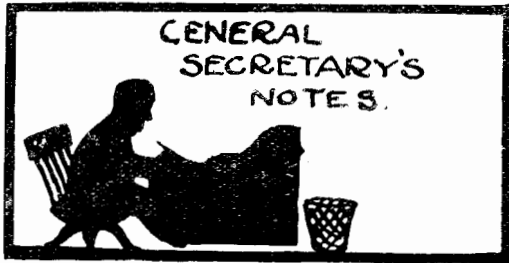


# The Customs Journal.

No. 559.

March 27th, 1926.

Fortnightly.



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

The Economy Bill has at last made its appearance, but, happily, it is devoid of any suggestion to tamper with the already modest means of livelihood enjoyed by Civil Servants as a whole. The Defence Committee awaited its introduction and were ready to take immediate and vigorous action had there been any indication of intention on the part of the Government to break agreements with its servants.

The general opinion is, however, that the Civil Service is not yet on entirely safe ground. Continual vigilance will be necessary in order to be prepared for any possible interpretation of the Bill that might give the Government power to effect, at its own discretion, cuts in the expenditure of Civil Service Departments.

The Defence Committee has indeed lived up to its title, but it is to be hoped that the Service will realise that the job is not yet completed. Defence measures are as necessary now as ever they were. There is no reason for being sure that the biggest fight is not yet to come. The Committee itself maintains a "be prepared" attitude, and it behoves every Civil Servant to do likewise.

\* \* \* \*

It is in this atmosphere of uncertainty that the Executive of the P.S.A. will discuss the possible chances of a Waterguard salary claim being successful at the present moment. There is plenty of evidence from the districts to show that a large portion of the staff is keenly anxious for immediate action to be taken. The justice of our case is so strong that some members are apt to disbelieve that it could possibly be ignored. Yet there are many people, well acquainted with current events, who tell us that it would be worse than useless to attempt to get justice under the present conditions.

Under these circumstances the Executive have a very great responsibility. It would be

very easy to bend to the storm from the districts, but even the most optimistic person must realise that the taking of such a course involves an unpleasant risk. The difficulty is that if the wrong moment is chosen, and consequently we are unsuccessful, the gate will be closed to us when the right opportunity presents itself. Everything depends upon the clear judgment of those whose responsibility it is to take the vital step, and any tendency towards precipitate action by the Executive is balanced by a knowledge that it is not impossible that even a definite loss may result.

It must be obvious to members who have given careful thought to the matter that the Executive must be guided by the knowledge with which they are supplied from expert sources, rather than by the opinions of people who have not the means of keeping in close touch with current Service politics.

By the time these Notes appear, the Executive Committee, which meets on March 25th and 26th, will have discussed a somewhat new proposal. This proposal, whilst aiming at attaining all-round improvements in salary, does not suggest a frontal attack such as a plain demand for revision of salary.

The meeting on this occasion takes place for the first time at the new headquarters office. In view of the heavy and important agenda, the advantage of having all necessary data ready on the spot will be greatly appreciated. It is the first Waterguard Executive to be provided with such facilities, and there can be no doubt that much more business will be got through. It is difficult to estimate the benefits that will be derived from the new departure.

\* \* \* \*

This week is a very busy one for the Association officers. In addition to the Executive meeting there is a meeting of the Small Ports Committee, and it is hoped to reach agreements regarding allowances for officers who have been patiently awaiting this event.

\* \* \* \*

Another important item of the week is the discussion on the Departmental Council on Wednesday, 24th inst., of the Waterguard case relating to the assessment of ad valorem duty in baggage and crews' effects.

\* \* \* \*

I have to thank those District Officers who so readily responded to my request to speed up replies in connection with circulars sent out from the Association. I hear that one or two officers mistook my humble request and thought it was an insult. I hope I have now been forgiven. My anxiety was to get on with business

due for Executive discussion. I cannot help remarking on the fact that several of the districts, each covering a large area, seem to be able to keep up quite a lively correspondence with headquarters. Business carried on in this style does not allow of much time to be spent in grumbling about defects in the Association.

