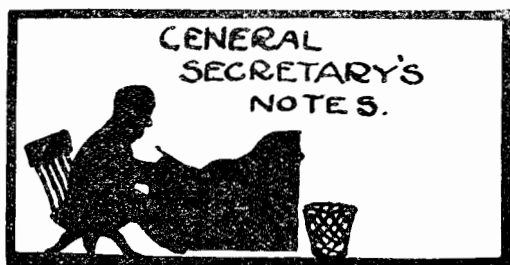


# The Customs Journal.

No. 575.

November 6th, 1926.

Fortnightly.



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

Despite the prominence of Betting Tax news, undiminished interest continues to be displayed by the newspapers regarding continental travellers and their adventures with the Silk Duty.

Reporters, ever on the alert for a story with strong human interest, have made such places as Dover, Folkestone, and Victoria Station their happy hunting grounds. There are so many different motives underlying the desire to smuggle silk that practically every case presents something new, and there is little danger of the public becoming bored by repetition. Nevertheless, the information gathered by the Press in connection with silk smuggling is merely superficial when compared with the intimate knowledge possessed by the Customs Officer regarding each little drama in which he plays a role. It is by the accumulation of this kind of expert knowledge that the Waterguard man is able to form his remarkably accurate and rapid judgments when faced with problems that require Solomon-like qualities to settle. It is noteworthy that the newspapers almost invariably pay tribute to the cleverness with which subtle attempts at Revenue dodging are counteracted, and, indeed, a London paper recently devoted its leading article to describing a typical case of skilful detection. But the really interesting and human side never gets into print, and, in spite of the efforts of the story-hunters, probably never will. It is the duty of the Customs Officer to keep all that to himself, and he does his duty nobly and well.

Stoicism is a quality which, in these days, is the most valued possession of the baggage officer. He constantly suffers insults and abuse during the performance of his work, and his success in the handling of trying situations is largely dependent on his being impervious to this kind of thing. The introduction of the

feminine element into the realms of smuggling has added considerably to his difficulties, for even the most gallant must admit that the ladies are often as much averse to displaying a charm of manner as they are to the producing of their dutiable goods. Perhaps, however, there is some excuse for the women-folk, because Customs Officers have acquired a very wide experience in silk attire and the latest fashions, and it must, of course, be very irritating to find a mere man so well informed in these sacred matters that his gullibility is reduced to an insignificant minimum.

A full day of dealing with continental passengers calls for unlimited patience and the exercise of great restraint, and it is small wonder that reaction comes in the form of both mental and physical exhaustion. Not a little of the strain is due to the ever present possibility of making a faux pas that might lead to unpleasant consequences. That such occurrences are extremely rare is a clear indication of a very high state of efficiency on the part of the staff.

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The Betting Tax is responsible for giving us something really interesting in the way of official regulations. G.O. 79, recently issued, provides hope that we are about to commence an era of "Brighter General Orders." This G.O. has been read with lively interest, especially Appendices B and C. To the student it stands out amidst the mass of dry and dreary regulations like an oasis in the desert. The issue of a few more documents of this description would make certain the success of the Departmental Education scheme which the P.S.A. is on the eve of bringing into being.

Fleet Street has, in the usual approved manner, been dispensing a great deal of nonsense in connection with the administration of the new tax, and, just as usual, the papers have got the unfortunate public into a very muddled state of mind regarding the whole business. It is evident that some of them would be delighted to see the Betting Tax fail, if only for the satisfaction of saying "I told you so." But they are doomed to disappointment, however, because the job is in the hands of the Customs and Excise—the most efficient of all Civil Service Departments—and they, also as usual, will see it through.

\* \* \* \*

The annual election of Councillors is now taking place, and it is hoped that this fact will cause large attendances at all Branch meetings. There is nothing like having good first-class discussions at meetings regarding Association affairs in order to weigh up a candidate's enthusiasm for the job to which he aspires. Not

only that, but active interest on the part of the members in connection with these elections gives confidence to the elected candidates, which is a considerable asset during their term of office. It is interesting to note most of the Executive Committee are amongst the retiring candidates eligible for re-election.

