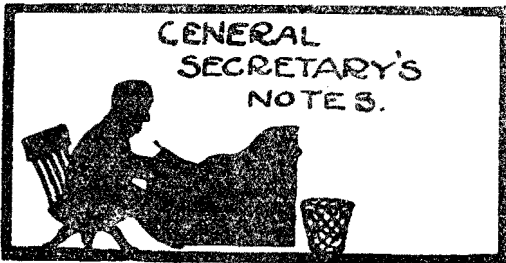


The Customs Journal.

No. 591.

June 18th, 1927.

Fortnightly.



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

Preventive Staff Association—
Thames Chambers,
13, Beer Lane,
London, E.C.3.

The Agenda which the Executive Committee had before them at their meeting, commencing June 1st, resulted in a full three days of strenuous discussion.

The annual report for the Conference, embracing reports from the "Customs Journal" Committee, Educational Committee, Organising Secretary and General Secretary, etc., had to be examined in detail. The report of the Educational Committee is, of course, a new item in Association affairs this year, and consideration of it claimed a good deal of time and attention. The Secretary of the Central Committee, Mr. Purser, attended during the discussion. Progress made was regarded as satisfactory, and proposals from the Central Committee for further improvements will come before the Conference, together with certain suggestions from the Executive.

The Journal Committee seem to have spent much time during the past twelve months endeavouring to meet last year's criticisms regarding cost of production. The whole question has been thoroughly gone into, and it is hoped that the report will be favourably received at the Conference.

The Executive's own report to the Council is a lengthy document covering a large array of subjects. The most important of these is, of course, the question of proposed salary claims, etc. In connection with this item the Council's instructions of last year regarding grading have been fully carried out, and recommendations to be made have been decided upon.

Requests from certain ports for a rearrangement of the existing system of Districts and Areas came up for consideration. Members have complained of not being kept sufficiently in touch with Association happenings. The Executive decided to propose to the Council that the present method be examined by a sub-committee with a view to finding if any improvements can be made.

It is, of course, quite impossible for every port to have the advantage of a Councillor at meetings. The Council members for each area should, however, be notified of all local meetings about to be held, and should be able to keep such meetings supplied with up-to-date news.

The Executive were of opinion that the "Journal" could be made more use of than is the case at present. At the moment all reports of meetings are published, and any other information of general interest is supplied from headquarters. Very often, however, particular Districts have a special interest in some phase of Association activity which is not exhaustively dealt with under general publication. This is the opportunity for the Councillor representing the members of that District, and understanding their needs, to give them the benefit of his intimate knowledge of Association affairs. A brief article in the "Journal," now and again, from a live Council member would do much to enlighten members and would also relieve the load at headquarters. Incidentally, the additional copy would be welcomed by the Editor.

* * * *

A meeting of the Waterguard Sectional Committee is arranged for June 21st, and the Staff Side will meet on the evening of the 20th. Several important matters upon which the Conference will expect information are on the agenda, but it is doubtful whether it will be possible to give a conclusive report on any of them.

The question of uniform will probably be the most satisfactory, but even in this case it is doubtful if any definite statement can be made regarding the claim for the supply of mackintoshes.

In the main, the uniform problem is gradually being solved. It is interesting to note that the old bitter complaints regarding absurdly cut garments are dying out. There is a decided improvement all round. The increased length of jacket and the more up-to-date cut of trousers has done much to achieve satisfaction. The trouble in the past appears to have been an accumulation of petty imperfections causing a total effect that was extremely irritating.

The requests made in these columns that all complaints regarding uniform should be sent to

Association headquarters have resulted only in complaints as to misfits being received, and these have been very few. It is true that in some instances undue delay has occurred in having these misfits rectified, but there is every reason to believe that in due course such occurrences will be obviated.

* * * *

The date on which the Conference will commence is July 5th. By that time it is not unlikely that some information will be available regarding Treasury regulations consequent upon the Trade Unions Bill becoming law. In any case, it will be necessary for the Council to consider the legal position of the P.S.A. under the new conditions. It is intended that the provisions of the Bill become operative from January, 1928.