As a result of the better facilities at Association headquarters, it is hoped to be able to send out circulars in future in sufficient numbers to provide each local secretary with a copy. I would therefore be glad if District Secretaries would inform me of their requirements in this respect.

\* \* \* \*

The affairs of the National Council seem to have reached a critical point. For some time past the Staff Side have been greatly dissatisfied with the functioning of the Council, and attempts have been made to induce the Official Side to agree to certain reforms. No progress has, however, been made, and it would appear that the Staff Side will be compelled to take very vigorous action before a satisfactory state of affairs can be obtained. At the moment things look far from pleasant.

\* \* \* \*

A further report of the progress made by the Housing Association will appear in this issue or the next. Several inviting schemes are mentioned, and no doubt the terms for obtaining a house to rent will be welcomed by many.

Any Civil Servant who anticipates buying a house could not do better than to consult the Association. Sound advice and valuable assistance is always to be had.

\* \* \* \*

The "New Civilian" seems to improve each week. Several interesting articles have appeared recently on Whitleyism, and on Staff organisation. Apart from the fact that this paper should be supported as a means of giving full expression to Service ambitions and ideals, it should also be taken by every member because of its educational value in Association matters.

A wide circulation of the "New Civilian" will in time cause the elimination of that parochial attitude which is the bugbear in the progress of many Associations.

\* \* \* \*

The cost of living is still on the down grade. The figure for March is 72. The average for food only is 65.

J. MERRON.

### OBITUARY.

We are extremely sorry to have to report the sudden death, a fortnight ago, of the wife of Mr. H. Leonard, P.O., London, and the loss of the daughter, during the same week, of Mr. W. J. Evans, P.O., also of London. Both Mr. Leonard and Mr. Evans are well known in Liverpool and London, and colleagues in these ports and elsewhere will receive the news of their bereavements with wholehearted sympathy.

## PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION.

### GLASGOW.

The annual meeting for the district was held at Mavisbank on Wednesday, March 3rd, at 7 p.m.

There was a gratifying attendance of both Grades, representatives being present from Greenock, Clydebank, Ayr, Ardrossan and Irvine. Messrs. Angus and Milne, Councillors for Scotland and North Ireland, were present. Mr. Wm. Stewart presided.

After the minutes had been read and adopted, discussion opened with the engaging question of promotion by merit. The scheme was read through and each paragraph discussed. The meeting proved to be unanimously in favour of promotion by merit with certain amendments. One was that seven years should be substituted for six; another was that chances should be limited to three—two at the Crown's expense and one at the candidate's own; and a third was that when the result of the examination was made known, all candidates should be informed of the number of marks obtained in each subject.

It was proposed that Scotland and North Ireland should have additional representation on the Council. The present strength of one A.P.O. and one A.P.O. was considered inadequate, and the Constitution should be altered to allow of another A.P.O. being brought in.

It was also proposed that the question of increased leave be again taken up with the Official Side.

The election of office-bearers resulted in the following:—President: Mr. M. Coen, A.P.O.; Vice-President: Mr. W. Stewart, P.O.; District Secretary: Mr. W. Manson, P.O.; District Organiser: Pending election; Local Secretary: Mr. G. Murray, A.P.O.; Local Organiser: Mr. T. McGlennon, A.P.O.; Local Whitley Representatives: Messrs. Manson, McGlennon, and Murray.

Votes of thanks to Messrs. Angus and Milne were given for the able manner in which they had stated their opinions on the various subjects discussed, and confidence in their policy was expressed, and "another cheer" for the Chairman brought to a termination the best-attended meeting in Glasgow for years, which goes to show that interest in Association affairs is very much alive in this district.

### HARWICH.

At a meeting held at the Queen's Hotel, Dovercourt, on Friday, March 12th, with Mr. G. H. Crabb in the chair, the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:—Chairman: Mr. A. G. Gatford, A.P.O.; Local Organiser: Mr. H. C. Mackley, P.O.; Local Secretary: Mr. C. A. Timby, A.P.O.

The suggested scheme of promotion by merit was freely discussed and ended by a ballot of all the A.P.O.'s being taken, the result of which was the rejection of the scheme as it stands.