\* \* \* \*

Amongst many other things appropriate for Branch discussion at the moment is the question of monthly pay for A.P.O.'s. The ballot papers have now been issued and should be in the hands of all officers eligible to vote. It should be borne in mind that this ballot is a preliminary to taking the matter up through Whitley channels. No discussions with the Official Side have yet taken place, and will not take place unless there is a decisive vote in favour of monthly pay.

\* \* \* \*

A Committee, representing a large number of Civil Service Associations, has now been formed under the title of the "Civil Rights Defence Committee." The functions of this body will be to watch over Civil Service interests in connection with any measures that may be taken as a result of the Chancellor's statement on the question of affiliation. It can be taken for granted that the personnel of this Committee is strong enough to put up a very strong resistance if such should be necessary.

\* \* \* \*

I would like to remind all Association officers that in case of change of address, it is necessary to advise the General Secretary as well as the "Journal" Editor. Cases have arisen where notification of changes in address have been communicated only to the Editor, with the result that no record of the change is made at the Association offices.

J. MERRON.

## PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION.

### BRISTOL.

At a meeting at the Central Restaurant on Oct. 7th, with Mr. Worner in the chair, the subject of unowned goods was fully discussed, and opinion was registered in a resolution that, in view of the increasing number of cases in which no member of a ship's crew could be induced to admit ownership of dutiable goods seized on board, the regulations should be revised so as to enable all seizures to be dealt with in the same manner, the onus being placed on the master of the vessel concerned.

Items of local interest were discussed, and proposed action approved.

### GRAVESEND.

At the District Meeting at Gravesend, on October 15th, the chair was occupied by Mr. G. Grey.

Owing to the small attendance of members it was decided to suspend Rule 2 of Standing Orders for the evening.

Matter arising out of minutes was disposed of, suitable action being decided upon in each case.

The circular relating to the "Coal Crisis" was next dealt with, and the Secretary was instructed to forward the replies to the General Secretary.

Mr. J. A. O'Connor and Mr. T. G. Wood were nominated as Councillor, A.P.O. Grade, for the ensuing two years. Mr. A. R. Millward, A.P.O., kindly consented to act as District contributor to the "Customs Journal."

"Staffing of Port."—The scheme submitted by the Special Committee was approved of.

Under "Other Business," the following proposition was carried unanimously: "That all fully-paid-up members of the P.S.A. shall, after retirement, be supplied with a free copy of the 'Customs Journal.'"

After voting thanks to the Chair, the meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.

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### NEWPORT (MON.).

On October 18th, Mr. Roberts presided over a local meeting at the Queen's Hotel. The proceedings opened with the election of officers to the Whitley Council, those already serving being re-elected. One or two items of local interest were dealt with, following which a resolution regarding Waterguard pay was proposed. This was to the effect that, in view of the recent cut in the Bonus, and the precarious position in which the lesser-paid A.P.O.'s were placed in consequence, the Executive Committee is urged to press forward with a scheme for an increase in pay. An amendment followed favouring no action being taken in the matter. In favour of the amendment, it was argued that the E.C. had already received instructions to go into this matter, and that there was, therefore, no useful purpose to be served by the proposal; neither did the proposal offer any constructive policy.

The advocates for the resolution were of opinion that, as the Executive Council should have the matter in hand, there was no need to offer a policy, but the necessity for urging the Executive to produce their policy with all possible speed. They contended that the latest cut, plus the quickly rising cost of living, had certainly made things very hard for the lesser-paid A.P.O.'s. They suggested that, rather than

wait for an opportune moment for formulating a claim, it should be ready to be placed before the Board immediately the opportune moment arrived. The amendment was withdrawn, the resolution being carried *nem. con.*

## CIVIL SERVICE CONFEDERATION.

### REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Monday, October 18th, 1926, at Caxton Hall, Westminster, attended by thirty-one members. Mr. W. H. James presided.

On the question of sick pay for Unestablished classes, the General Secretary reported that a number of deputations to Departments had taken place and others were being arranged. In regard to the case of the Ordnance Survey, a communication had been received from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to the effect that authority had now been given for the grant of paid sick leave as from September 1st, 1926, to Messengers at the Ordnance Survey on the same basis as that allowed to Messengers at the Headquarters offices of the Ministry under Treasury Circular of June 2nd, 1924.