* * * *

The series of articles recently started by "Caractacus" in the "Journal" certainly make topical reading. Events of late in the political world will enable the reader to judge how far we have drifted from the great ideals upon which the English Constitution is based, and which are rightly eulogised by "Caractacus."

The chief principle, that all law must spring from the people and be administered by the people, is, according to many authorities gradually being usurped by the idea of centralisation. Local self-government, which stands for everything upon which the English Constitution was built, is slowly being demolished. Study of the Constitution of the land is unfashionable to-day with those who make our laws, and the result is that Statute Law is getting quite out of harmony with Common Law, which is the voice of the people. If that is the case, then centralisation is assuming the upper hand, and if that kind of thing gets a real grip we are heading towards all the things Communism would promise us.

* * * *

Readers of the "New Civilian" will have noticed some very apt comment in that journal regarding the insulting references made recently in the House of Commons in connection with the manner in which the examination of passengers' baggage is carried out.

The Waterguard is getting tired of these frequent and entirely unsubstantiated charges of officialism and incivility. No one with any intimate knowledge of the actual process of baggage examination could possibly find reason for complaint. The most disconcerting answer that could be given to the irresponsible critics would be the publication of facts and figures regarding attempted smuggling transactions.

Nobody takes a delight in having his personal belongings examined, no matter how necessary it might be, and in these circumstances very little is required to cause a passenger to take umbrage. It is surprising, therefore, that so few complaints are forthcoming, and that those which do come forward can rarely be supported by fact.

Apart from studying the susceptibilities of travellers, the officers have, in addition, a most responsible duty to perform in protecting the Revenue, and between the two they have a job that is far from rosy.

Questions such as Sir H. Brittain has raised are, of course, seasonal, and are, fortunately, not regarded seriously by the staff.

The Post Office arbitration case has now come to a close, after a hearing lasting thirty-eight days. In view of the hard hitting that has taken place, it is interesting and pleasing to note that in the winding up of the case the Official and Staff Side representatives paid tribute to each other regarding the manner in which the case had been presented.

It is expected that the award will be made some time in July. The decision will be eagerly awaited by all Civil Servants. If the result is available when the P.S.A. Conference takes place it will be an item for interesting discussion.

* * * *

I have recently received from the Fabian Society a specimen copy of a very interesting book entitled "The British Civil Service," by Dr. Finer. The sale price is 2s., but reduced terms can be had if a sufficient number of copies are purchased through the Association. Members desiring to take advantage of this offer should send their names to headquarters as early as possible.

The book is of particular interest just at the moment, and is a definite aid in estimating the position of the Civil Service under the new legislation.

J. MERRON.

PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

REPORT OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING.

Inasmuch as the meeting of the E.C. which immediately precedes the Annual Conference has to consider Annual Reports and Accounts of Sub-Committees; adopt its own Report of progress; explore the finances of the P.S.A.; receive and collate Constitutional amendments and resolutions from the Districts, and a host of other items; it is without doubt the most important meeting of the year.

The Committee sat, under the chairmanship of Mr. E. P. Madden (President), on June 1st, 1927, and the two following days, and comprised Messrs. Merron, Purdye, Sutton (co-opted), Purser (co-opted), Thomson (Preventive Officers), Ball, Booth, Milne and Powell (Minute Secretary) (Assistant Preventive Officers).

REPORTS OF MEETINGS.

As an outcome of a discussion on a motion to circulate minutes of meetings to all places where six or more P.S.A. members are located, it was decided to give authority for the publi-

cation in the "Customs Journal" of as full a report as practicability and policy permit, and to instruct the Secretaries to render to Districts a further report embracing the items not so published.

STAFF STRENGTH.

The Organising Secretary reported that several Districts had not yet replied to the circular asking for details of staffing, etc. It is necessary that all Districts should be represented in the final return.

WATERGUARD FORMS SUB-COMMITTEE.

LIST 142.—The Sub-Committee reported on its findings in connection with the various suggestions to amend this form, and submitted a draft revised copy.