**SENIORITY OF POST-WAR ENTRANTS.**—A proposal was carried to the effect that post-war entrants should be placed in order of seniority from date of completing application form for the position of Preventive Man as forwarded to the Civil Service Commissioners.

**RELIEF DUTY.**—Arising from the fact that officers on relief have to travel back to their own port on the day in which they have already completed their normal spell of duty, it was proposed that where officers are sent on relief to another port, a day for the return journey should be allowed when the time for the distance to be travelled would exceed three hours.

After a discussion of local affairs, the meeting concluded with a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman, and also to Mr. A. V. Rock, A.P.O., the retiring Local Secretary.

◆ ◆ ◆  
**HULL.**

A special meeting of the above was held on March 12th at "The Metropole."

Mr. A. Cameron (Chairman) presided over a large attendance of members. Arising from the minutes, L.W. Committee representatives reported what had transpired at the last local official Whitley meeting re reduction of staff, and the question affecting the withdrawal of a Watcher from the Goole Waterguard Staff. Both questions were adjourned.

**PROMOTION BY MERIT.**—This question, being adjourned from the last meeting, was set down for decision. The meeting approached the matter with due concern as to its importance, and many and varied were the opinions expressed. Proposal, amendments, and further amendments were put forward. It was then decided by majority vote "that the whole scheme be rejected."

On the subject of issue of the "New Civilian," it was agreed to take no action respecting the supply to the Executive.

**CIVIL SERVICE HOUSING ASSOCIATION SCHEME.**—After discussion, it was moved: "That this meeting is in favour of the P.S. Association supporting the scheme, and suggests that steps be taken by the Executive Committee to invest a certain amount of P.S.A. funds in the project." Secunded, and carried nem. con.

A local question on leave concluded the business of the evening. The Chairman expressed pleasure at the attendance and the enthusiasm displayed. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded the chair.

◆ ◆ ◆  
**NEWCASTLE.**

The adjourned meeting of the Branch was continued on March 25th at 7 p.m.

Vocational Education having been further discussed, it was decided to pass on to the next item on the agenda.

**PROMOTION BY MERIT.**—Each member was very anxious that some variation of the present modus operandi should be found, and

eventually a resolution was carried that the scheme be adopted, subject to 8 being substituted for 6 years.

**HOUSING SCHEME.**—Here again the members felt that something should be done to relieve the general situation, but they could not agree with the scheme for investing the funds of the Association, and it was decided to put in the form of a resolution the considered opinion of the meeting that the time was not opportune for the funds of the Association to be used in support of the Housing Scheme.

A general discussion followed, matters of local interest being fully and freely discussed; and it is most gratifying to record that a very lively and intelligent interest is being taken in the affairs of the Association, and as a mark of appreciation of the efforts put forward by the officers of the Association, a record attendance was present at the meetings.

A hearty vote of thanks to the chair terminated a very instructive and pleasant meeting.

◆ ◆ ◆  
**SUPPER AND SMOKING CONCERT AT CARDIFF.**

One of the most enjoyable evenings ever arranged by the Waterguard Social Committee was staged at the Old Arcade Hotel, Cardiff, on Thursday, March 11th, 1926, when a Supper, followed by a Smoking Concert, was held.

The Collector, Mr. Churchill Lemon, presided, supported by Messrs. Howell, C.P.O., and Wickham, C.P.O. (retired).

A magnificent supper, excellently served at 7.30 p.m., having satisfied to the full the inner man, the company settled down to enjoy the entertainment provided by their colleagues and friends. Mr. Knight officiated at the piano, and other artistes were: Messrs. Crothers, Densley, Pidgeon, O'Loughlin, Hill, Lafferty, Young and Warne.

The toast of "Our Chairman" was received with great applause and musical honours. In a very able and witty reply the Chairman said it was a great pleasure to be associated with the social side of the Service, and gave great credit to the Committee for the work they were doing in arranging these enjoyable evenings. He proceeded to give some of his great store of anecdotes (both Service and non-Service), which were very much enjoyed by all present.

