

The Customs Journal.

No. 605.

December 31st, 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.

This opportunity is taken to wish all members every happiness and success for 1928. Association activity is tireless in endeavour to maintain standards and to improve the fortunes of the Waterguard. There is good reason to hope that in the coming year a measure of progress will be attained which will mark the period as one of prosperity for the rank and file of the Department.

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There can be no doubt that year by year the Waterguard is emerging from the obscurity created in the past through prejudice and misunderstanding. Gradually the Department is coming to be regarded in its true light, as an important, efficient, and capable branch of the Customs and Excise.

The old-time notions regarding the Preventive Staff will eventually be swept away—and then the Waterguard man will come into his own.

The process that is going on results from patient and persistent efforts by Association enthusiasts, not only now, but in the days gone by. The fights that have been fought by the stalwarts of the past are bearing good fruit, just as in the future our present activities will produce ample evidence of their worth.

It is from this standpoint that the value of association should be judged. There are some who imagine that the main purpose of a staff organisation is to continually press for increases of salary. Certainly, that is important, but it is more important still that the less easy task is undertaken, of proving the value of services rendered by the staff. This is a more lengthy

job, and, to do it properly, something more powerful is needed than a strong conviction on the part of the staff as to the value of these services, in order to prove the fact to the satisfaction of others. The object can only be achieved by heavy spade-work.

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The task of the P.S.A. is particularly difficult because the things to be fought are the erroneous and strange impressions regarding Waterguard work, which are deeply imprinted in the minds even of contemporary Staff Sides. It has been said that "It is shorter and easier to proceed from ignorance to knowledge, than from error," and this sums up the difficulty in bringing real knowledge to people who imagine they know all about the Waterguard.

The more loyal are our members, and the more clearly they realise the significance and expediency of Association policy, the sooner will come success, and, when it does come, it will be something really worth while.

Let it be the New Year resolution of every member to carefully follow Association policy, to be keenly critical, but to think well and deeply first.

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The extended week-end which Christmas brings this year is a very welcome holiday to most people. To Waterguard Officers there will, of course, not be any appreciable difference in the ordinary routine of work. Many of the officers "off duty" on Christmas Day will have to appear at 10 or 11 p.m. to start the following day's work. It is always unpleasant to tear one's self away from the family festivities at such an hour, but that is one of the drawbacks of Preventive work.

From the point of view of Association officials greatly increased work results from this holiday season. December is always a busy month for Civil Service organisations. Meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees are numerous. Strenuous efforts are made to commence the New Year with a clean sheet. It is under such conditions that these notes are being written, and consequently they will be brief. It is necessary for all "Journal" contributions to be available before the holidays in order to get publication at the usual date.

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I understand that the terms under which the Minor and Manipulative candidates, successful at the forthcoming examination for entrance to the clerical classes, will be transferred, are now before the National Staff Side. It is likely that an agreement will very shortly be reached, and an announcement made to the Service.

In the meantime those Waterguard Officers who are taking the examination are informed

that there is every reason to think that the transfer conditions will be acceptable. It is very probable that removal expenses will be paid. Apparently, the only handicap from which the Waterguard entrants are likely to suffer would be loss of overtime emoluments.

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Various are the devices adopted by non-members to obtain information from the Association without disclosing the fact that they are not entitled to benefit. Considering how small is the number of non-members, it is very surprising that during the past year so many of them have found it necessary to seek Association assistance. Applicants of this description are very lucky if they escape the eagle eye of our Organising Secretary, who has a special gift for "detections." Some happy results have materialised from this.

An anonymous postcard, postmarked "Whitley Bay," recently received at the Association Office, appears to come into the non-member category. The writer desires information regarding supposed new regulations for retirement age in the Waterguard, and he hints that the Association is concealing facts on this subject. It is difficult to see how any officer who is a member could get so far off the track. Also, a member would know that anonymous communications are unnecessary and useless.

Straightforward questions are always properly dealt with, and honest criticism is never ignored if presented in the right manner. Our Whitley Bay correspondent could be helped, and would certainly find it more profitable, if he would conform to Association rules.

