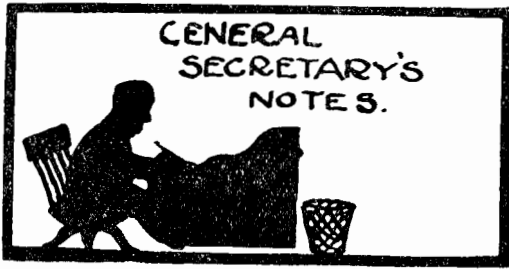


# The Customs Journal.

No. 570.

August 28th, 1926.

Fortnightly.



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

We live in an age when the tendency to talk round and round a subject, instead of getting right down to the truth of it, has become a very marked characteristic of almost every grade of society.

Newspapers are to blame for a great deal of this sort of thing. They indulge in noisy and nonsensical chatter in connection with the most important problems of the day. There is more concern for "net sales" than for the search for truth, and therefore we are never edified by the sight of a newspaper heroically tackling a problem and coming to a logical and definite conclusion upon it. The conclusion might in some instances appear to be definite, but one can always be certain that somewhere hidden away is the line of retreat, in case discretion or the financial supporters of the paper demand something less than the plain unvarnished truth.

In Parliament also a similar spirit prevails. Few soul-stirring speeches are made to-day, because such speeches can be expected only from men imbued with a desire to fearlessly express their personal convictions. It would seem, however, that most of our legislators consider it their duty to subordinate everything to the ambitions of party or class. Small wonder is it, therefore, that no progress is made with the

gigantic social problems of modern times, for no man who is compelled to keep a vigilant eye on the whims of party can make masterly contributions to any discussion. Thus it is that skill in evading the main issue has been developed to a high degree, and much indifference exists as to the importance of where the line should be drawn between right and wrong.

It would indeed be remarkable if the long-suffering public escaped being infected with this complaint. The examples ever before it are too strong for that. Even among the best sort of people in the business world misleading announcements are not looked upon as dishonourable—frequently the capacity to gracefully mislead is regarded as a virtue. For instance, we have great admiration for the business of advertising, yet the business is more concerned with attractiveness than with accuracy; and there can be no doubt that the art necessary for a successful career as a poster-king would never be found in a George Washington.

\* \* \* \*

In view of all this it is not greatly difficult to understand why some of our leading newspapers have thought it necessary to publish articles purporting to instruct people on "How to get through the Customs." The Customs baggage examination floor is one of the few remaining places where the "artless inexactitude" is promptly nailed down and is followed by swift retribution. Obviously the Press finds itself in full sympathy with people whose peccadillos so soon come home to roost.

There is, however, no need for special coaching in order to "get through the Customs." It is simplicity itself, but most of the articles published have failed to give the recipe. They have failed to state that a straight answer to a plain question is the only thing that need be practised. There is no need for anything more, and it seems a pity that of all the advice that has been broadcast lately none of it gave assist-

ance on the only point where it was really required. It is only the evasive people who have trouble with the Customs.

\* \* \* \*

It must be mentioned, however, that letters have appeared in the Press by people describing the nastiness of the unfortunate officials who have to examine their baggage. This type of individual usually states that he has "travelled in many lands," and he has words of loving affection for every Customs Officer who is not English. It so happens that English Customs Officers are also experienced, and their experience teaches them that the genuine "much-travelled man" is a delight to meet. He is usually broad in his outlook, is understanding, and is not reduced to a state of pettishness by the normal discomforts of travel. He is the most easy traveller to deal with, and not infrequently expresses his satisfaction at the manner of treatment meted out to him.

\* \* \* \*

The Chancellor's announcement regarding the activity of Civil Service staff organisations has created much more excitement in the Press than in the Civil Service. The journalists have, as usual, shown themselves very ignorant of the rock-bottom facts of the case, and some of their effusions are rather amusing. It is probable that the Government would feel much more comfortable about the whole business if they could take the same airy view of the situation as do the newspapers.

Before any action can be taken it will be necessary to define exactly the meaning of the term "Civil Servant." It will be no easy task, and there is some ground for thinking that the difficulty in arriving at that definition may lead the Government to drop the matter. It is to be hoped that this will be the case, because no good can come if force is used to make the Service abandon what it regards as a right. There are many Civil Servants who ordinarily do not bother their heads about affiliation with outside bodies, but they are much perturbed at the prospect of any addition being made to the restrictions to which they are already subject.