In proposing the toast of "Our Organising Secretary," which was received with loud cheers and musical honours, Mr. Wickham referred to the very efficient manner in which Mr. Warne carried out the arduous task of organising these gatherings.

In reply, Mr. Warne spoke of the pleasure it gave him to work in so good a cause. He felt that it was necessary for officers to meet in a more social and congenial atmosphere than could be found in the ordinary round of duty, to make them fully appreciate each other and the Service

generally. He was happy in the knowledge that the efforts of the Committee and himself to attain this end had stood the test of two years, and were still so much appreciated. They were fortunate indeed in having a Collector and other superior officers whose enthusiasm in the social cause was of such great assistance.

At 11 p.m. a very happy evening ended with the singing of "The King" and "Auld Lang Syne."



By "SEAGULL."

A Scotch passenger from America was delighted with the information given to him by a musical friend that the tax on musical instruments didn't apply to his set of bagpipes. (He hasn't seen the joke yet.)

From a U.S. paper:-

"Customs Commissioners are chosen not for their high devotion to duty but for their devotion to high duty."

#### NOTICE TO MARINERS: WRECK.

"Two objects observed at 8 a.m. drifting about 50 yards S.E. of the Customs Boarding Station . . ."

Two of our chaps who were going home after the morning watch on that date hope that no mistake has been made.

From a Manifest for imported cattle:-

No. of animals shipped	200
No. of animals landed	203
Satisfied with discrepancy due to natural cause:- (Signed)	P.O.

Something similar happened at another place when a letter of advice, stating that five dogs remained on board, was forwarded to the next port. A few hours after the departure of the ship to that port it came to the knowledge of the Clearing Officer that two of the dogs had been illegally landed and sold. Appropriate action was taken, and a notification stating that only three dogs were on board was despatched to the next port. The Boarding Officer who received the communications regarding the dogs boarded

the vessel upon arrival at his port and was surprised to find seven dogs on board. The owner of the dogs (a ship's officer) explained that one of his dogs was remarkably intelligent, and realised that there was going to be a lot of trouble over the missing dogs, so she tried to put the matter right, and—well, you can't blame the poor animal for being too zealous and having a couple of pups too many.

#### BELGIAN TERRIER DISOBEYS ORDERS.

Whilst carrying out his duties as a Preventive Officer on board the s.s. "Hermion," at Swansea, Mr. Burge, proceeding from one part of the vessel to another, was attacked by a Belgian terrier, which jumped at him and bit him on the back, necessitating attention by a doctor. The sequel was the appearance of the master of the vessel at the Swansea Police Court, on a charge of failing to keep the dog properly secured. His defence was that his instructions had been disobeyed. Defendant was fined £2, and was ordered to pay 15s. witnesses' expenses.

#### A LONDON RETIREMENT.

Mr. R. C. TREMAYNE, P.O.

About thirty Service friends, old and new, met together on March 10th to bid farewell to Mr. R. C. Tremayne on his retirement from the Waterguard after 37 years' service. Mr. W. J. Evans presided over the gathering, which did fair justice to an appetising spread, and thoroughly enjoyed an impromptu concert from a number of Service artistes, whose contributions to the programme were greatly appreciated.

The Chairman, who had been associated with the guest of the evening for many years, said that they were rejoicing with Mr. Tremayne in the completion of long and honourable service. To-morrow we should realise that we had lost an esteemed friend. He could do nothing better than wish him all that he could wish himself.

Mr. Merron, although his acquaintance was rather limited, was very glad of an opportunity of speaking. Mr. Tremayne had stood the test of Waterguard work very well, and in the past, up to quite recent times, had given officers of the Association much valuable assistance.

During subsequent remarks by Messrs. Field, Miller, Beachor, Hicks and Johnson, many a hearty laugh was raised, and there is no doubt that Mr. Tremayne will cherish many pleasant recollections of his farewell to some of his old colleagues in London.

A vote of thanks was passed to the Chairman and to those who contributed to a most enjoyable evening, both by organising and by vocal effort, especially to Mr. Bert Rogers, whose adaptability at the piano was a real asset.