With regard to the National Whitley Committee on the Promotion of Minor and Manipulative Grades, it was reported that certain proposals had been made by the Official Side to the Staff Side of the Committee, and that a joint meeting of the Committee would be held shortly.

A report was received of a meeting on October 8th, 1926, of organisations concerned in the question of the threatened Government legislation to prohibit the affiliation of Civil Service Staff Associations to outside industrial and political organisations, at which the Confederation had been represented, and some discussion took place on future action. It was decided (1) that the Confederation should be represented by the President and the General Secretary at a further conference to be held on October 29th, and (2) that the Confederation representatives should support a proposal that action should be taken at once in anticipation of the threatened Government legislation rather than wait until the introduction of a Government Bill.

Letters were read from the Inland Revenue Stamping Department Superintendents' Association and from the Association of ex-Soldier (War Office) Clerks, expressing appreciation of the assistance rendered by Confederation representatives in handling cases on behalf of these Associations before the Industrial Court. It was reported that an award had now been issued in the recent case of the Warehouse Supervisors. H.M. Stationery Office, also handled by the Con-

federated, which gives increases of remuneration to the classes concerned.

The draft of a proposed amended Constitution and Standing Orders for the National Staff Side was received, which had been agreed upon by the various parties concerned, with a view to resolving difficulties which have recently arisen; and it was decided that this draft be approved and that it be supported by the Confederation representatives at a special meeting of the National Staff Side to be held on October 22nd.

Proposals for the amendment of the Constitution, Bye-Laws and Standing Orders of the Confederation were considered, and it was decided that certain amendments be put forward for consideration at the Half-yearly Council Meeting to be held on November 27th, 1926.

The Honorary Treasurer's Statement of Income and Expenditure for the half-year ended September 30th, 1926, was also presented and approved.

On the subject of Income Tax Allowances, a resolution was adopted and agreed to be forwarded to the National Federation of Professional Workers asking that representations be made to the proper authorities to have contributions under the National Health Insurance and Widows' and Orphans' Pensions schemes admissible for relief from Income Tax.

Resolutions were adopted, and agreed to be forwarded to the National Staff Side for appropriate action, on the following subjects:—

#### OFFICE FURNITURE AND ACCESSORIES.

That the Staff Side of the National Whitley Council be requested to press for the provision of up-to-date office furniture and accessories.

#### CLEANING OF GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

That the Staff Side of the National Whitley Council be asked to seek for the appointment of a Joint Committee with the Official Side to consider the filthy condition of Government offices in general, arising from the inadequate provision of staff and materials for the periodical cleaning of walls and records, and remediable in part by the provision of vacuum cleaners and the washing of office furniture.

#### DEPARTMENTAL MARKINGS.

That, in view of the experience gained in connection with the awarding of Departmental marks in recent Service examinations, efforts be made to secure the abolition of this system in all future examinations.

#### CONTRIBUTORY PENSIONS ACT.

That it is desirable that arrangements should be made whereby contributions to the contributory pensions scheme due from voluntary contributors may, if the contributor so desires, be deducted from his official salary.

#### WIDOWS' PENSIONS.

That, in view of the fact that a large proportion of the Service are outside the scope of

the Widows' and Orphans' Contributory Pensions Act, 1925, and that the rate of widows' pensions under the Act is not adequate, we urge the Confederation to expedite the proceedings of the Superannuation Sub-Committee of the National Whitley Council towards the provision of a more suitable Civil Service scheme.

## PRESENTATION AT KIRKCALDY.

A pleasing function took place recently at the Custom House, Kirkcaldy, when officers of the different departments met to witness the presentation of the long-service medal to Mr. Harris, Preventive Officer. The chair was occupied by Mr. J. W. Crook, Collector, Dundee. Mr. G. McDiarmid, Waterguard Superintendent, spoke to Mr. Harris's good qualities, and wished him all good health in his retirement. Mr. W. G. Harvey, C.P.O., with a few pleasing remarks, referred to his sterling worth, and Mr. Wedderspoon and Mr. Black, Officers, also paid tribute to him as a conscientious and trustworthy Officer.