It is time the public learned that a contented Civil Service is a necessity, and not a luxury.

If this had been realised years ago the problem presented to the Government to-day would never have arisen. The Service has suffered much from scurrilous attack by irresponsible journalists. It has fought hard against those attacks in order to thwart attempts to reduce salary scales that would not bear reduction. The Government has done nothing to prevent these unjust attacks, and the result is that sections of the Service have sought other means of protection.

The best way to handle the situation would be to remove the cause for Civil Service Associations to be affiliated to outside bodies. Let the Government take a real interest in the welfare of its servants, and then the Service could be accurately described as a privileged body.

\* \* \* \*

It is extremely unfortunate that just at this moment the Premier should see fit to turn down the request of the National Staff Side that he should receive a deputation on the questions of imperfect arbitration machinery, and regarding the misapplication of National Council agreements, departmentally. The excuse given for the refusal is not regarded as being in any way sufficient, and it serves as a further illustration of the kind of treatment that makes the Service despair of ever getting a hearing without invoking outside aid.

There seems to be an absolute failure to understand that these issues are regarded by the Service as being of the utmost importance. It is small consolation to be told that pressure of business caused by outside industrial trouble allows of no time being given to the grievances of Civil Servants.

\* \* \* \*

Circulars are being sent out to all District Secretaries this week in connection with the vote that is being taken on the question of seniority of Post-War Entrants (excluding 1923 men and ex-Messengers). Ballot forms should be returned direct to the P.S.A. headquarters as early as possible. It is now possible to supply as many copies of the circular as may be necessary, and District Officers should see that every one of the affected officers is supplied.

Replies to the circular recently issued, asking for certain particulars of staffs in the various Districts, are rather slow in coming in. The information is wanted as early as possible, and it is hoped that everything will be done to speed things up.

\* \* \* \*

The cost-of-living figure for August is again 70. The figure for "food only" being 61.

The prize-winning article published in the "New Civilian," and entitled "Should the Bonus be Consolidated?" is contributed by Mr. W. J. Cronin. He makes out a very strong case against consolidation, and the article is well worth reading. It is also interesting to note that most of the essays sent in for the competition did not favour consolidation. More of these essays are to appear in subsequent issues of the "New Civilian."

\* \* \* \*

Several members who received Staff Annuals have written to say that owing to the long lapse of time since the issue of this useful book, they have forgotten exactly how much is due from them. The cost of the book was 1s. 3d., post free.

\* \* \* \*

Correspondents should note that I shall be away on leave until September 13th, and that any letters requiring immediate attention should be addressed to Mr. W. H. Powell, Assistant Secretary, at Beer Lane, E.C.3.

J. MERRON.

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## PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION.

### LONDON BRANCH.

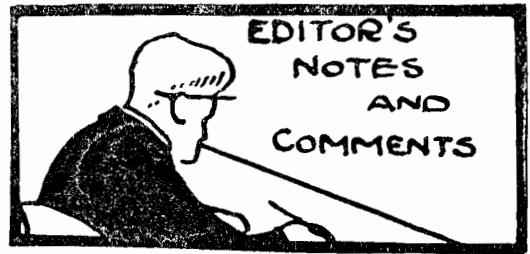
#### Election of District Organiser.

As the result of an election, the vacancy created by the retirement of Mr. C. R. Purser, P.O., will be filled by Mr. W. H. Johnson, P.O., Waterguard, Regent's Canal Dock.

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## CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

The Assistant Secretary, Mr. W. H. Powell, wishes to notify members that his address is now: 32, Dalgarno Gardens, St. Quintin Park, W. 10.



The attention of members who are interesting themselves in the Pensions Scheme is drawn to a letter published in this issue from the General Secretary of the Post Office Employees' Approved Society. The Post Office has long had a Society that has been adaptable to the Government schemes of insurance, etc., a luxury that it has not been our good fortune to possess. The letter explains itself. We have been in communication with our Gen. Sec., Mr. Merron, on the subject, and he has expressed his willingness to answer any enquiries that might be made by members of the P.S.A. The action of the Post Office Society in opening out to other Civil Service Organisations will, we feel sure, be appreciated by many of our members.