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Council members will hear with regret that Mr. A. Milne has found it necessary for private reasons to resign from his Association appointments. Mr. Milne is a very popular member, and during his service on the Council, Executive, and Waterguard Sectional Committee, has given evidence of a very keen interest in the work. His retirement will be regarded as a real loss, especially to the younger members.

It will now be necessary to elect from the Council another A.P.O. representative on the Executive, and on the Waterguard Sectional. An election for A.P.O. Councillor in the Scottish Area will take place as soon as possible.

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I hear that the interviews for successful candidates at the recent examination for entrance to the Waterguard are now concluded. It can therefore be expected that within a few weeks the new recruits will be coming in. This will be good news for those who have been anxiously looking forward to a return to normal staffing conditions in the A.P.O. Grade.

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According to the Ministry of Labour Gazette there has been no change in the cost of living this month. The figure for December stands at 69. No doubt the recent wintry conditions, causing an uptrend in prices, will result in an increased figure for January.

J. MERRON.

PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION.

CARDIFF.

A district meeting was held on the 19th inst. at the Old Arcade Hotel, Mr. Warno, P.O., presiding over a moderately attended gathering.

Mr. Densley, Councillor, gave a lengthy report of the Council's last meeting, arising out of which a resolution was voted upon and carried agreeing with the decision arrived at in respect of the 1923-25 entrants' salary claim.

Approval was registered regarding the suggestion of re-scheming the districts, with a view to bringing isolated places in closer touch with Association affairs.

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CIVIL SERVICE CONFEDERATION.

HALF-YEARLY COUNCIL MEETING.

The Fifteenth (Half-yearly) Council Meeting of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Saturday, December 10th, 1927, in Caxton Hall, Westminster. Mr. W. H. James presided over an attendance of 76 representatives of 37 constituent organisations, in addition to the officers and other members of the Executive Committee.

The half-yearly Report (subject to minor amendments), the Treasurer's Financial Statement for the half-year ended September 30th, 1927, and the half-yearly Report on Parliamentary and Publicity work, were presented and adopted.

The appointment of Mr. P. H. M. Hoey, Secretary of the Inland Revenue Departmental Whitley Council (Staff Side), as General Secretary of the Civil Service Confederation on a part-time basis, was ratified by the Council.

A letter of appreciation was read from the Attendants' and Repairers' Association, Public Record Office, thanking the Confederation for assistance rendered in a recent arbitration case before the Industrial Court; and it was reported that an award had now been received from the Industrial Court in the Government Minor Grades Association and the Workers' Union—Office Keepers' Case, which represented a measure of success.

The Confederation was thanked on behalf of the Admiralty Established Civil Servants' Federation for assistance rendered in connection with the recent discharges of established men in the dockyards. Representations were made to the Admiralty by the Confederation in this matter, and as a consequence many notices of discharge were cancelled.

Statements were made to the Council regarding the position of one or two Associations in relation to the provisions of the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act, 1927. A question regarding the adjustment of the payment of affiliation fees of those Associations required to leave the Confederation on December 31st, 1927, under

the Act, was referred to the officers of the Confederation for consideration.

It being necessary for the Confederation to withdraw from affiliation with the National Federation of Professional Workers on December 31st, 1927, in order to comply with the provisions of the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act, representatives from that body had been invited to be present at the Council. Mr. W. A. Jones (deputising for Mr. Latham, President of the Federation) and Mr. W. C. Keay, General Secretary, addressed the meeting and expressed regrets at the forthcoming inevitable severance after six years of close association and mutual benefit. A vote of hearty thanks to the National Federation for its assistance to the Confederation on various issues was passed unanimously.

It was reported that certain amendments to the Contributory Pensions Act were under consideration, and would in due course be submitted to the Staff Side Committee with a request that a preliminary interview, before the amending Bill is passed, be sought with the Ministry of Health.

An interview with the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on the subject of Sick Pay for Unestablished Classes is also being requested, and it was stated that no reply had yet been received from the Board of Inland Revenue on the claim put forward respecting Sick Pay for Boys and Girls in that Department.

It was agreed that a memorandum on the subject of Employment of Married Women should be circulated to constituent organisations of the Confederation for an expression of opinion.