Several minor alterations and additions were recommended by the E.C. and the final draft was referred to the Conference.

ARRIVAL JOURNAL AND ARRIVAL SHEETS.—The suggestions in these instances were referred back to the Sub-Committee for further consideration in detail.

SUBSISTENCE.

The General Secretary reported that the National Staff Side claim in this matter is now before the Arbitration Board.

WHITLEY BULLETIN.

Arising out of a discussion on "Publications, etc.," in the Annual Accounts, it was decided to cancel the Association order for the above periodical.

WATERGUARD SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

A meeting of this Committee has been arranged for June 21st, 1927. This will enable the Council at the Annual Conference to be in possession of the latest information on the following questions:—Seizures Rewards; Launches and Boats; Leave Claims; Electric Lamps; Seniority of Post-War Entrants; Employment of C.P.M. Grade; Uniform. Instructions were given to the representatives.

SUGGESTIONS COMMITTEE.

WATERGUARD CODES.—This matter is now being dealt with on this Committee as a separate suggestion and not, as previously intimated, as part of a general suggestion on Regulations and Instructions.

FOUNTAIN PENS.—The General Secretary reported that representations by the Staff Side for the supply of fountain pens to members of the Department have been put forward, and that negotiations in connection with this were nearing satisfactory conclusion.

LIGHTS ON SHIPS.—The suggestion that ships from foreign arriving at night should exhibit a special light until such times as the Customs Officer has been aboard, stands adjourned.

MERCHANTS' OVERTIME CHARGES.—The E.C. decided to support a suggestion seeking collation of all orders, circulars and rulings bearing upon charges to be raised on merchants in respect of overtime in one General Order.

"CUSTOMS JOURNAL."

The negotiations by the "Customs Journal" Sub-Committee in the question of a new contract is proceeding, and there is every possibility of a favourable completion before the Conference.

The Annual Report was adopted.

ANNUAL REPORT OF EXECUTIVE.

The Annual Report was considered in detail. Several alterations were made and the final draft approved.

(Copies of this document have now been forwarded to Councillors and, immediately following the Conference, will be circulated to all District officers.)

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SECTION.

Considerable interest will be evoked by the first Annual Report of the Central Committee on the operation of the initial stages of the Scheme. An exploration of the finances at this stage, whilst giving some indication of the possibilities of the movement, will not reflect as true a picture as would a statement rendered after a complete cycle of terms embracing an examination.

Among the recommendations of the Committee are to be found:—

- (i.) That there be three definite terms per annum.
- (ii.) That the fee for the Preliminary Course be increased.
- (iii.) Suggested course for Preventive Officers.

(Copies of this Report have been circulated to Councillors and will be sent to Districts after the Conference.)

PROMOTION BY MERIT.

The Executive Committee has decided to recommend to the Council an alteration to the present system of promotion from Prev. Officer to Chief Prev. Officer. A resolution embodying the proposal has been forwarded.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The Council will meet in Annual Conference at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, London, on July 5th, 1927, and the two following days.

Resolutions from the Districts and the E.C., and proposals to amend the Constitution, have been circulated to all Councillors and District officers.

LABOUR PARTY.

Notice has been given of a motion to discontinue affiliation with the Labour Party in consequence of Clause 5 of the Trade Union and Trade Disputes Bill, and to make any necessary amendments to the Constitution.

LOCAL MATTERS.

Instructions and advice on purely local questions have been forwarded direct to the Districts concerned.

DISTRICT MEMORANDUM.

Separate report has been circulated to District officers on the following subjects:—Seizure

Rewards; Age of Retirement of Inspectors and Waterguard Supts.; Launches and Boats; Officer Grade and Preventive Staff; Waterguard Claims.

W. H. POWELL.

SWANSEA.

A well-attended meeting was held on Friday, May 27th, at the "Market Cafe," Oxford Street, Swansea, with Mr. P. Ould, A.P.O., in the chair. One of the main items on the agenda was the question of the A.P.O.'s Leave Scheme.

The Local Secretary was instructed to obtain the views of the A.P.O.'s in the District regarding the scheme in operation at present and to submit a rotation for their approval.