\* \* \* \*

There are still a large number of members who would wish us to drop back to the bad old days when the Association enjoyed a difficult hand-to-mouth existence, days when Association officials were always faced with the possibility of asking for a levy to meet current expenses. The appearance of a useful balance in hand on last year's balance sheet is a temptation to make suggestions for voting large sums from Association funds for various definite objects. While the objects may be very laudable and necessary, we should have to think very carefully before making inroads on the balance in the hands of the P.S.A. Probably we are stealing some of the Organising Secretary's thunder, but he would be the first to warn the membership against taking a balance in hand too seriously, for while a balance actually does exist, no organisation ever possesses the whole of its balance in hard cash. The balance is the amount standing to the credit of an organisation at a given date, and is produced at a time subsequent to that date. The work of the Association is,

however, going on all the time, and the money in hand is being used while the work of the Association goes on. The balance twelve months hence may show a still further increase, but it should not be lost sight of that £600 is really a comparatively small balance.

\* \* \* \*

We had hoped to publish a photograph of the tug-of-war team that brought the C.P.O.'s Challenge Cup home. It has not been found possible in this issue, but in all probability it will appear in our next.

The formation of a Cricket Club in London is a move in the right direction, and the enthusiastic persons who are responsible for its inauguration are to be congratulated on the success that is attending their efforts.

\* \* \* \*

The small paragraph at the end of the Gen. Secretary's Notes will fail to enlighten readers as to the real state of affairs. For some time the General Secretary has been working under a severe strain, and the wonder of it has been, to us who have seen him at work, that he has kept going so long without a breakdown. The leave he is taking now is of the utmost necessity, and will, we sincerely hope, be the means of restoring new vigour and of preventing the collapse that must inevitably have come. Mr. Merron can be assured that he has the sympathy of the whole staff, and best wishes for his speedy recovery.

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#### APPEAL FOR Mr. J. BRASIER, A.P.O., OF LONDONDERRY.

The following additional donations have been received since the previous publication:—Previously acknowledged, £13 12s.; London: Harpy, £3; Wgd. Supt. Office and Victoria, £2 2s.; R.A. Docks, £2 14s.; Surrey Docks, £1 3s. 6d.; Shadwell and Regent's Canal, £1 15s.; West and Millwall Docks, £2 5s.; Blackwall and Woolwich, £2 6s. 6d.; Whitehaven, 2s.; Stranraer, 2s. 6d.; Sunderland and Seaham, 19s.; Goragwood and Portadown Land Boundary, 10s.; Harwich, £1 2s.; Ipswich, 2s. 6d.; Newhaven, 14s.; Barrow, 5s.; Grangemouth, £1 7s. 6d.;

Bo'ness, 8s.; Glasgow, £2 1s.; Grimsby, £1 2s.; A. E. Howell, London, 5s.; Fleetwood, 3s.; Brightlingsea, 6s.; Heysham, 4s. 6d.; Swansea, £1 15s. 6d.; Ilanelly, 6s.; Watchet, 1s.; Cowes, 9s.; Arbroath, 2s. 6d.; Dundee, 18s. 6d.; Ilfracombe, 1s. Total: £42 5s. 6d.

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#### THE MYSTERY CONTINUED.

Reviewing the circumstances, there seemed little doubt that the evidence of a tragedy was before us. The police were informed and, although they were non-committal, they brought out notebooks and set to work. I left them at it and went home to sleep. Through my dreams floated visions of blood, and finger-nails torn off by a drowning man struggling to board the yacht, with another man beating him off with a boathook. When I once again appeared at the Custom House to resume my "wrestle with the world," the solution was at hand.

Two men set out for a week-end on the yacht. They dropped anchor in shallow water and set about preparing a meal. When the meal had been cooked and divided, and they were about to eat, it was noticed that the yacht was drifting, the tide having risen and lifted the anchor from the bed of the river. One man went from his meal to let out more cable. Whilst doing so the yacht drifted across the mooring of a training ship, when the jerk to the cable caused the man to catch his hand in it and tore the nails from two fingers. He called his friend, and together they struggled to free the anchor from the moorings—the injured man reaching over the side and tugging at the cable, causing the blood smears on the yacht's side. They went aft to the cockpit, where the lamp was alight, and viewed the damaged hand, causing the blood tracks and the splashes about the cockpit, where he shook his hand in agony. They hailed the training ship and were brought off by a boat to that ship, leaving the yacht foul of the moorings, but apparently quite safe. The injured hand received first-aid attention on the ship, but the man was in such pain, and the damage to the hand so severe, they were recommended to go ashore to a doctor. They did so, and after

receiving treatment they decided to stop ashore for the night, where the injured man could get a better rest. Whilst they were ashore the yacht freed herself, and drifted with the evidence to where it was picked up by the barge. The gruesome evidence had quite a simple solution.