After the chairman had fastened the medal on Mr. Harris's coat, Mr. Kavanagh, P.O., on behalf of friends and staff, handed to him tobacco, pipe and pouch, followed by appreciative speeches from Mr. W. Cairns, C.P.O., and Messrs. W. Adams and E. V. Owen, P.O.'s.

A letter from Mr. Murdoch was read by the Collector regretting inability to attend.

## EARTH.

(Adapted from the *Auto-da-fé*.)

By ANONYMOUS.

Yes! thou art wonderful, but, Oh,  
 'Tis sad to think, 'mid scenes so bright  
 As thine, fair Earth, sounds of woe,  
 And shrieks of pain and wild affright,  
 And soul-wrung groans of deep despair,  
 And blood and death should mingle there.  
 All speak thee wonderful—the phrase  
 Befits thee well,—the fearful blaze  
 Of canon flashing in the night,  
 And wretched men deprived of sight.  
 Two silent minutes for our slain  
 (Who on this day return again),  
 In memory of how they fell,  
 Fighting with human fiends that swell  
 That withering scream—that frantic yell.  
 Ah, Earth, all too truly tell  
 Thou art a marvel, and, a hell.

## C. & E. DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL.

The seventy-eighth meeting of the Council was held in London on October 20th, 1926, the chair being taken by Sir H. P. Hamilton, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

### BETTING DUTY.

The Staff Side referred to the desire of the Staff to co-operate with the Board in regard to the staffing and methods of work to be employed in this connection, and complained that the response to their offer had been so late and inadequate that the attempt had failed. In reply, the Official Side expressed the Board's regret that it had not been possible to give the Staff Side longer time for the consideration of the draft General Orders.

A detailed discussion ensued on the conditions under which, in other than very urgent cases, the drafts of important General Orders might be made available for effective consideration by the Staff Side of the Suggestions Committee, and the subject was adjourned. With regard to co-operation at an earlier stage, the Official Side could express no opinion except to point out that in the case of new duties the lines of administration had generally to be settled before the Budget was introduced, and that the Board had, of course, at their disposal the services of their chief technical advisers.

Information was given concerning new posts in the Chief Inspector's Office and the new staff of ex-police officers, and an announcement made respecting the relaxation of Old Age Pension instructions. With regard to the latter, the Official Side promised to consider the question of consulting Local Committees before withdrawing the relaxations in any area.

### CONTRIBUTORY PENSIONS.

With regard to the effect of the Act of 1925 upon the work of the Department, the Official Side stated that in Scotland and Northern Ireland arrangements would be made to ascertain the number of full-rate pensioners under the 1908-24 Acts who were qualified by insurance, and to transfer those who established a claim to the Scottish Board of Health and Northern Ireland Ministry of Labour respectively. In England and Wales some 4,000 full-rate pensioners had been transferred to the contributory scheme.

### DELAY IN ISSUE OF INSTRUCTIONS, FORMS, Etc.

The Staff Side gave instances in which instructions and forms had reached Officers at a date too late to enable them properly to perform the work involved, and investigation of the matter was promised by the Official Side.

### COMMISSIONS.

It was agreed that commissions in general terms such as are issued to Officers of Customs

and Excise should not be issued to Clerks employed in the Department.

#### LEAVE.

Arrangements were agreed for the modification of the instructions relative to officiation, assistance, etc., when leave is granted outside the minuted periods of Officers.

#### OLD AGE PENSION REMUNERATION.

It was agreed that the remuneration to be paid under Part I. of General Order 52/1924, in exceptional cases where an Officer (a) performed all the work in connection with new claims arising out of the Old Age Pensions Act, 1924, or (b) performed all the work in connection with such claims with the exception of the delivery of the Order Book, but in either case received no extra remuneration owing to the deductions made in respect of assistance given to his successor in the Station should be at the full rates of 4s. 6d. or 6s. per claim respectively laid down in the Order.

#### DEPARTMENTAL CLERKS.

It was agreed that for the purpose of providing relief for leave, sickness or pressure of work, the whole staff of Clerks employed in any one Collection shall be interchangeable between the Collector's Office and any Sub-Offices or Stations in the Collection to which Clerks have been appointed.