Many other items of local interest were discussed and dealt with as far as possible.

The meeting terminated at 9.45 p.m. with a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman.

HULL.

The quarterly meeting was held at the Metro-pole on May 20th. Mr. C. O'Neill presided over a poor attendance of members.

Correspondence and circulars from the Gen. Secretary were read, special reference to the E.C. minutes of February being made. The subject of promotion was discussed at some length.

The question of arrears of members' subscriptions was dealt with by the meeting, and it was noted that the present rules of the P.S.A. do not refer to any penalty for non-payment of subscriptions. The Councillors were instructed to bring this matter before the Annual Conference. It was recommended that any member falling two quarters in arrears should automatically become a non-member and lose his rights to any individual representation, and also to any benefit from the V.E.C. Application to re-join should first be placed before the Executive Committee.

The business concluded with the discussion of local affairs.

BETWEEN TIDES.

PARAGRAPHS FROM THE DISTRICTS.

LONDON.

On May 20th, before J. Sharpe, Esq., at Thames Street, a fireman of the s.s. "King-fisher," from Ostend, was charged with smuggling 2 lb. cigarettes O.S. and 1 lb. cigars O.S. He pleaded guilty and was fined S.V.D., Mr. Sharpe taking into consideration that he had lost his work in consequence of his action. The goods were discovered in the bunker coal by Mr. A. N. Platten, A.P.O., under the supervision of Mr. Rawle, P.O.

DUNSTON-ON-TYNE.

The chief engineer of the Belgian vessel, "Roi Albert," was charged at the Gateshead Police Court on May 25th with knowingly concealing 18 lb. cigarettes, the treble duty and value of which amounted to £47 9s. 6d.

The magistrates imposed a fine of £15 16s. 6d., being the single duty and value of the goods, or in default two months' imprisonment. The fine was paid.

The goods were discovered ingeniously concealed under the flooring and in the casing of the engine-room thrust shaft by Mr. Graham, A.P.O., during the rummage of the vessel under the supervision of Mr. Rugg, P.O.

The case for the Crown was conducted by Mr. T. L. Corner, C.P.O.

HULL.

At the Hull City Police Court on the 2nd inst. a fireman on the s.s. "Kovno," from Danzig, was charged with concealing 25½ lb. O.S. tobacco. Mr. L. Johnson, Waterguard Superintendent, and Mr. G. O'Malley, C.P.O., represented the Department, and sued for £100 penalty. The Bench convicted the offender, and fined him £25 or two months' imprisonment. The fine was paid, time being allowed.

The tobacco was found in the forced air draught equipment of the vessel in the port and starboard boilers. The packages of tobacco were dropped down the air check column or space, the only means of entrance being through the ash-pit door. Great difficulty was experienced by Messrs. A. Moss, W. E. Kiddell and W. S. Outram, A.P.O.'s, in bringing the tobacco to the surface. The rummaging crew was under the supervision of Mr. R. A. Crooks, P.O.

AND SCOTS AREN'T FUNNY!

A young man was sent from the Excise Office in Edinburgh to a remote part of the Highlands to discover a suspected "illicit still." After tramping many miles over the moors he met a native, with whom he got into conversation. Eventually the young man said: "Donald, I'll give you £5 if you'll show me where there's a private still."

The money changed hands. The two set off over the moors together, and the young man walked and walked until he felt wobbly at the knees.

"Have we far to go?" he asked wearily.

"Na, na, jist roon' the hill an' a wee bit farther on."

At last they came to a cottage and knocked at the door. A big man appeared. "Here's a man to see ye, Maitland," said Donald; then, turning to the Excise man, "Sandy was 21 years in the Army and he's a 'private still.'"

PARLIAMENT.

By "CARACTACUS."

II.—THE BEGINNING OF PARLIAMENT.

It was stated in the first of this series that the Constitution of our country grew, easily and naturally, as a part of our nation itself, and in tracing the manner of its evolution we must, perforce, also follow the history of the country.

