

# The Customs Journal

No. 615

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Fortnightly

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*Letters to the Editor, and articles and correspondence intended for publication, should be addressed to the Editor, "The Customs Journal," 91 Tressillian Road, Brockley, London, S.E.4.*

*All matter for insertion in the forthcoming issue should reach the Editor on or before the Monday preceding the day of publication.*

## V.E.S. SUCCESS.

THE result of the recent examination for promotion to the rank of Preventive Officer was received just in time to ensure its inclusion, at the last moment, in the last issue of the "Customs Journal." We were thus enabled to reach many officers in outlying districts before the official list could possibly have been received by them.

Since the inception of the Vocational Education Scheme this examination has been looked forward to as the first real test of the work carried out by the Central Committee. An examination of the list of successful candidates reveals some extremely interesting points. The number of candidates who sat at the examination was 91, successes numbering 66. Of those who passed, all, with the exception of three, were under some form of organised tuition.

We are firmly convinced that haphazard study will not carry an A.P.O. through his promotion examination. Some form of organised tuition is vitally necessary. Such an organisation must be carried on in such a manner that various useful ideas can be co-ordinated into one comprehensive scheme. Such a scheme must embrace all grades of students from the purely elementary to the well advanced. We may here say that the ultimate expert is he who commences from the very beginning and slowly works through the several stages. To do this he must start early—not leave his study

until a few weeks prior to the day of the test.

There are those at every examination who have so far neglected their opportunities as to leave themselves little or no time for preparation, under the delusion that a prolonged course of study is quite unnecessary. It cannot be too often stated that Customs law is of much more importance than to warrant such treatment. It is a study in itself, and the Central Committee, in tackling its task, has been fully alive to the position. We have praised the work of the Central Committee and the Tutors in the past. Now that an examination has placed the seal upon their efforts, we feel we must again raise our voice in enthusiastic admiration of what has proved an unqualified success. Organised tuition has for many years existed in our department in some form or other, and has, up to the present day, done wonderfully good work. The idea of centralisation has, however, made all the difference. The proportion of successful candidates to the whole has changed from roughly two-thirds to three-quarters.

The first nineteen places were taken by candidates who studied under the V.E.S.

The number who were making their second attempt, and passed, was 17. At the examination previous to this, not a single second-timer passed. This fact alone conveys sufficient to a wise man.

## CURRENT COMMENTS

**I**T would be interesting to know just how many members are really concerning themselves regarding the approaching Annual Conference. There will, of course, be a great deal of the usual rough-and-tumble chit-chat of the "watch-house," which, more often than not, leads nowhere. But, if past years are anything to go by there will be comparatively few who have resolved to impress their views on the Association in a businesslike manner by attending District meetings for this purpose. "Hot air" is the only description that can be given to the utterances of members whose vocal efforts regarding Association affairs are to be heard anywhere but at the District meeting.

There are twenty-one Councillors distributed throughout the kingdom, and these Councillors, though stationed for the most part at places where they have immediate access to large bodies of officers, are also linked up to their more distant constituents by the system of District and Local Secretaries. Yet, it is almost certain that Councillors will attend the Conference without having received instruction on some of the most important matters affecting the Association and its work. Such is the dismal effect of a neglectful constituency.

This kind of thing not only holds up general progress, but also ties up the Executive, no matter how enterprising they might happen to be. The reason being that whenever the Council is not sure of itself, action is taken on safety lines, by the passing of resolutions obviously calculated to restrict the activities of the Executive on questions regarding which a progressive-minded Committee might be tempted to take a strong line.

\* \* \* \*

The position of the Executive has been pointed out in these columns on several occasions, but it would appear that further emphasis is necessary. So many people are misguided enough as to harp upon that ancient question: "What are the Executive doing?"

The answer is that the Executive have, both in the letter and spirit, done everything they were instructed to do by the last Conference, and full record of this has been conveyed to the members in reports and minutes of meetings.

The Executive Committee are not allowed to do more than this.

This answer is so very, very complete, and so capable of proof, that those critics who think as well must for sheer decency's sake seek elsewhere for delinquents when they wish to decry the Association. And their investigation can lead them only to discover the deficiencies of the Annual Conference. They would also discover that these defects are nearly always due to a most praiseworthy desire on the part of Councillors to do nothing they have not been told to do by the members.

The members, who alone can provide the motive power for a vigorous and progressive Conference, do not, unfortunately, get down to fundamentals in their Local discussions, and this is due mainly to the spasmodic nature of their attendances at District meetings. Members who thus fail to keep in touch are prone to waste valuable time discussing the parish pump, when they do take it into their heads to occasionally join their colleagues at District meetings. This fact cannot be disputed—reports of District meetings tell their own tale.