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

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

FIRST PAPER. QUESTION 1 (b).

**Question.**

1. (b) On boarding a vessel which is on the point of departing for a Foreign port you find 2 lb. of Cavendish Tobacco concealed on the person of a dock official who is about to land. He states that the steward had given him the Tobacco. The steward admits that he did, and informs you that he had obtained the Tobacco by breaking the official seal securing the ship's stores.

**Answer.**

Port,
Station,
Date.

Sir,—

I beg to report that when visiting the s.s. "Greyhound," British, 1,940 tons, Captain Thomas Wright; outward bound to Copenhagen, at 2 a.m. to-day, I observed the dock-gate foreman, John Bowman, trying to avoid me as he was leaving the vessel.

Suspecting an irregularity, I intercepted the gateman and questioned him. After long deliberation he admitted having two pounds of Cavendish Tobacco concealed in his trousers pockets. He further stated that he had visited the vessel to obtain the dock-pass and had been offered the tobacco by the steward for 5s.

I detained the tobacco, questioned James Brewis, steward of the vessel, in the presence of Bowman and obtained his admission of having broken the official seal and selling the tobacco to the gateman for the sum stated above.

Drawing the master's attention to the incident, I requested production of his Outward Clearance, found the seal broken, and checked the contents of the locker, which was situated in the provision room. I discovered that the discrepancy agreed with the quantity of tobacco detained. The other stores were found correct. The tobacco abstracted was the steward's property, and was part of 11 lb. of Cavendish

Tobacco Private Stores placed under seal on the vessel's arrival from Rouen.

The remaining stores were again secured under seal and the keys of the provision room handed to the master.

I have endorsed the Inward Clearing Bill accordingly.

When given the option, the steward and the gateman elected to deposit treble duty-paid value of the 2 lb. tobacco, i.e., £4 3s. 3d. each.

I informed the master of his liability for the security of the seal and stores concerned. In reply, Captain Wright expressed regret for the incident.

He stated that he relied upon his steward to look after all the vessel's stores, and said he would deal with him accordingly on the vessel's return to the United Kingdom.

As the vessel was on the point of sailing and any delay would mean demurrage on the ship, the master, at my request, made a deposit of £22 to cover the breaking of the seal, i.e., £20, and also for the duty involved, i.e., £1 3s. 9d., pending the Honourable Board's decision.

I have issued a suitably worded receipt for the deposit on Form 282, and requested the master to address his further relative communications to The Secretary, Custom House, London. His written explanation of the incident and request to make the deposit is attached.

The vessel is owned by the Steam Packet Company, Baltic House, Quayside, London.

The dock-gate foreman is employed by the River Improvement Commission and resides at 17, Jewry Street, Liverpool.

I submit my action for approval.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

No. 21, P.O.