The history of our Constitution is the history of the Houses of Parliament and its transition from an assemblage of representatives of the people somewhat analogous to a Whitley Joint Committee to an almost perfect legislative machine with the experience of six hundred years behind it. If we would gain a true understanding of what our Government really is, we must regard, not so much what it seems to be to-day, but rather what it has been in the past—what it has done, its vicissitudes, and what it has tried and failed to do. The man who sneers at Parliament as a "talking shop" merely displays his lack of understanding and historical knowledge, for Parliament was, as its name implies, originally a gathering of delegates for the purpose of discussing various problems of national import. So far as I am aware, and I think most people would agree, this basic object has never been altered, and we must not lose sight of the fact that legislative power has merely developed from it. Indeed, it will be a bad day for us if and when the House of Commons ceases to talk and attempts to govern—a thing which it has several times tried to do and has failed signally always. We should hesitate to condemn even its irregularities and perversities, for they are the result of the irregularities and perversities of our national history; rather should we hail them as evidence of the natural process of evolution in our scheme of government, which gives it that stability of which we are justly proud. If we would criticise the shortcomings of our national assembly, let our criticism be constructively designed, through the medium of the ballot-box, to carry on the process of modification and expansion which has brought us to where we are to-day.

In the preceding article there was a reference to the habit our continental forefathers established of "talking things over," and we cannot do better than return to that point.

These early Teutonic tribes, in their fatherland, had an uncongenial climate to contend with, and an equally difficult soil, and being almost entirely agrarian, quickly discovered the necessity of concerted action. The formation of communes was the natural outcome, and we see the beginning of communal councils, at first informal, but with steadily growing definition and autonomy. Probably it was the commune which did most to form the character of these ancestors of ours, and made them so distinctive as compared with contemporary peoples in the

rest of Europe who were generally so much better favoured in the matter of climate, soil, and so forth, and had so little need to exert themselves unduly, or for foresight and common action. So it is, then, that the Teutonic peoples were the first to band together with any sort of order, and so realised the beginnings of a national consciousness, logically carrying the same habits of thought into effect as between tribe and tribe as they did between individuals in the commune.

We find better favoured peoples accepted things much as they found them, having no great incentive to fight, while the Teutons were compelled, in self-preservation, to rely upon their superiority over conditions, and thus developed the characteristic which is most necessary to a successful polity, the art of conference and hard work. In this regard we may safely compare the history of our nation with that of others, whose periods of national greatness were coincident with powerful dynasties of great personality. The fact that these latter were actuated mainly by a desire for power and conquest, without a national capacity for steady hard work behind them, explains, I think, why our civilisation has lasted so much longer than theirs. This and similar ideas make me impatient of the scaremonger who sees national ruin as the imminent outcome of each school of revolutionary thought which arises, because discontent is the antithesis of apathy, and its very existence bespeaks the presence of a condition somewhere which needs a remedy, and a strong determination somewhere to find that remedy. In each revolt of thought is a germ of justice and right, and as discussion is brought to bear upon the subject, that germ is separated from its accompanying prejudices and goes to swell the stream of political progress, while the "revolutionary" becomes more and more respectable. Our history is one of aggressive discontent, and it is well. While discontent continues in harness with constructive legislation our political progress will continue. But to return.

We have seen how the Teutons came to form communes, cut off from their neighbours by geographical considerations such as hill-chains, rivers, forests, and it is in these communes that we first find a development of political life. When these people left their wolf-beset forests and river-girt settlements and came, first to plunder, then to settle in, this country, they brought the instinct for conference with them. Coming, as they did, in small bands, their early settlements here had, in the attacks upon them of the rightful owners of the land, an additional need for preserving that instinct. Agrarian, lovers of green nature, the open spaces, the