#### OVERTIME.

A reference in more comprehensive terms having been arranged, it was agreed to withdraw the following reference from the Outdoor Service Sectional Committee:—"Staff Side proposal that steps be taken to put an end to the systematic and/or excessive amount of overtime which Officers are called upon to work in certain instances on account of the extent to which the privilege of keeping bonded warehouses open beyond legal hours has been granted."

#### PROBATE.

The Official Side undertook to bring to the notice of the responsible authorities the representations made at the previous meeting by the Staff Side concerning the administration by Officers of Customs and Excise of grants of representation to estates up to and not exceeding £1,000 in value.

#### OTHER MATTERS.

A number of Local Committee decisions were considered, including one involving the possible exclusion of a King's Warehouse Station from the normal scheme of rotation at a certain Port, with results that have been communicated to the Committees concerned.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on November 17th, 1926.

#### THE YEAR'S WORK.

Referring to the conclusion of another year's business, the Chairman remarked upon the

setting up of another record of continuous activity, during which it had been a particular pleasure of the Official Side to co-operate in inaugurating a system of Fixed Officiatorships. The value of deliberation in connection with Committee agreements and disagreements was continually impressed upon them, and the Council was far from being a mere recording machine. Even agreements had sometimes to be altered; disagreements were carefully considered, and in many cases converted into agreements, while even when they persisted, each Side better appreciated the position of the other. There was no reason why the Council's business should not continue on the same lines.

The Vice-Chairman concurred, stating that however much arguments had developed, there had been no bad feeling engendered, and the Council could claim that the gospel of common sense had prevailed throughout the year.

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### ARMISTICE DAY, 1926.

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To the Waterguard Staff is again entrusted the task of conveying the Departmental wreath to the Cenotaph on November 11th. Arrangements are practically complete for the carrying out of the ceremony at the Custom House.

With grateful hearts we remember those who passed over during the War whose glorious deeds were instrumental in saving our country from the gravest menace that had ever threatened it. R.I.P.

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### LOWESTOFT PRESENTATION.

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A meeting was held at the Custom House, Lowestoft, on Wednesday, October 13th, the occasion being the presentation to Mr. E. B. Jenner of a leather suit-case upon his promotion to the rank of P.O. In the absence of the C.P.O., Mr. H. V. Welton, P.O., occupied the chair, and in a few well-chosen words spoke of the sterling qualities of Mr. Jenner and of the high esteem in which he was held by the staff, he also read letters of appreciation received from members of the Excise and Clerical staff. He asked Mr. Jenner to accept the present with the good wishes of his colleagues. Others present testified their appreciation of Mr. Jenner's qualities and wished him every success in his new sphere.

Mr. Jenner replied with great feeling, and said it gave him every pleasure to accept the gift which would always remind him of Lowestoft and his brother officers there.

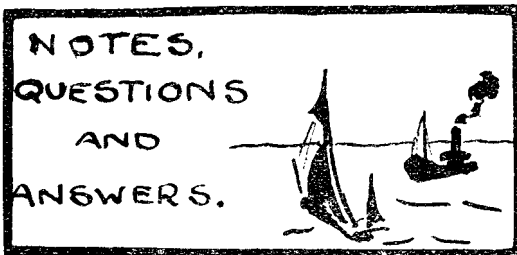
The meeting afterwards concluded in the usual manner.

### CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

We have been notified of the following changes of address of the Organising Secretary and of the South Coast Councillor. Future correspondence should be addressed:—

Mr. J. T. SUTTON,  
Preventive Staff Association,  
13, Beer Lane, London, E.C.3.

Mr. S. E. D. BALL,  
7, Town Wall Street, Dover.



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

### Notes.

In a recent issue of the "Journal," the Editor, anticipating my wishes, drew attention to the fact that questions from students would be greatly appreciated, and were necessary to continued interest in this column.

During this last six weeks I have only received two small questions.

This is very disheartening to me.

I rightly consider that I am wasting my time publishing items of the regulations that may not be at all interesting and that I have not been asked to publish.

It seems rather strange to me that there is not more interest taken in the very wide range of regulations with which students should now be studying. I say that students should now be studying for several reasons. Winter time is the best time to learn the "Winter Restrictions," etc., etc. Competition for P.O.-ship and seniority as such is becoming very keen. The last list of successful candidates is dwindling; perhaps slowly for those fortunate officers on that list, also for those few who are really eager to be on the next, but I can assure those officers who are within range of the next examination that every day now is valuable to make success a foregone conclusion.

