godfrey, contributed a duet, and afterwards acted as accompanist. Miss Groves, the possessor of a charming voice, was presented with a bouquet and box of chocolates. Mr. Howcroft's finely delivered monologue proved all too short for an enthusiastic audience; Dagmar, conjuror extraordinary, gave a wonderful performance; Mr. Watkins, a baritone of great merit, earned universal applause; and Mr. Joe Payne, comedian, lived up to his title by keeping everyone in a state of helpless laughter.

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## The Orphans', &c., Fund Boxes.

### AN INTERIM REPORT.

And a partial apology. A perfect spate of remittances and relative correspondence has overwhelmed the undersigned. Experience shows that the treatment of all the points involved (checking, receipting, banking, noting for new boxes and boxes retained, membership forms required, suggestions, apologies, congratulations, and explanations) takes many hours per hundred letters, and there are many hundreds.

Senders of crossed cheques, postal and money orders need not worry about the safety of remittances. Receipts have been sent specially early in the case of notes and cash remitted.

Four hundred receipts have now been posted, and nearly £250 handed over to the Treasurer in connection with them. Others are being dealt with in rotation, but it is a one-man job. A list of all amounts received will be published by the Fund in due course.

And thank you for a happy Christmas.

C. A. W. SANDERS.

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## Retiring from the Service.

After serving in various ports for the last 40 years, Mr. J. Wickham, C.P.O., is leaving the Waterguard for a well-earned retirement. Many of his friends would welcome an opportunity of contributing to a presentation to be made to him. Such contributions should be forwarded to Mr. P. A. Owen, P.O., Mr. G. A. Warne, P.O., or Mr. T. B. Olsen, A.P.O., Cardiff.



It is not our intention to write a prolonged article so early in the year. We must, however, wish our readers all the best, and a happy and prosperous New Year. The Treasury, however, still keeps an unfairly tight hand on the purse strings, and we are not supposed to run a green-grocer's shop or a gambling den, so we probably shan't be much better off than last year, except for an increment at some time and a few Sundays on duty to make our salaries look more than they really are. Still, we can keep smiling.

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Congratulations have come in thick and heavy regarding our Christmas Number. We are grateful to our correspondents from all ports for their expressed appreciation. We, in our turn, would once again thank our contributors for their co-operation in making the last issue so great a success.

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As a first attempt at this sort of thing we feel a certain amount of self-satisfaction. The Waterguard Staff can, with little effort, produce something worth reading. The subject matter, too, is based on a variety of subjects, and is not limited, as many people seem to expect, to one subject only. Runnage is, undoubtedly, a duty of great importance, but it is one only of the important duties that the Preventive Staff has to tackle as part of an ordinary day's work—a fact that is often lost sight of, when convenient.

### Whist Drive at Cardiff.

On Thursday, the 10th ult., a very successful whist drive was held at the Dormie Cafe, Cardiff, when Officers of H.M. Customs and Excise and their friends participated in a very pleasant evening.

The drive was arranged by the Waterguard Social Committee, Mr. G. O. Warne acting as M.C., ably supported by members of the Committee.

Mrs. J. Wickham presented the prizes as follows:—

Ladies.—1st, Mrs. Hawkins; 2nd, Mrs. A. Collen; 3rd, Mrs. Nurcombe; Travelling, Mrs. Sheppard.

Gents.—1st, Mr. Gatheridge; 2nd, Mr. Bowen; 3rd, Mr. John; Travelling, Mr. Brache.

Mystery Prize.—Miss Atwell.

### Vocational Education.

THE importance of this scheme is not to be under-estimated. Education plays a far larger part in the Waterguard to-day than ever it did. Waterguard Officers have greatly extended the scope of the regulations of latter years, and the efficiency required from our Department in these days bears no comparison with that demanded, say, twenty-five years ago.

We have much to gain from a system of self-education, and, it need hardly be said, nothing to lose. A body of men who are willing to work a scheme of education, for the benefit of themselves and of the Department, inaugurated and worked at its own expense, commands at once the respect and admiration of the administrators of the Department. The self respect of the body is automatically raised. The natural product of all this would be, at no far-distant date, increased responsibility, a higher standard of efficiency, contentment.

London is extremely fortunate to have been asked to conduct the initial stage of the proposed education scheme, and the sub-committee appointed by this branch has been fully alive to the possibilities of the scheme in the future. I feel sure that the recommendation to confine studies at first to departmental subjects is a wise one. We must learn to walk first. Progression comes with experience, and the scheme can, and ought to be, extended as soon as possible. For the time being, therefore, it is suggested that the classes should be conducted mainly for the benefit of those who desire to study the law and regulations governing the C. and E. Department, and the Waterguard branch in particular.