It is from these people that one can expect, as usual, after the Conference, fierce upbraidings regarding the things done or left undone by the Councillors—and so the merry game goes on.

\* \* \* \*

Throughout the history of Waterguard Associations the tendency has always been towards evolving a system of representation under which officials negotiating for the Staff could not take any action of importance without full authority from the membership. To-day, that system exists, and is as perfect as possible—perhaps too perfect for the type of individual who finds it too fatiguing to take active interest in the instruction of his representatives.

\* \* \* \*

Everyone must sympathise with the conditions of the 1923-5 entrants, championed by "W.H.G." in the last issue of the Journal. It will not be generally admitted, however, that this group of officers have the monopoly of adverse circumstances in the A.P.O. Grade; and this can be said without in any way belittling the misfortunes of the 1923 men.

Obviously, the new entrants to-day are the most comfortably situated, because, being practically all single men, they are at least spared the anxieties of providing for a family out of their meagre pay. Nevertheless, since landlords have no special respect for official announcements regarding the alleged fall in the cost of living, the men now entering at 27/- per week will not be without their own particular troubles in making ends meet.

\* \* \* \*

It would have been more helpful if "W.H.G." had made some constructive reply to the statements recently made in the Journal regarding the action already taken, with much success, by the Association on behalf of the 1923 entrants, and regarding which the officers concerned expressed themselves as well satisfied.

"W.H.G." states that "This genuine grouse has received no official recognition," but if that is intended to mean recognition by the Association, then the statement is obviously wrong. In addition to the original occasion when an increase of pay was obtained for the 1923 entrants, the Executive have quite recently discussed the matter on a District

resolution. Reference to this will be found in the minutes, and it will be a subject included in the Executive report to the Council.

In his article, "W.H.G." alleges that "unity cannot be where discontent exists." Surely this can hardly be dubbed an axiom. All human experience indicates otherwise. Discontent arising from injustice has always been a potent factor in creating unity amongst the oppressed, whether the sufferers be a nation or a poor staff of Civil Servants.

In any case, "W.H.G." winds up his argument by urging "each and every Waterguard Officer" to support the case of the 1923 entrants; so, apparently, he really does appreciate the truth that unity begets redress, and not *vice versa*.

\* \* \* \*

It might be well to mention that, though there has been nothing whatever to prevent 1923 entrants from causing a discussion on the Council regarding any special claim they have to make, no resolution has ever been sent forward for a Conference Agenda since the last increase was gained. In the absence of some kind of resolution the Association cannot even discuss the matter. It will therefore be seen that there can be no ground whatever for charging the Association with neglecting the interests of the officers concerned, who have not taken even elementary steps to state their case in the proper quarter. It must not be forgotten, either, that this class of officers has direct representation both on the Council and Executive.

\* \* \* \*

On Wednesday, the 9th inst., six Lower Section Chief Preventive Officers appeared before the Promotion Board for interview in connection with promotion to the Upper Section. Information as to the number successful at the interview is not available up to the time of going to print.

\* \* \* \*

It is interesting to note that the section of the V.E.S. dealing with tuition for candidates for promotion from P.O. to C.P.O., is experiencing a boom. This new section was inaugurated just prior to the recent examination for C.P.O., Lower Section, and only comparatively few candidates took advantage of the course. No doubt recent events have shown the need for systematic preparation for this examination.

\* \* \* \*

Efficient as the V.E.S. is, however, there is one aspect of this examination that cannot be adequately provided for, and that is the perilous character of the written test. The written questions at the last examination were admitted by everyone to be excellent in every way. But only one may be attempted by a candidate, and by his performance on that one he stands or falls.

It is hoped that members are at last fully alive to this situation. Now is the time to give Councilors a very clear mandate on this issue. Every opportunity has been given for the fullest discussion, and the scheme before the Districts gives a solid ground to build upon.

At the Executive Committee meeting of the Customs and Excise Sports Club, held in the Custom House, London, on Tuesday, the 8th inst., four Waterguard members were present.

Reports from the secretaries of the various sections indicated a healthy condition of the Club's activities. It was generally agreed, however, that more publicity was needed in order to expand the membership. After much discussion on this point it was decided to issue, for an experimental period of three months, a monthly bulletin containing information of current events in connection with the Club.

Mr. W. H. Powell was elected to the position of Editor of the bulletin. It will be his task to collate information supplied by the different secretaries, and to arrange for publication. Mr. Powell is well experienced in this kind of work and has a fruitful brain for ideas, so there is reason to hope that this venture will turn out well and become permanent.