Special attention was drawn to the Report on Meetings of Confederation Whitley representatives set out in paragraph 15 of the Half-yearly Report, and delegates were asked to bring this specifically to the notice of their respective organisations.

With regard to the seats rendered vacant on the National Staff Side by the secession of the Joint Consultative Committee, it was stated that a further attempt had been made towards a solution of the difficulties existing. Report was made also on the progress of the following matters at present before the Staff Side and National Whitley Council:—Promotion, Subsistence (Removal Expenses Abroad, Night Rates), Superannuation (Unestablished Service prior to Establishment, Retiring Gratuity for Unestablished Classes), and Press Attacks on the Civil Service. It was stated that the National Whitley Council had agreed that Committees be appointed to consider conditions of service of (i.) Writing Assistants, and (ii.) Typing Grades.

Attention was drawn to a question and answer in the House of Commons on December 6th, 1927, making a statement with regard to advertisements on official stationery.

The following resolution was passed by the Council on the subject of civil rights:—

“That the Publicity Committee of the Confederation be instructed to go into this question with a view to taking the earliest possible action to alleviate the position of Civil Servants in regard to civil rights.”

Certain proposals for the amendment of the constitution of the Confederation were submitted to the Council by the Executive Committee and formally passed. One was put forward to meet objections which might arise under the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act, and the others were consequential on the adoption by the Annual Council of a recommendation in a recent report upon the Secretariat and Headquarters Staff.

LANDING AND SHIPPING DUTIES.

By WINSTON.

The discussion which has been proceeding in recent issues of the “Customs Journal” is extremely interesting, and marks a new spirit in the rank and file of the P.S.A. that is greatly encouraging to any student of Waterguard progress.

The General Secretary, in his remarks upon the appointment of certain clerical officers to the Officer Grade without their first undergoing the usual examination, contrasts their value to the Revenue as compared to the experienced Waterguard Officer. He expresses a certain amount of surprise that the Board have evidently failed to appreciate the fact. I cannot escape the feeling that Mr. Merron fully realises the reason for the Board's apparent short-sightedness, and that his timely remarks upon the whole subject were written with a great amount of restraint. Writing as one who has had some experience of Whitley, I realise the necessity for this restraint, but submit to him, and to the members, that this altruistic policy, which is certainly not being reciprocated, is not in the best interests of the grades comprising the Preventive Staff Association.

Mr. Merron, I feel sure, knows that the refusal to reserve a percentage of the appointments to be made to the Officer Grade for Waterguard Officers is only a small and unimportant phase of the question. At the same time, however, we must be grateful that it has provided the necessary spark to a fire that has been smouldering for years. I refer to the reasonable claim of Waterguard Officers for the performance by them of certain quayside duties at present mainly carried out by the Officer Grade.

The experience of the last few years should have proved to everyone interested in the advancement of the Waterguard Department that better conditions of service and higher salaries can only be obtained by proving that greater responsibility is being borne, and higher Grade duties are being performed by those who claim increased remuneration. The policy of every live Association is to take advantage of all opportunities for enhancing the value of the service provided by its members. Service politics provide sufficient evidence that whenever opportunities are presented “fair fighting” is not the invariable rule, but “no favour” always obtains. In this connection the failure of the

C. and E. Federation representatives on the Joint Committee to support the just claim to the Clerical Classes (it is obvious that they did not support it), should clearly demonstrate to the Council of our own Association that it is high time we dropped the high-minded policy, and studied more closely the policy of expediency.

In my opinion the circumstances could not be more propitious for an intensive campaign to secure the whole of the Landing and Shipping duties for the Waterguard. Fiscal changes in recent years have revolutionised the whole Customs and Excise Department. This revolution has particularly affected the Officer Grade, and the tendency has been to concentrate their energies upon the more technical phase of their duties. This is especially so on the Customs side, and the result has been that the routine work formerly done by that Grade is now performed by Clerical Officers. It is also quite true to say that Officers are now doing work, and bearing responsibility that was previously thought applicable to the Surveyor Grade, and it is significant to observe that no cry of "black-legging," if such a strong term may be excused, has been raised by this development.