The success of the scheme depends upon two important points. Having gained the whole-hearted support of the tutors, and I here say that the response of the tutors has been simply remarkable, not only for its unanimity, but also for the wealth of suggestion that has accompanied it, great care will have to be given to the choice of members of the central committee; for upon this committee, especially at the outset, rests the responsibility for success or failure. Granted a real live central committee, the other vital feature is the manner in which the scheme is received by those whom it will benefit. It cannot be said too often that a cold reception will kill any scheme. This scheme needs the fire and enthusiasm generally ascribed to youth, and it is up to those with life, full of opportunities, before them, as much as to those who will organise and operate, to contribute to the success of a scheme which has aroused a tremendous amount of interest, not only among our own ranks, but among others who are closely watching the effort.

The keynote of the Albert Hall was unity. That word should also apply to this latest phase of Association activity. Unity! Sixteen hundred men united in one aim—advancement by

self-education, not only for the benefit of self, but also for the higher phase, the benefit of the State.

## Housing.

1.—“INSURANCE” SCHEME NOT SUFFICIENT.—The National Staff Side has come to the conclusion that no “Insurance” scheme of purchase can meet all the demands of the Civil Service for housing facilities, especially the needs of Civil Servants on the lower scales of salary, and that the best method of providing for the major part of those requirements will be by the formation of an independent “Civil Service Housing Association.”

2.—HOUSING ASSOCIATION.—The Staff Side has accordingly decided to establish such an Association to be registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts with all necessary powers, including purchase and sale of land, provision of houses, borrowing money, and lending money to members.

3.—SUBSIDIES, &c.—The Association will be able to take full advantage of all the concessions as to subsidies and loans under the various Housing and other Acts.

4.—MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNMENT.—Membership will be obtained by payment of a small fixed amount, being the purchase price of one share. The following persons, appointed by the National Staff Side, are (with such persons as they may co-opt) the provisional Committee for the establishment of the Association, namely:—Mr. George Middleton, J.P. (Chairman), Mr. J. W. Bowen, Mr. W. G. Boys, Mr. G. Chase, Mr. A. J. C. Edwards, Mr. F. A. A. Menzler.

5.—PROFITS.—The profits of the Association will be limited by regulations made from time to time by the Treasury under general powers, and will be distributable amongst the members. The present maximum rate of profit allowed is 6 per cent.

6.—INITIAL SCHEME.—The main initial scheme of the Association will be for the building by the Association on one site of 50 houses of at least three types with good gardens, and preference will be given to those applicants who can make immediate substantial deposits. This will enable the scheme to be floated, and the Association will, it is anticipated, have no difficulty in arranging at a slightly later date for those who can make only a very small deposit. The provision of accommodation for those who desire to buy or build houses on individual sites not covered by the initial scheme, whether in the Provinces or London, will be considered immediately with a view to assistance being given in such cases. Every effort will be made to bring officers of restricted means within the scheme at an early date, but the extent to which many desirable activities can be pressed depends entirely on the amount of support received from the Service.

7.—SAVINGS SCHEME.—An integral part of the scheme will be a section to assist officers with small financial resources to save money with advantage towards house purchase on the basis of regular payments well within their means—say at the rate of £1 per month, or even by weekly sums.

8.—FURTHER DETAILS.—Any persons interested and desirous of receiving further details of the scheme (which will be ready in January) should apply in writing to the Acting Secretary, Civil Service Housing Association, c/o C.S. Whitley Council, Staff Side, Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.1.

Two questions are given below, together with the relative answers.

## Obituary.

Mr. J. E. ROGERS.

The many friends of Mr. J. E. Rogers, Prov. Officer, London, will be sorry to learn of his death, which took place at his residence in East Ham on 21st ult. It may be remembered that he returned to London from Oban a little over two years ago. Since then he had been in an indifferent state of health. He was, however, on duty until the end of September last, when he was taken suddenly ill and had to be conveyed home.

Since then he gradually weakened, and the end came on 21st ult., when he passed peacefully away.

The funeral took place on Christmas Eve at the London Cemetery, Wanstead. En route to the place of burial the cortege halted at St. Barnabas' Church, Little Ilford, where part of the burial service was read by the Vicar.

Although it was a bitterly cold day, there was a good attendance of his brother officers at the funeral. Amongst others present, we noticed Messrs. Fooks, Gardener, and Clark, C.P.O.'s; Messrs. Hewett, Miller, Gosling, and Hogg, P.O.'s; and Messrs. H. Arnott, Senr., Gatward, Page, Rowland, and Stocker, A.P.O.'s. The last six named officers attended in uniform and acted as pall-bearers.