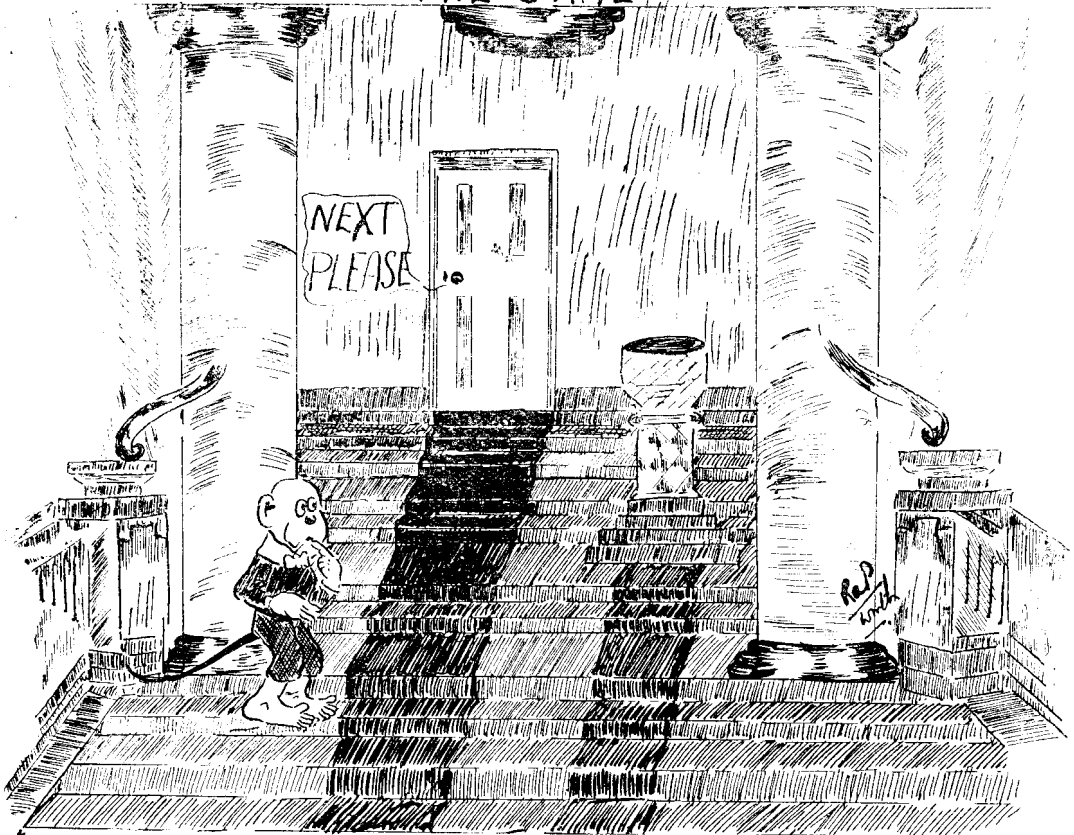
To the C.P.O.,

— Dock.

**THE CO-OPERATIVE PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETY.**

The forty-second annual Report and Balance Sheet of the Co-operative Permanent Building Society is worthy of mention, as it shows that not only has the Society made extraordinary progress during the year 1925, but that it is in a remarkably strong and sound financial position. Its assets are now approaching £3,000,000, showing an increase of 41 per cent. over the preceding year. Its mortgage business has been arranged in forty-seven counties of England and Wales, preference being given to occupying owners. Out of the surplus profits for the year, 5 per cent. interest (tax free) has been allotted to shareholders, and a sum of £16,000 has been added to the reserve fund.

## "THE ORAL"



"CAST! CAST! THY BREAD UPON THE WATERS AND IT SHALL RETURNING AFTER MANY DAYS COME BACK TO THEE"  
 THUS SANG THE P.O. INTO THE EARS OF AN A.P.O. WHO HEEEDED NOT THE WORDS THE WISE MAN CHANTED"

### PROSECUTIONS.

#### SMUGGLING AT BO'NESS.

At the Linlithgow J.P. Court recently the cook of the Belgian steamer, "Charles," from Ghent, was charged with harbouring and concealing six bottles of brandy. Mr. P. McLellan, C.P.O., Grangemouth, prosecuted on behalf of the Crown, and sued for T.V.D., equal to £9 0s. 6d. The defendant pleaded guilty, and a fine of £6 was paid.

The goods were discovered in a pipe casing in the ship's hold by Mr. W. Gaillie, A.P.O., under the supervision of Mr. V. R. Fox, P.O.

At the same Court on the same date the mess-room steward of the "Charles" was charged with smuggling 2½ lb. of cigars O.S. and

1 lb. tobacco O.S. T.V.D. of £13 2s. 6d. was pressed for. Defendant pleaded guilty in this case and was fined £9. This fine was also paid.

The goods were concealed in the linings of a store locker, and were found by Mr. V. R. Fox, P.O.

. . . . .

Another prosecution at the same Court concerned the cook of the Belgian steamer "Yvonne," from Bruges. He was charged with smuggling 11 lb. 9 oz. cigars O.S., ½ lb. cigarettes, 63/100ths gall. brandy and Geneva, the T.V.D. on which was £61 10s. 9d. The offender pleaded guilty and was convicted in a penalty of £25, which was paid in Court.