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### THE EMERSON CLUB.

Many readers will have attended meetings of Civil Service organisations held at the Emerson Club premises in Buckingham Street, and will be interested to know that the club has now moved to larger and more convenient premises overlooking the entrance to the main building of the Board of Trade in Great George Street. The move makes it possible for the club to increase its membership, and many Civil Servants who cannot afford an expensive club will be glad to know of a club close to Whitehall which gives them the facilities they require at a modest subscription. The Emerson Club is not attached to any political or religious organisation, and is open to men and women alike. Its social activities are extensive, and it has earned a reputation for good but inexpensive meals.

The Hon. Secretary, Emerson Club, 1, Little George Street, himself a Civil Servant, will be happy to supply further information to anyone interested.

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### CIVIL SERVICE ARTS COUNCIL.

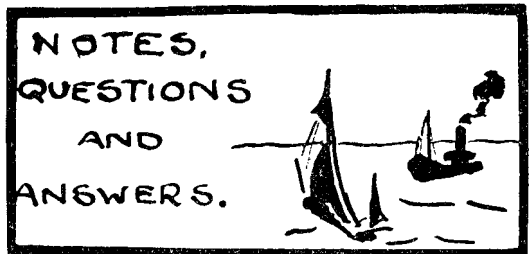
(Operatic and Dramatic Section.)

The Civil Service Arts Council are holding a special general meeting in Room 209, Treasury Chambers, Whitehall, on Monday, September 20th next, at 5.30 p.m., at which the chair will be taken by N. Curtis-Bennett, Esq., C.V.O.

This meeting has been called for the purpose of forming a Civil Service Operatic and Dramatic Society, and it is hoped that every Civil Servant interested in such a Society will endeavour to be present. The Council are of the opinion that with sufficient support a Society worthy of Service traditions can be formed, and it is hoped that this meeting will prove the

beginning of an all-Service Operatic and Dramatic Society.

Further particulars respecting this meeting will be supplied on application to the Honorary Secretary of the Operatic and Dramatic Section, Percy W. Nash, Adj. Branch, Post Office Savings Bank, W.14 (Telephone: Riverside 2000, Ex. 108).



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

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

#### SECOND PAPER.

#### Question.

3.—(a) What is the method to be followed for ascertaining the Tonnage of wood goods carried as deck cargo?

(b) A British vessel arrives from America with the following as deck cargo:—

- 25 horses,
- 93 oxen,
- 4 mules,
- 219 sheep,

and a quantity of timber measuring—

	Mean Length.	Mean Breadth.	Mean Height.
Section 1 ...	73 feet	35.7 feet	7.9 feet
Section 2 ...	59 feet	28.3 feet	5.7 feet
Section 3 ...	17 feet	11.4 feet	2.9 feet

Under Section 1 there is a hatch measuring 23 ft. by 15 ft. by 3.9 ft., and deck fittings of a cubical capacity of 17.9 ft.

Calculate the total tonnage of the deck cargo and state what forms would be prepared and to

whom delivered and where the tonnage would be recorded.

• • • •

### Answer.

3.—(a) Measure along the deck, floor, or deck-space covered by the cargo the mean length in feet. Measure the mean breadth and mean height reached by the cargo in feet and tenths. Multiply together the length, breadth and height so taken and divide the product by 100. The result will give the tonnage of the space occupied. Spaces occupied by deck fittings included in such measurements are to be deducted.

The means may be ascertained by taking three measurements in different parts and dividing the sum of such measurements by three.