The Waterguard has also moved with the times, and it cannot be disputed that as a Department it has considerably improved. Any individual who may be judging it by, say, pre-war experience, is sadly out of touch with present conditions. In the ranks of the Waterguard to-day there are many men who are fully capable of performing all the duties of the Officer Grade. Apart from that, however, the whole of the Department is peculiarly adapted for dealing with Landing and Shipping duties. Waterguard experience necessarily inculcates an instinct that would ensure the maximum Revenue protection in the carrying out of these duties. In addition, the existing duties bring all Waterguard Officers in close contact with the public, and from that aspect even our most persistent traducers must give the credit that is undoubtedly well earned. Still further it is true to say that the dual performance of Waterguard and Landing duties could not be anything but advantageous from the Revenue viewpoint.

The Preventive Officer of to-day has had to satisfy the authorities that he has an extensive knowledge of the regulations, their application, and also their connection with the other sections of the Department. It may be argued that most of his work is carried out under immediate supervision. This contention displays sheer ignorance of Waterguard work. There is not an official in the Department, or in the whole Service, who is more frequently met with circumstances which demand initiative, and the necessity for the immediate acceptance of personal responsibility. To those who would detract from our value by the bogey of supervision, I would reply that the exigencies of the work prove that only an extremely small percentage can be carried out under supervision.

It is interesting also to examine the claim of the Assistant Preventive Officer for increased responsibility. There is no doubt that the un-

economic use of this Grade under present conditions is in itself sufficient condemnation of the existing state of affairs. The Grade contains abundant material that is available for duties of greater value to the Revenue. Without in any way detracting from the value and importance of the duties now applicable to the Grade, it can be maintained that their performance could easily be made coincident with any quayside duties that would be carried out by the Waterguard in addition to those now performed.

The members of the A.P.O. Grade should give serious consideration to this problem. The reversion of Landing and Shipping duties to the Waterguard would, besides being advantageous to the whole Department, materially assist in the removal of certain obstacles that at present hinder progress, and would certainly provide a remedy for certain other disadvantages that concern the Grade at the moment.

In conclusion, I would once again lay stress on the fact that we must fight if we are to make any progress in this direction. The opposition will be powerful, and we will only succeed after a lengthy and possibly bitter struggle. Nevertheless, I believe that if we pull together we will gain the day. As "W.G.T." advises in his admirable article in the last issue, this question should be discussed at every District meeting in order that at the next Council meeting the best method of tackling the problem will be decided upon.

PROSECUTIONS.

BELFAST.

At a special sitting of the Belfast Custody Court, on December 12th, the master and mate of the s.s. "Vena" from Antwerp were charged with knowingly concealing 7.96 liquid gallons (5.97 proof) spirits, 1.188 gallons of perfumed spirits, .15 gallon liqueurs, 9 lb. cigars, O.S., and 4 artificial silk articles.

The offenders were proved guilty and were each fined £161/11/0.

Mr. H. Creighton, C.P.O., prosecuted.

The goods were discovered concealed in the hold by Messrs. P. A. Richardson, W. McKenna and J. G. Flynn, A.P.O.s, working under the supervision of Mr. W. P. D. Manley, P.O.

SUNDERLAND.

At the Borough Justices' Court on the 10th inst., the master of the Danish s.s. "Lars Kruse" was charged with knowingly harbouring and concealing 2½ lb. cigars and 19/100 gall. perfumed spirits. A penalty of single duty paid value was imposed.

The goods were discovered in the master's berth by Mr. G. R. Miller, A.P.O., under the supervision of Mr. R. E. Johnson, P.O.

SMALL PORT WORK.

By "VAGRHETH."

WRECK.

This is one of the most difficult duties which a Preventive Officer in charge has to perform. Every case of "wreck" has its own peculiarity, and although general rules for the performance of the work are laid down, it is extremely difficult for the beginner to get a working grip of the regulations. This is largely due to the wide discretionary powers given to Receivers of Wreck, and to the fact that experience is the best teacher of all. However, it is the purpose of these articles to outline the various duties of a Preventive Officer in charge in the broadest and simplest manner possible in order to convey a general idea of the class of work performed by a Small Port Officer.