The goods were discovered concealed in spaces adapted within a cupboard of the ship's galley. The seizing Officers were Messrs. J. D. Doherty, P.O., and D. Ramsay, A.P.O.

**To G.E.N., from DISMAL JAMES.**

Why! Oh, why! Dear G.E.N.,  
 Do you so silly use your pen,  
 To put poor Dismal James about,  
 Giving him cause again to shout?  
 I know that Dismal cannot help  
 To give vent sometimes to a yelp,  
 But why should you pen your idea  
 To scandalise the Dismal Dear?  
 Let James be whatever he is,  
 He would not stoop to the likes of this.  
 When Dismal read your poetry true,  
 He first went green, and then went blue.  
 He simply said, "O my, what fun!"  
 But, thank the Lord, I'm not a hum.  
 Be it true his friends are few,  
 He's got no time for the likes of you,  
 He shrinks to think that you, alas,  
 Should such kind thoughts of me amass.  
 With every good wish to G.E.N.,  
 I hope when next you want to pen  
 That you will not be quite so rash,  
 And spare my wish to use the lash.

Yours lovingly,  
**DISMAL JAMES.**

**HEAVY PENALTY at WESTMINSTER  
 POLICE COURT.**

**SILK GOODS CONCEALED AT VICTORIA.**

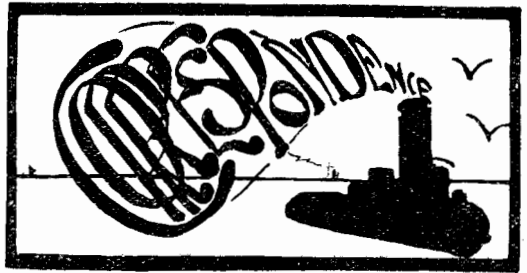
At Westminster Police Court, on the 15th inst., Marie Lastovska was charged before E. C. P. Boyd, Esq., Metropolitan Magistrate, with concealing four silk articles and one bottle of perfumery at Victoria Railway Station on the 13th inst.

The accused was represented by a solicitor, who eventually pleaded guilty on her behalf.

Mr. Boyd, the magistrate, said that after hearing the statement of the Customs Officer, he would inflict the full penalty asked for, namely, treble value and duty, £70 8s. 9d., but on the request of the solicitor, the magistrate allowed eight days for payment of the fine.

The goods were found concealed by Mr. T. J. Knight, A.P.O., who was under the supervision of Mr. O'Flynn, P.O., and the case was conducted in court by Mr. J. Clark, C.P.O.

The directors of the First Co-operative Investment Trust, Ltd., recommend the payment of the usual half-yearly dividend at the rate of 7 per cent. per annum.



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.

**PROMOTION.**

Sir,—Is this suggested new scheme for the promotion of A.P.O.'s to P.O.'s to be carried through at the next Executive meeting by the "Great Majority" without any thought for the "Minority," the ex-Boy Messengers, who seem to be the voice in the wilderness in the matter? for they will be the section who will be severely hit if this proposed scheme comes into action. It is hoped that the Association will see fair play carried out, and will not disregard the rights of the minority in this case.—Yours, etc.,

X.S.X.B.M.

Sir,—With reference to letters by "Possible Victim" and "Av. In.," I should like to say something in support of their views. I hope that the Association, in endeavouring to please the majority, will not sacrifice the rights of the minority. The ex-Service Boy Messengers throughout the kingdom are watching the progress of the scheme with mixed feelings. Are we to get justice? I would suggest a plebiscite of all the Grade, as suggested at a Liverpool meeting recently, be taken before the Conference takes place. Yours, etc.,

"BORNEAS."

Sir,—In the last issue of the "C.J." a report of a Liverpool meeting quotes Mr. Sutton as saying: "The six years . . . 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."

Apparently Mr. Sutton is labouring under a misapprehension, and as his sentiments appeared to have been endorsed by the Liverpool meeting, I am giving you a brief outline of the case for the ex-Service ex-Boy Messengers.