(b)—

25 horses at 80 cubic ft. per animal	2000
93 oxen at 70 cubic ft. per animal	6510
4 mules at 65 cubic ft. per animal	260
219 sheep at 10 cubic ft. per animal	2190
Section 1 = 73 ft. by 35.7 ft. by 7.9 ft.	20588.19
Section 2 = 59 ft. by 28.3 ft. by 5.7 ft.	9517.29
Section 3 = 17 ft. by 11.4 ft. by 2.9 ft.	562.02
	<hr/>
Total cubic ft. ... ..	41627.5
Deductions—	
Hatch = 23 ft. by 15 ft. by 3.9 ft.	1345.5
Deck fittings ... ..	17.9
	<hr/>
	1363.4
	<hr/>
	100 ) 40264.1
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Deck cargo tonnage ... ..	402.64
	<hr/>

Issue Form Survey 104 to the master. Issue Form Survey 105 to the Long Room with the time occupied stated thereon. Enter particulars of deck cargo tonnage in the official log book on the page following the last entry therein. If log book is not available, forward a duplicate Survey 104 to the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine suitably amended regarding the entry in the log. Enter deck cargo tonnage in the ship's Blue Book.

“SCRUTATOR.”

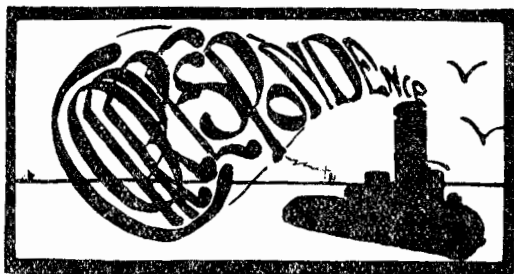
## CRICKET CLUB FOR LONDON.

Hitherto in London it has not been found possible to organise anything in the shape of a sports club. Difficulties have always seemed impossible to surmount, the chief of these being the large area covered by the staff both on and off duty, and the varying times of attendance. Added to this has been the barrier of Father Thames running through the town and dividing the port into two halves. Enterprising people have at last found what seems to be a way out, and it is so simple that we wonder that we did not think of it ourselves. Father Thames himself seems to have given the cue, and a meeting held on August 13th brought into being a Cricket Club for officers living on the south side only. No time has been lost, and the honorary officers have been elected. Mr. C. E. Egan, C.P.O., who has shown a keen interest in sport, is President. The Secretary is Mr. W. O. Eldridge, A.P.O., and the Treasurer, Mr. W. J. Ferguson, P.O. The members of the Committee are Messrs. W. H. Johnson, P.O., R. G. Steers, P.O., S. F. Bennetts, A.P.O., and W. Dowden, A.P.O.

Members of the Club must reside on the south side of the Thames at the date of admission and must also be members of Waterguard Associations. The entrance fee is one pound. Applications for membership should be made on the appropriate form, and should be returned to the Secretary at the Surrey Docks not later than September 7th next.

The exclusion of the north siders has appeared a drastic move, and no doubt it required not a little courage on the part of the meeting to draw such a line. Its wisdom is, however, beyond question, for everyone is prepared to admit that a man living in North London would soon tire of journeying to Sydenham for cricket, as would also a man at Sydenham who was compelled to journey to East Ham or Tufnell Park. The formation of the new Club can only have one sensible result, and that is the inauguration of a Club on the north side which will be restricted to north siders only. Thus there would be two rival clubs in London, and the port is big enough for two clubs, which could combine for important events, and could alternately entertain one another.

We have heard that membership is growing rapidly, and we heartily wish it every success in its formation and in its first season.



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

#### THE CONFERENCE.

Sir,—I am one of the old brigade, but am still interested in the "Journal," and although not in the habit of contributing to your columns, I would like to see some of our younger men contributing to the little green paper, which, I believe, has and will continue to do good service for the Waterguard cause.

Now, Sir, may I ask a few questions relative to matters that were apparently discussed at the recent Conference? Regarding Rummage allowances, it would be interesting to know why this was wiped off the slate by the Districts. The reasons would be interesting from many points of view, and perhaps some of the District representatives would let us know. I, personally, think it desirable that there should be a substantial allowance given to men who prefer this work and are prepared to dig in the dark and dirty places for contraband. Of course, I mean rummaging. The rummaging officer of ten years back is hard to find in these days. I know I shall get a few hard knocks for making this statement, but I am fairly sure of my ground when I say that the present-day A.P.O. on rummage duty is not up to the standard of the old Boatman P.M. of days gone by. The smuggler is still on the job. Are we keeping our reputation in combating his wiles? I say No! It's no use bothering about the style or pattern of the electric lamp if you have not on hand the rightly trained man to use it.