A large number of wreaths had been sent, conspicuous amongst them being a very beautiful one from the Waterguard Staff in London.

Mr. Rogers was 53 years of age, and leaves a widow and a daughter.

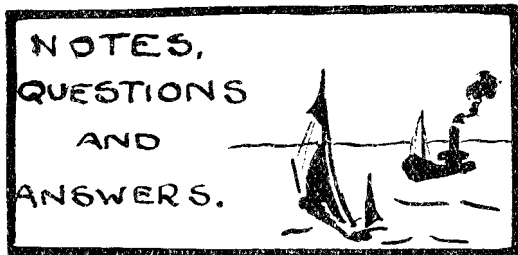
## Glasgow Whist Drive and Dance.

The Glasgow Entertainments Club held another successful whist drive and dance on Saturday, November 28th, at the Masonic Hall, West Regent Street, Glasgow, which was largely attended by the staff and friends. Among those present were Mr. G. Fairs and Mr. E. J. Holdes-

worth, Assistant Collectors, and Mr. J. Brames, Waterguard Superintendent.

The whist proved very popular, the first prizes being won by Miss Stewart, daughter of the President, and Mr. C. Harrison, A.P.O., respectively. Miss Fairs kindly presented the prizes.

To Messrs. Shannon and Henderson, as M.C. and Secretary, are again due great praise for the able manner in which they carried out their duties.



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

Two questions are given below with their relative answers.

#### Questions.

1.—In practice no bond is required, in respect of stores whose duty exceeds £20, for ships which have cleared outwards via another U.K. port. Can authorities (Code Paragraphs) be quoted?—"Perplexed."

2.—I would be obliged if you could give me any information on the following subject:—Would a Naval man on arrival from foreign, and proceeding on leave for more than 7 days, be allowed any duty-free concessions besides Tobacco and Perfumery, such as wines, spirits, ad val goods, and low-duty goods, etc.?—"Chubb."

#### Answers.

1.—Paragraph 19, Part V., Volume I., could be quoted as authority.

A vessel, having cleared outwards via another port in the United Kingdom, can hardly be said to make a voyage in the coasting trade.

2.—Wines, spirits and low-duty goods are not enumerated in the duty-free concessions for Navy men proceeding on leave. (See Table of Duty-free Concessions on page 12 of G.O. 12-17.) Such goods would not therefore be allowed duty free.

Silk goods are allowed duty free under certain conditions. (See G.O. 36-25, paragraph 12A, added by G.O. 50-25.)

I have not seen any authority for duty-free allowances to Navy men of McKenna and Key Industry Goods. I should say, however, that the concessions applicable to passengers would also apply to Navy men proceeding on leave.

## Presentation to Mr. W. A. Whyte, C.P.O.

An interesting event took place at Aberdeen on December 17th, when Mr. W. A. Whyte, C.P.O., was made the recipient of gifts on the occasion of his retirement after 41 years' service.

Quite a large number foregathered, including members of the Landing and Watcher Staffs.

Mr. Carstairs, Waterguard Superintendent, who occupied the chair, before calling on Mr. Girvin, P.O., to make the presentation, spoke of Mr. Whyte's many excellent qualities and recounted a long acquaintanceship with him.

In asking Mr. Whyte to accept a silver tea and coffee service, Mr. Girvin spoke of the great respect and admiration in which Mr. Whyte was held as a superior, and wished him long life and happiness in his retirement.

Mr. Girvin also asked Mr. Whyte to accept a gold wristlet watch for his daughter, Miss Whyte.

Messrs. MacKenzie, Stuart, Duncan and McDairmid also referred in glowing terms to Mr. Whyte's sterling qualities.

In thanking the company, Mr. Whyte feelingly referred to the cordial relations existing amongst the whole staff, and his regret at severing his official connection with them all.

A very pleasant evening was thereafter spent, when items were contributed by Messrs. K. and J. Sutherland, Thomson, Fraser, Brown and MacKenzie.

The pleasant function was brought to a close by the company singing "For he's a jolly good fellow" and "Auld Lang Syne."

## Presentations.

### ABERDEEN.

A pleasing ceremony took place at the Old Custom House, Aberdeen, on December 15th, when a presentation of a case of pipes and a gold-mounted fountain pen was made to Mr. Creighton, P.O., on the occasion of his promotion to the rank of Chief P.O. Mr. McDairmid, Assistant Inspector, who presided, spoke of Mr. Creighton's sterling qualities as an officer, and wished him every success in his new sphere. Mr. Whyte, C.P.O., on making the presentation, referred to the cordial relations which existed between Mr. Creighton and the staff. Messrs. Stuart, Mackenzie, McDairmid and Fraser also spoke in high terms of Mr. Creighton as a colleague.