Please, therefore, commence right away.

If you don't know how, where, when, or why, drop me a line. Your correspondence, if correctly addressed, is dealt with in strict confidence by me. I may be able to help you. If not, I shall say so.

"SCRUTATOR."

### GRAVESEND CUSTOM HOUSE SPORTS CLUB.

(ROWING SECTION).

SECOND YEAR.

The final race for the Rowing Shield took place at noon on Saturday, October 16th, 1926. The finalists, Messrs. E. W. Thomas and H. V. Fleet, gave us a very interesting and exciting quarter-of-an-hour. Mr. Thomas secured the lead on turning for the second part of the race, but Mr. Fleet kept going gamely and was only beaten by about eight lengths. The winner's name will be duly inscribed on the Shield, and both he and the loser will receive medals. The race was kindly judged by Mr. W. Donaldson, Waterguard Superintendent.

Perhaps other ports may wish to know something of this Shield Competition, that they might inaugurate a similar affair among themselves. The Hon. Sec. (Mr. G. N. Camburn) will gladly give particulars as to the manner in which the competition is arranged to anyone desirous of organising a similar competition. Who knows? Perhaps some kind person or persons may eventually present the Waterguard with a National Shield to be rowed for annually.

It is interesting to note that the Shield Competition originated at Gravesend from two causes:—

Firstly.—Our rather bad defeat in the local Regatta in 1925, in the four-oared race in watermen's boats against the Port of London Authority (Harbour Service).

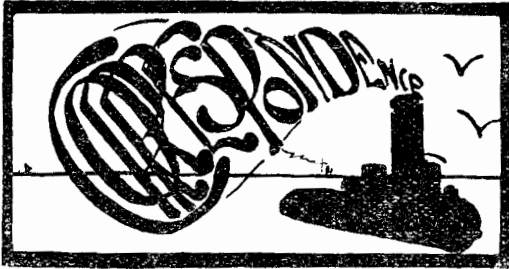
Secondly. A race in small skiffs by two of the members of the staff here for a wager. The course these two gentlemen chose was from the Customs Pier at Gravesend down stream to one of Cory's coal hulks and back to the Customs Pier, a distance of approximately two nautical miles.

They never imagined that they would commence a new history on the Station, but, strange to say, the winner of the wager was also the winner of the Shield in the first competition last year.

## LAUNCH SERVICE PRESENTATION.

On his retirement from the Launch Service at Portsmouth, Mr. H. Reed, Mate-in-Charge, was made the recipient of a handsome gold signet ring. In presenting the ring on behalf of the staff, Mr. G. B. Hart, District C.P.O., expressed a wish that Mr. Reed would live long to wear it as a mark of esteem and respect from his colleagues at Portsmouth and Cowes.

Mr. Reed feelingly thanked the staff for the gift, and said that it would always be a token of remembrance of the happy days he had spent in the Service.



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.

Sir,—The leading article in last week's "John Bull," entitled "Slaves of the Crown," has not come before time, and the Editor is to be commended in bringing to the public notice and sense of fair play the anomalies which exist in the Civil Service to-day. The time has come when we must put our "pocket" before pride, and let the country know that we are not the sheltered, well-paid officials that the stunt Press makes us out to be.

The recent cut of one-thirteenth off the Bonus has just about put the "tin lid" on the home life of hundreds of Civil Servants, and the "gentlemen" who compile the cost-of-living figures should be all made to take a trip to the land where there is no cost to live. Take our own little Department. Here am I, after six years' service in the Waterguard, stationed in a small port (where the cost of everything is half as dear again), trying to exist on the handsome salary of £2 19s. 6d. weekly. Every married man must know what that means, yet the powers that be expect us to keep respectable, free of debt, and immune from bribery and corruption.

Things have come to a pretty pass, and if something is not done soon, instead of being blamed for being "Bolsheviks," we will all be certified "Lunatics."—Yours, etc.,

"GEE-WHIZ."