Now, the whole of the British coast is divided into stretches known as "Wreck Areas." These stretches vary in length and may be anything up to and over fifty miles. For each "Wreck Area" a Receiver of Wreck is appointed by the Board of Trade, and as a rule a Preventive Officer in charge has an area under his control. All "wreck" found in this area must be delivered into the custody of the Receiver.

The expression "Wreck" generally includes all kinds of articles found in or on the shores of the sea or any tidal water, but the Receiver should discriminate between genuine "wreck" and property only temporarily lost. For instance, timber washed off a pier in the course of construction and found on the adjoining beach is not considered to be "wreck." If property which is brought to the Receiver does not appear to be "wreck" within the meaning of the Merchant Shipping Act, he should refuse to take it into custody. Where property has been taken into custody and the owner proves that it is not "wreck," the Receiver should not charge commission on it, but an account of the actual expenses should be rendered. If the owner refuses payment the property is not to be detained, and the facts are to be reported to the Mercantile Marine Department of the Board of Trade.

When "wreck" is found, the finder, if he is the owner of the property, must advise the Receiver that he has taken possession of it, or, if he is not the owner, he must deliver the property to the Receiver as soon as possible. The Salvor of Wreckage notifies the Receiver, or the local Coastguard or Coast Preventive Man, that he has recovered and secured certain articles. The full particulars are then entered on combined Form W.R. 5, 7 and 11, and the Salvor gives an account of his services on the form and makes a declaration that he has delivered up all the goods, and appoints a person to receive the salvage award. The officer receiving the report then enters the estimated value of the "wreck" and witnesses the Salvor's signature.

When the form comes to the Receiver of Wreck he examines it, enters the particulars in his Wreck Report Book, and issues a receipt for the property in the form of "Salvor's Warrant" (F. 16). The reference number of the "Droit" or "Wreck" shown in the report book is entered on the Form W.R. 5, 7 and 11, which is then forwarded to the Finance Department of the Board of Trade. Whenever the Receiver takes possession of "wreck" he is to post up in the Custom House a notice (Form W.R. 8), giving details of the "wreck." If, in his opinion, the value of the property where it lies exceeds £20, the Receiver is to send a copy of the report on W.R. 8 to Lloyd's, and a charge of 10s. is made against the property. At the end of each week the Receiver forwards to the Head Receiver (the Collector) a report on Form W.R. 7 of all "wreck" taken into possession during the week.

When the value of "wreck" is under £5, and it is not likely to be claimed, a Receiver is empowered to sell it as soon as possible. In ordinary cases the sale should be by auction, but often this course is not necessary, because local people will often make satisfactory offers for the "wreck." When the property is sold by a Receiver, he issues a receipt for the money on Form F.24, which the purchaser countersigns, and the money is brought to account on Schedule B. Where the value of unclaimed "wreck" exceeds £5, the permission of the Board of Trade to sell is required, and this is sought on Form W.R. 61. In cases where the property is claimed the Receiver should endeavour to act in concert with the owners, and the insurers if interested, when he is selling any "wreck." All sales made by auction should be advertised in some local paper, and a notice posted up in the Custom House, but no sale is to be advertised before obtaining the approval of the Mercantile Marine Department of the Board of Trade. The Receiver is to fix a fair price as the reserve bidding on the part of the Crown or party entitled to the proceeds, and when the property does not fetch the reserve price the facts are to be reported to the Board of Trade, who may arrange for a sale at another port.

After the sale of the "wreck" the claims of the Salvors have to be met out of the proceeds, and the Receiver may award such salvage as he considers suitable, but generally he is not to award more than two-thirds of the proceeds where the nett proceeds do not exceed £2 10s.; not more than one-half where the nett proceeds exceed £2 10s. but not £5; and not more than one-third of the nett proceeds where they are £5 and over. A receipt for the salvage awards is obtained from the Salvor on the Form F. 16, which was handed to him in the first place as a receipt for the property now sold. After charg-

1928 B.C.F. COUNTY CORRESPONDENCE CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP.

Messrs. Hardie and Boodle have been chosen from the Waterguard Chess Club to play for Kent in the above match, which begins on January 1st, 1928. To have two players chosen from the Club for a team of 30 players out of a selection of about 600 players, is indeed an honour. May they meet with success.