woods, they burned every township they found, settling, as was their wont, in small villages, and so preserving the communal type of life. Village associated with village for the twin purposes of defence and conquest, until finally there came to be a central council about the king, a nominal head who led his villager subjects in war and settled disputes of a wide character. From the petty kingdoms there emerged the three great kingdoms of Mercia, Northumbria, and Wessex. When the Danes had come in their teeming hordes and well-nigh conquered the whole country, Wessex, small but central and compact, broke the flood, re-conquered the country, and set up its central council. But this council was still a vague, remote thing to the people of the villages, scarcely touching their every-day life, and the king was a shadow someone who ruled somewhere in Winchester or London. This system of national life continued, through more or less tentative changes, up to the eleventh century, and then, although the Conqueror completely altered the central government, he displayed his wisdom by leaving the commune and the shire court severely alone. He went further in giving legal identity to what had formerly been customary, and here we see a great beginning of the principle of precedent which has, through history, been such a bulwark to the people, and which has become so important in the constitution and government of to-day. Most people conceive the Norman Conquest to have been a complete subjugation of the people. It is an erroneous idea. There was very little change, at first, in their life, or they would not have been so tractable as they undoubtedly were. The only changes immediately apparent to them were the appearance of strange landlords who spoke a foreign tongue, and the fixation of their customs.

It is from then until towards the end of the fifteenth century that we find the slow founding of our Parliamentary system as we know it to-day. Under the Normans there sprang up two distinct ideals of government, and the country was fortunate in profiting from the contention between them by receiving the best that belonged to them both. We find the barons, while accepting the king as the governor or national head, claimed an hereditary right to advise, or even to dictate to and limit him. That was the feudal ideal. Against that was the ideal which the Norman kings, with a not altogether disinterested clergy and legal fraternity behind them, encouraged an ideal which regarded the king rather as a benevolent, autocratic owner of the land in which his people lived, with a paternal interest in their welfare, governing through the Magnum Concilium the Great, or King's Council. Opinion is divided as to whether to this Council or the Witanagemote of Alfred the Great should be ascribed the origin of Parliament, although the writer favours the view that they have an equal claim, that we have developed the best of both, and that the points they had in common have the greatest significance in the system of our day. That point is the gathering about the king, first at his com-

mand, but later also of their own volition or at his request, to advise, assist, or even to curb him, of individuals representing the classes, who were there to assist in the enactment and the definition of laws, the confirmation of declarations of war and of peace, collection and levying of taxes, and so on.

This ideal which was fostered by the Norman kings was normally, I should think, the most acceptable to the people, for they already began, in the twelfth century, to feel too keenly the iron heel of the nobles, and a baronial oligarchy would have been a further medium of oppression for them, although, had the country still been as entirely agrarian as it was before the Conquest, the country people might have supported the other ideal by reason of local attachment.

Arising from the contention between these two opposing ideals, we find that the king's power waxed and waned directly as that of the barons diminished or increased. The weakness of the nobility was the king's power.

Magna Carta was wrung from John by this oligarchy of nobles, and it is indicative of the strength of feeling in the country that the clergy and the lawyers were so much at one with their natural enemies in opposition to the king's policy. Remembering the Charter, some folk are constrained to think that constitutional progress has been gained by the restriction of royal power. This is a wholly erroneous perspective to take. It is much more true to say that it has been by the definition of its means of expression.

The Charter was a great class victory for the barons, but it went much further than that, for it defined the methods of judicial administration, collection of taxes, weights and measures; it prohibited confiscation of a workman's tools which were his means of livelihood; and the demand that the tenants of the overlord should receive the same consideration as did the baron from his king had an incalculably far-reaching theoretical, and later, practical effect. The Constitution to-day embodies also an almost literal acceptance of two of the great principles of the Magna Carta, namely, that it is unlawful for the king to levy taxes without the consent of the Great Men of the Realm (then, the barons; now, the elected representatives of the people together with the Lords), and the principle of trial by peers.

Note the first of these two great principles. It involves the calling together of a body of great men, and this is provided for in Article XIV. of the Charter. It reads:—

“For the holding of the Common Council of the Realm We will cause to be summoned Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls, and greater Barons individually by Our letters, and We will also cause to be summoned collectively through Our Sheriffs and Bailiffs all those who hold of Us in Chief for a fixed day, that is, at the end of forty days at least, and in all Our letters we will state the cause of the summons.” (It needed forty days to reach London in those days from the remote districts.)