These men became Boy Messengers in the years 1912-15. They joined with the express

intention of becoming A.P.O.'s as soon as they were of age. The war intervened, and some, being Territorials, were mobilised in 1914; others volunteered in the year 1914 or the years following. Most of those that joined did so with the permission of the Hon. Board, and were promised a position as A.P.O. on their return. Some of them returned and were given their correct place upon the seniority list. Had they not enlisted, a good number of them would have become A.P.O.'s in 1915 or 1916. They would, therefore, have sat for P.O. with their colleagues at the last examination, taking a chance of one in two. Mr. Sutton now wishes them to drop this and accept a chance of one in twenty. No suggestion has yet been made that their seniority should have been merged into the pre-war and war entrants, and one wonders what would have happened if such a suggestion had been made.

However, ex-Service ex-Boy Messengers insist on their vested right of examination under the old conditions. If the "Promotion by Merit" scheme is to be adopted, let these men have their fair chance first.—Yours, etc.,

"AV. IN."



Sir,—So sorry for intruding upon your precious time, but I've got a nasty feeling towards that humorous little fairy story entitled "Promotion by Merit." I would have written earlier but have been unable to procure the necessary stamps and stationery, as I'm only an A.P.O. just yet! However, I have collected a few halfpenny stamps—the aftermath of the weekly deductions for Widows' and Orphans' Fund—and so here we are, so to speak. Well now, getting down to "tin-tacks," the only good point about the proposed scheme is its title! Promotion by Merit! It sounds real good—sort of uplifting and all that, don't you know. However, just get right under the title and, lo—like the proverbial glue-pot—that's where we get stuck!

Now, Mr. Editor, don't look so bored, I won't keep you a minute, and then you can slip out and get your jolly old pint of "fourpenny." Well now, to begin with, I sincerely hope I am not displaying any trace of sarcasm—it's not in my line—I leave that to my wife when I bring home my pay on a Friday. I believe that in passing the following comments I am merely doing my duty to the Service—as the P.O. said when he reported his A.P.O. for being "bottled"! Well now, I am of the opinion that the whole scheme is just a good joke at present, but if the A.P.O.'s are not very careful it may develop into a tragedy.

It appears to have been staged for the purpose of gulling the ex-Service men into the belief

that, instead of having to wait about four years for their opportunity to qualify for a P.O.'s job, if they vote for this scheme they have the chance of qualifying almost at once. That is absolute nonsense. The scheme will NOT benefit the post-war entrant at all, rather will it be his undoing! Have the post-war entrants given any thought to the matter of a few hundred of chaps who have already failed twice competing against them? Those men who have already failed twice have anything from 20 to 30 years' service and experience in the Waterguard to their credit. The post-war entrants have seven years at the outside. Who is likely to get the plums under the scheme? I believe the whole scheme is a fraud to enable those who have failed twice to get what they have been crying about for long enough—a third chance!

But, of course, I've got a bad mind, so you will have to excuse me putting it so bluntly. Post-war entrants, wake up, and down with the proposed scheme! Vote against it before it's too late! Did you ever get any sort of decent treatment from the pre-war gentlemen since you entered the job? No, you didn't! Then why are these same gentlemen, who ridiculed and scorned you at every possible moment, so ready now to offer you such a tempting bait? Because they've got to pretend they are doing it for your benefit in order to get the necessary support to carry it through.

Every time you hear the scheme discussed, just remember that bit regarding the chaps who have already failed twice, and visualise your position if they compete against you. I daresay the "third-timers" will be vastly annoyed at my remarks, but really I'm not a bit charitable when my future is at stake. Well, cheerio, Mr. Editor, and believe me—Yours, etc.,

"UNCLE JOE."



Sir,—I sympathise with "Av. In." in his reminder to the Executive for fair treatment for ex-Service ex-Boy Messengers, but I am afraid we have very little chance of sympathy at the hands of the Executive in view of the account of the recent meeting at Liverpool, where a member of the Executive cheerfully suggests that the ex-Service ex-Boy Messengers meet the rest on level terms in the examination room to fight it out.

This clearly shows that our claim of vested interests is not recognised by at least some members of the Executive.

However, we can rely on the Board to be fair-minded, and we can confidently expect justice from them.—Yours, etc.,

A COMRADE.