Further, the salary question seems to have occupied some time at the Conference, according to your report—I mean in the transition stage from A.P.O. to P.O. Surely there is no very great need to labour this matter. Aren't we sort of pleading too much of the poverty stunt to ask for fortnightly payments? Any A.P.O. who is looking for and expecting promotion should be

able to carry on for one month at least. If not, why not?

I have written this for the purpose of discussion, and hope your readers will reply in the same spirit; at any rate, I hope they won't get their wool off. More anon.—Yours, etc.,

ENQUIRER.

#### SICK BENEFIT.

Sir,—Owing to the appearance of several cases of hardship in prolonged sickness amongst the Waterguard staff, I think that a scheme could be adopted whereby it would be possible to render financial assistance on these occasions when it is so much needed. This could be done by means of a small subscription of 6d. per month, collected at the same time as the Association subscriptions, thereby saving a little expense to the fund. By this means a sum of about £200 could be placed at our disposal at the end of the first six months, and to assure the success of the fund I would suggest either a levy of 2s. per member to commence with, or to transfer £200 of the £600 credit balance of the P.S.A. to the proposed fund. I venture to say that the benefits to be derived from this scheme would be far in excess of any other sick club or society benefits, and, furthermore, no deserving case would be allowed to exist without receiving the necessary assistance.

For the present I am only making provision in my scheme for the period when half-pay from the Service commences, and any subsequent period when no pay is received. Should the scheme get into working order and funds permit, an allowance after the first month of sickness, say about 10s. per week, might be made during the first six months to meet doctors' bills, etc.

The following are a few ideas as to how the scheme might be instituted:—

- (1) The Fund be named "The Preventive Staff Sick Benefit Fund."
- (2) The P.S.A. to manage the financial side of affairs.
- (3) All monies of Fund to be banked in the name of the Fund.
- (4) Subscriptions to be paid monthly.
- (5) No member to receive a lump sum benefit under any circumstances.
- (6) No benefit until member commences on half-pay from Service.
- (7) When on half-pay the full pay to be made up as benefit.
- (8) When in receipt of no pay, a benefit up to the amount of full pay for a period not exceeding one year or up to the time of superannuation should such happen within one year.

(9) Benefits to be paid weekly or monthly as desired by sick member.

(10) A member of a selected committee to be held responsible for the delivery of benefits, and required to report on the state of health of the sick member to the committee.

(11) When funds permit, a sum to be allotted to provide a bed or beds in a hospital at the principal ports for the use of members only.

No doubt this scheme could be greatly improved upon, but it is something to work on, and I should be glad to hear any suggestions or criticism on the subject.—Yours, etc.,

BENEFACTOR.



### PENSIONS.

Sir,—The Ministry of Health has just made a special concession with regard to the Contributory Pensions Act which will almost certainly be of interest to your members.

The closing time for entry into the Contributory Pensions scheme was July 4th, but in certain cases this has been extended until October 4th next. The Ministry has realised that there was considerable delay in the issue of regulations showing the actual amount of pension which a Civil Servant in receipt of a Service pension would get at the age of 65, and it is clear that a great many Civil Servants delayed their applications until this information was forthcoming, and that in a number of cases the applications were either not made or made too late. The Ministry, therefore, has agreed that in all such cases applications may be received and accepted provided they are made before October 4th next. It will not make any difference if no previous application has been made.

In case your members are not familiar with the actual position, may I say that under the Contributory Pension Act a pension of 10s. per week is payable both to the member and his wife at the age of 65, i.e., £1 in all, but where a Service pension is received and the member at entry was over 45 years of age, a deduction is made from the Contributory Pension which, roughly speaking, reduces it by 2s. per week for every two years over the age of 45. To put it simply, a man who entered after the age of 45 but before 47 would only be entitled to a pension of 9s. and 9s. for his wife. If he entered over the age of 59 he would be only entitled to 2s. per week. These regulations also apply to the pension at 70, but it should be borne in mind that at 70 a pension is granted without any enquiry into means, i.e., over and above any Service pension which is being received.

You might like to make this information known to your members, and I shall be very glad to send any further information either to yourself or to any member who may be interested.—Yours, etc.,

G. W. CANTER,  
General Secretary, Post Office  
Employees' Approved Society.

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

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