The significance of that clause is that it means the creation of a House of Parliament.

Now there is another small but important point. All barons were tenants in chief of the king, but there had been a gradual divergence between the greater barons and the lesser, resulting in the formation of two distinct classes, and the Charter gave legal recognition to the distinction between them, giving the greater barons the right of individual summons to the King's Council. This right exists to-day for hereditary members of the House of Lords. The lesser barons received only the right to a collective summons issued through the king's sheriff (and they probably never obeyed it).

On numerous occasions in the period following, succeeding kings were compelled to confirm this and other Charters, and so there grew up a recognition of the principle, founded upon precedent, that a baron, once summoned as an individual, has the right always to be so called in the future, and that this right shall be handed down to his hereditary heirs. Just so soon as these principles are definitely recognised, your House of Parliament becomes a House of Lords.

Again, the clause recognises also the right of the other body, the lesser barons, to be summoned to participate in the work of legislation, and if they did not for some considerable time avail themselves of it, it was nevertheless there, firmly established as by law provided, ready for them when the time should come when they wished to use it. As we now know, it was a principle of very great importance.

Here we must note also that two years before the Charter, that is, in 1213, on at least two occasions when councils were called to discuss affairs and complaints arising from the king's business, there were present representatives of other classes than the barons. During the succeeding forty or fifty years we find knights and the smaller landed gentry generally combining to form a counter-balance to the power of the barons. In 1254, we find Henry III. directing the sheriffs to summon four knights from each county to confer with him as to what financial assistance they were able and willing to give.

This process went on apace in the period following 1215 until, when Simon de Montfort formed his famous Parliament in 1265 and caused to be summoned two knights from each shire, two citizens from each city, and two burgesses from each borough, the principle of representative government was very firmly established, although, of course, only those barons were present who had assisted him against the king. Edward I., in his "Model" Parliament, in addition to this, followed the precedent set by his uncle by summoning also the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls and barons, greater and lesser. The natural result of class feeling was the segregation of the clergy, the barons and the earls, and the knights, citizens and burgesses into three distinct groups, and later on we find the clergy dropping out altogether and forming their Convocation, while the other two groups remained, sharply defined, as the beginnings of

a House of Commons (Communes) and a House of Lords, the latter called individually by hereditary or traditional right, and the former by summons of the sheriff as the selected representatives of their cities and boroughs and of the smaller landed gentry. They met at first in the same chamber, but it was not very long before the Commons began to meet in the Chapter of Westminster Abbey, and later in the Chapel of St. Stephen, the Lords remaining at Westminster Palace, and the division was complete. This arrangement continued until the destruction of the Palace by fire in 1834, when it was replaced by that monument of ministerial niggardliness, the present Houses of Parliament.

CUSTOMS WATERGUARD CHESS CLUB.

A Committee meeting was held on June 10th at the Surrey Commercial Docks, London. Mr. C. E. Egan, C.P.O., occupied the chair, and the members present were Messrs. Smallwood and Dudley, P.O.'s, and Bishop and Boodle, A.P.O.'s.

The Chairman opened the meeting with a hearty welcome to the outport officers. The rules of the club were discussed and suitably amended in readiness for printing on the membership cards.

It was decided to issue B.C.F. laws free to each member on payment of the entrance fee, and sufficient club score sheets to carry members through the tournaments.

The Hon. Secretary was instructed to affiliate with the Civil Service Chess Association.

The purchase of the Cup was discussed, and it was decided to leave this matter in the hands of the Committee members in London.

The meeting closed with a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman, who, in reply, congratulated Mr. Boodle on his good and arduous services in the formation of the club, and to all members in their unanimous support of a club which, he had no doubt, would become larger and would prove of great benefit to the Waterguard Service generally.