Sir,—Having read in the last issue of the "Customs Journal" that, by an overwhelming majority, the ex-service A.P.O.'s are in favour of seniority by date of entry, might I suggest that ex-Boy Messengers might also take their places in the same manner? It appears that the ex-service A.P.O.'s have a keen sense of fairness, and I think the majority of them would be quite ready to admit that we are entitled to a little consideration, especially as we are such a comparatively small number. Many of them have been men enough to tell me that they are of the opinion that we have not received fair consideration by the Association when seniority schemes have been put forward.

Trusting we shall eventually be placed on a fair footing, and with respects to my numerous ex-service colleagues,—Yours, etc.,

FOUR-AND-A-HALF YEARS B.M.

## OVERWORKED AND UNDERSTAFFED.

Sir,—Recently this Journal has published articles by "X" and "Old Stager" stating conditions prevailing in some ports. I have every sympathy with the writers and their colleagues in their ports, which are evidently like this one, overworked and understaffed.

Here, also, the work increases daily, but there is no extra staff, and the only response to any such suggestion is a quotation of the amount of work done in London. Many people cannot understand how the work of this port continues without serious trouble. The credit is not due to organisation and manipulation of the staff, but to the wholehearted willingness of that staff, which is determined to maintain the prestige of this port at any cost.

To quote the amount of work done in London is no comparison—it is bluff,—because many of us have had London experience, and know how it is staffed.

What the supervisory grades, in the overworked and understaffed ports, should do would be to associate themselves with the practical side of the work of the port, and, as "Old Stager" says, go round the station with the P.O. for the full eight hours and glean first-hand knowledge of the work on the different stations. Since these officers are supposed to advise and instruct their juniors, why not take over a station themselves for a watch or two? I am confident of the result, and, perhaps, there would be less pin-pricking from armchair critics. I can tell a man what he should do by B.O. so-and-so, but I cannot tell him how, when he has ten hours' work to squeeze into the space of eight. He must, of course, use his own common-sense in overcoming his difficulties, always remembering that the protection of the Revenue is his first duty.

However, it is pleasing to know that at least one port in the U.K. is perfection, and that it is governed well. How I long to get there, and how I congratulate officers of London that they enjoy happy and reasonable conditions of service, they have plenty of material to work with, and that they have attained such a high standard of efficiency as to be held up as models for our guidance! The very persons who infer all this do not seem to restore the outports to the standard of London, because in their own hearts they must know that it is impossible with the insufficient staff and material at their disposal. Knowing this, why don't they show their grit and ask that the supply shall meet the demand, putting the true facts before the Commissioners? No; they prefer to muddle along controlling with the aid of bluff and bluster, praying all the time that nothing glaring will happen during their turn of duty in the port, and anxiously awaiting the opportunity to get away, I suppose to London. In the meantime, if any officer makes a slip, no allowance is made for the abnormal pressure of work. He is bluntly told that he is not efficient. Now this, to a good and efficient officer, naturally causes worry for a considerable time. He has been told that he is not efficient. He does not know how far this remark is going, and he knows that it is untrue. Yet, what remedy has he? None; for should he fight and win, it is a short-lived victory; so he submits, feeling somewhat like a whipped cur.—Yours, etc.,

N.Y.Z.

**PROSECUTIONS.**

**PORTSMOUTH.**

At the City Police Court, on October 23rd, the master of the s.s. "Denisem," from Roscoff, was charged with harbouring and concealing 200 cigars and 5 gallons of brandy and rum. He admitted having the goods on board, but stated that no attempt was made to sell them. Mr. G. B. Hart, C.P.O., prosecuted for the Crown, and pressed for £100 penalty or six months.

The magistrates decided to fine the defendant £25 and 19s. costs.

The goods were found by Mr. E. Barron, A.P.O., under the supervision of Mr. J. E. Tuggey, P.O.

\* \* \* \*

At the same court the mate of the "Denisem" was charged with concealing 2 lb. 5 oz. of tobacco. He pleaded guilty, and was fined £1 7s. 4d. and 19s. costs. When the interpreter explained to him the decision of the magistrates, Pentecote replied, "That's not too bad."

Mr. R. H. Dwen, A.P.O., found the tobacco, with Mr. E. J. Osborne, P.O.

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

ESTABLISHED 1866.

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