Messrs. Smallwood and Dudley again represented the C.W.C.C., playing for Kent against Surrey at Central Hall, London, on December 3rd, 1927, and will probably play against Middlesex on January 28th at the same place.

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FORSYTH NOTATION.

The Forsyth notation is a short way of writing down an unfinished game or a problem. Start at Black's side of the board, recording each rank from Black's first rank to his eighth rank, as you would read the lines of a book; i.e., from left to right always. Put figures for empty squares, and the initial of any man for the square on which he stands, using small letters for Black men and capitals for White. At the end of each rank put a semi-colon or other mark of convenience. If the rank is empty you show it thus: 8; Problem No. 6 would be notated like this: 7B; 8; 8; 8; 1k6; 1P3q2; B4r2; K7.

In the Capablanca—Alekhine match, 29th game, Capablanca by clever play got a passed Queen's pawn which considerably worried Alekhine. The position after Alekhine's (Black) 45th move was: 8; 2q2pk1; 4bpb1; 7p; 3PP3; 3Q1KtPP; 5PK2; 8.

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|--------------|--------------|
| 46. P-Q5 | 46. P×P |
| 47. P×P | 47. Q-B6 |
| 48. Q×Q | 48. B×Q |
| 49. K-B1 (a) | 49. K-B3 |
| 50. K-K2 | 50. B-Kt5 |
| 51. Kt-B6 | 51. B-B4 (b) |
| 52. Kt-B6 | 52. K-B4 |
| 53. K-B3 | 53. K-B3 |
| 54. P-Kt4 | 54. P×P+ |
| 55. P×P | 55. K-Kt4 |
| 56. Kt-K5 | 56. B-Q5 (c) |
| 57. Kt×P+ | 57. K-B3 |

(a) The first step towards keeping the Black K away from passed pawn. (b) If K-K4, Kt-B6 wins B. (c) If P-B3, Kt-B7+, etc. Alekhine resigned at White's 70th move.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF.

To December 19th, 1927.

TRANSFERS.

Preventive Officer.—Ritchie, J. A., Glasgow, to Greenock.

Assistant Preventive Officer.—Owens, D. T., Sharpness, Worcester, to Newport, Mon.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

Retirement.—Preventive Officer, McCarthy, J. Greenock.

Death.—Advising Officer, Travis, H., O.B.E., I.S.O.

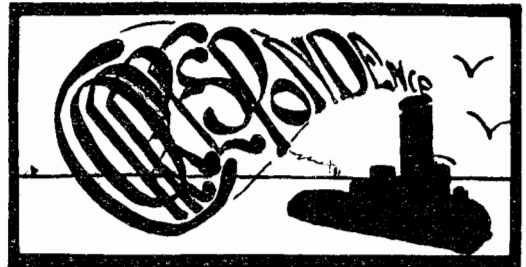
Other Causes.—Assistant Preventive Officer, Newman, R., Ramsgate, Dover.

VACANCIES.

Assistant Inspector (Unattached), Office of Inspector-General of Waterguard, January 2nd, 1928; Preventive Officer, Glasgow, January 14th, 1928.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

Hall, W., Preventive Officer; Newell, W. J., Preventive Officer (upper section); Richards, J., 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.

WATERGUARD DUTIES.

Sir,—I entirely agree with the writer of "We are concerned," published in your last issue. It is about time the Board took a greater interest in the Waterguard, for it has been the Cinderella of the Department long enough.

During the last ten years or so the type of officer promoted to the Preventive Officer Grade has been of a very high standard, and capable of performing any of the Customs work of the Customs and Excise Department. It is a matter of concern to most of us that the Board have not tapped this valuable source of combined efficiency and experience, and it is to be hoped that they will draw upon this reserve instead of taking all raw material from outside.—Yours, etc.,

"BETA."

WANTED.

Services of a supervising officer required for tuition purposes (Preventive Officers to Chief Preventive Officer Grade). Replies in confidence to Hon. Sec. V.E.S., Preventive Staff Association, 13, Beer Lane, London, E.C.3.