The positions in the tournament to date stand as follows:—

	SECTION 1.	Played	Lost	Pts.
Mr. W. G. Thomson, P.O., Liverpool		3	0	3
Mr. F. G. Boodle, A.P.O., Newport				
(Mon.)	2	0	2	
Mr. J. M. Mitchell, A.P.O., Leith	2	0	2	
Mr. A. Hardie, C.P.O., Avr	1	0	1	
Mr. E. W. Kidman, A.P.O., Liverpool	4	3	1	
The remainder—Nil.				
	SECTION 2.			
Mr. H. Ellis, A.P.O., Newport				
(Mon.)	1	0	1	
Mr. S. H. Matthews, A.P.O., Do.	2	1	1	



We notice in the current issue of "Red Tape" that the Civil Service Clerical Association has sanctioned, at this year's Conference, a scheme whereby the Association pays a death benefit of £20 to the representatives of every full member who dies in harness. There is always more or less delay in the payment of insurance moneys, etc., and the effect of this new scheme will be that the Clerical Association will be able to assist as soon as possible after notification of death has been received. It will readily be seen that the C.S.C.A. is now able to render valuable aid at a time when assistance is generally most needed.

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Although it is still a fair distance to August 22nd, the closing date for criticisms of the Preventive Officers' Guide, there is no real reason why your effort should not be posted this week. Your entry may make all the difference to future editions. Perhaps the idea you have at the back of your mind has not been thought of by anyone else. Why not put your pen to paper and send it along to us? We are authorised to receive it and the V.E.C. is anxious to make the booklet useful to all members. Address to the Editor.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF.

TRANSFERS.

Chief Preventive Officer, Lower Section: Woffenden, A., Belfast, to London.

Preventive Officers: Hodge, W. F., Barry Dock, Cardiff, to Runcorn, Manchester; Wilson, C. G., Dover, to Gravesend, London.

PROMOTIONS.

Chief Preventive Officer, Lower Section, to Upper Section: Hurley, M., London, to Plymouth.

Preventive Officer to Chief Preventive Officer, Lower Section (Unattached): Thomas, J., Bangor, Chester, to Office of Inspector-General of Watguard.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

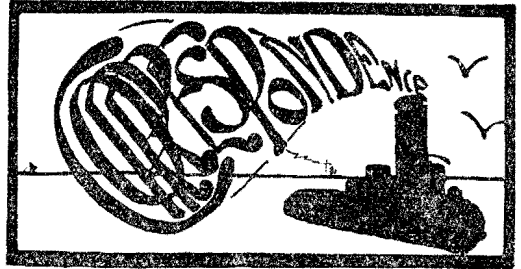
Retirements. — Chief Preventive Officers, Upper Section: Jarvis, W. A., Liverpool; Tizard, E., Middlesbrough, Sunderland. Preventive Officer: Hanlon, M., Fishguard, Swansea. Mate-in-Charge: McBride, A., Liverpool.

VACANCIES.

Preventive Officer: Gravesend, London, 23.7.1927.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

Hails, W., Preventive Officer.



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,—It is now some time since a plebiscite of the A.P.O. Grade resulted in a majority vote in favour of monthly payment of salaries, yet the Association does not appear to be in any hurry to bring about the desired change.

Is it not time that our Executive adopted a more active and pushing policy instead of merely contenting themselves with carrying resolutions or adopting motions and then letting the matter rest for months on end?

Another subject of vital interest to the Grade was temporarily shelved at the last Annual Conference, and we have since heard nothing further concerning it. I refer to "Promotion by Merit."

The E.C. was instructed to draw up a scheme based on new points raised at the meeting. We are still waiting to hear of any such scheme, and are likely to be doing so after this year's Conference unless we press for better results from our Councillors.

It is well known that time, as well as tide, waits for no man, and if we are nearing our superannuation when the benefits we are fighting for to-day are gained, it is of little use having an Association except for the settling of local differences. So, **wake up**, you younger men, and let your Councillors know that you want **action** as well as discussion. Conditions of service in the Grade have improved beyond recognition in the last few years, but we don't want to drift back to pre-war standards of salary, service and promotion. We must keep on progressing, and I look to the post-war entrants to keep the ball rolling and to become the live wires of the A.P.O. Grade.—Yours, etc.,

"FUTURIST."