### SWANSEA.

At the Prince of Wales Office on December 18th, 1925, Mr. W. J. Bottel was the recipient of a beautiful barometer, suitably inscribed, to mark the occasion of his promotion to the rank of Preventive Officer.

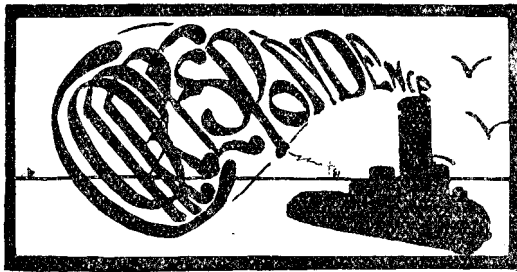
Mr. R. E. Jones, P.O., the Chairman, in his opening speech, spoke very highly of Mr. Bottel

as an officer, and his remarks were endorsed by his former colleagues, who wished him every success in his new sphere.

Mr. F. Blewitt, C.P.O., who made the presentation on behalf of the Waterguard Staff, made reference to Mr. Bottel's sterling qualities, adding that he hoped the glass would continue to rise for him during his official career.

Mr. Bottel, in response, said he wished to thank those responsible for the beautiful present from the bottom of his heart, and also for the sincere expressions of goodwill for his future.

Votes of thanks to the C.P.O. and the Chairman brought a very happy meeting to a close.



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.

To the Editor of the "Customs Journal."

#### DUTY ROTATION AT SOUTHAMPTON.

Sir,—It is with the utmost reluctance that I am compelled to trespass on the columns of the "Journal" to air what after all is only a local grievance, but I realise that it is only by the publicity that this will entail that the desired remedy can be attained.

In this port there are four Rummage Crews, and from the days of the old U.S. P.O. the charge of these crews has always been given to the senior P.O.'s (with one recent exception), irrespective of their qualifications for this important duty.

The rummage, with its consequent freedom from night duty, has always been eminently desirable and coveted by the remaining P.O.'s, but until lately without the remotest prospect of achievement. Some few weeks ago an order from Headquarters was received at the port, and this stated that the old order of things was to change and that in future all duties were to be equally shared by all the staff. You can imagine the joy (and, of course, the heart-burnings) with which this was received, and the quarterly change of duties was eagerly looked forward to; but with what result? Instead of four P.O.'s being relieved from rummage duties and four more being appointed, we found that only one

was to change, and this one the last-comer to the rummage ranks. The four P.O.'s had been "on rummage" for 3, 3, and 2 years, and for 3 months respectively, and yet when the change is made the first man to be relieved is the man with only 3 months' service to his credit.

Then, in addition to this, although all other stations and duties in the port are of quarterly rotation, we are informed that any appointments to the rummage will be for a period of 12 months, and such appointments will be in order of seniority, so that before all the P.O.'s have had their turn of rummage, a considerable number of years are bound to elapse, so that it is quite easy to see that as far as about 50 per cent. of the staff are concerned it is problematical whether the change will be of any advantage.

I anticipate that any reply to this letter from the powers that be will include the statement that as the duties of the Rummage P.O. are primarily baggage examination, supervision, etc., it is necessary that senior officers should be appointed, and also that such appointment should be for a long period to enable the officer to be thoroughly conversant with this important duty, but I can assure you that these excuses are too weak to be entertained. The most junior P.O. is called upon to relieve the Rummage P.O. at all times of sickness and leave, and then, again, P.O.'s on reserve duty are in constant attendance at all baggage, oftentimes alone, and there is not one P.O. in the port who is unwilling to demonstrate his ability and fitness for the rummage.

All that we require is that rummage will take its place in our quarterly change of stations and be available to all, so that the utmost relief from night duty shall be afforded to each of us.—Yours, etc.,

FAIR-PLAY.

Sir,—Although no progress was made on the 20th Nov., for the merging of two sections of the Chief Preventive Officers into one grade, the members of the confederated Association are pleased to see that the Staff Side are determined to press their case, by taking it to the Court of Arbitration, or forcing the pace for a public enquiry into the Waterguard Department.—Yours, etc.,

BROADCASTER.

A.D. 1999.

Purchaser: Have you a large trunk or case in stock, please?

Salesman: Yes, we have this one; it holds about three or four big blankets and other bed linen.

Purchaser: I'm afraid it is not large enough. You see, I am an Officer in the Customs, and I want to put some of my Orders in it, especially No. 30, which will be 74 years old now.