The sub-committee charged with the responsibility of making arrangements for selecting a recipient for the sports trophy, recently presented to the Club by Sir Horace Hamilton and which is to be awarded annually for the best athletic performance of the year, made their report, and the Executive signified approval of the methods adopted in making the selection on this occasion.

Waterguard officers will be interested to know that the Club member who gained the trophy this year is Mr. Titherley, of the Stores Branch. He has two brothers in the Waterguard, one of whom, Mr. C. P. Titherley, Preventive Officer, Liverpool, is well known in Association circles. He was, indeed, one of the band of stalwarts who, at Liverpool, put up such a good fight against the "die-hards" when fusion was being discussed, that their efforts were responsible, in no small degree, for the founding of the Preventive Staff Association.

\* \* \* \*

The falling cost-of-living figure is causing much uneasiness amongst the lower-paid grades of the Civil Service. Unless there is a sharp rise in prices very soon we will have to face another reduction of bonus in September. It is not much good trying to convince people on small salaries that these reductions are in accord with an actual fall in prices, causing purchasing power to remain unimpaired. In practice things seem to work out differently.

It is a very complicated sort of problem, but the Civil Service Confederation has decided to tackle it, and an examination of the whole question is to be undertaken. Members who are expressing anxiety at the prospect of a disappearing bonus may find some comfort in the fact that the Confederation is fully alive to the importance of the matter.

## OUR SHORT STORY.

By "GEN."

"Well, boys," said the C.P.O. to the Rummage Crew, one day about twenty years ago, "what about taking a half-day off?"

## Preventive Staff Association

Head Office:

Thames Chambers,  
13, Beer Lane,  
London, E.C.3.

Telephone ROYAL 4279

President: E. P. Madden

General Secretary: J. Merron

Organising Secretary: J. T. Sutton

Assistant Secretary: W. H. Powell

### ABERDEEN.

Every available member resident in the port attended the annual general meeting of the Branch on the 12th ult., a fact which, so far as Aberdeen is concerned, sets at naught the "C.J." comments on apathy in the Districts.

Under the Chairmanship of Mr. A. H. Stuart, the meeting was as enthusiastic as the attendance was large, and despite lengthy and spirited discussions, the keynote of the proceedings was the desire of all hands to get "the job" out of the doldrums, wherein it lies becalmed.

Reports were submitted by the D.O., showing the state of the District accounts and the record of subscriptions, all of which were received with satisfaction and adopted by the meeting, *nem. con.*

Unanimous decisions were recorded on the following subjects:—

*Landing and Shipping Duties.*—To support the Executive in the claim for the annexation of these duties by the Waterguard, provided adequate recompense by increase of salary and staff would accrue.

"*Customs Journal.*"—Continuance of fortnightly issue.

*Salary.*—The meeting regarded it as urgently imperative that action be taken to secure immediate increase of salary.

After a division it was decided by a majority to support the Leith resolution on the subject of post-war entrants and promotion.

Business of local interest was deliberated upon, and votes of thanks to the District Secretary, Mr. Duncan Mackenzie, to the District Organiser, Mr. Kenneth Sutherland, for services rendered, and to the Chairman for his able and courteous handling of the meeting, were heartily accorded.

## THE CUSTOMS FUND.

*The Editor of the "Customs Journal."*

Sir, I shall be grateful for an opportunity, through your columns, of thanking the Customs Fund subscribers in the Waterguard Service for their valued support in the recent election for the post of Auditor.—Yours, etc.,

FREDERICK G. PERKINS.

## TIME OFF IN LIEU OF OVERTIME.

The following Circular to C.S. Departments has been received. The Waterguard received a similar agreement in 1914:—

E. 16191.

Treasury Chambers.

24th April, 1928.

### TIME OFF IN LIEU OF OVERTIME PAYMENT.

Sir, I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to inform you that My Lords have had under consideration the arrangements as to the grant of time off in lieu of overtime payment in the case of officers belonging to classes normally eligible for overtime payment.

2. On many occasions it would not be possible to allow an officer who has worked overtime to take time off in lieu of payment, without requiring another officer to work overtime, and it follows that the question whether time off may be allowed in lieu of overtime payment must always be within the discretion of the Head of the Department concerned. My Lords have, however, agreed that, subject to the provisos set out below, an officer who is required to work overtime shall not be compelled to take time off in lieu of overtime payment.

3. This agreement does not apply to any existing arrangements as to attendance on public or privilege holidays.

4. When an officer applies for and is granted time off in lieu of overtime payment, in respect of overtime worked on week-days, the time off allowed shall be calculated at plain time rate. Thus a Clerical Officer conditioned to a 42-hour week, who in a period of Monday to Saturday has worked 46 hours' overtime at the rate of time and a quarter, will be allowed 4 hours off if he elects not to receive payment. The arrangements as to time off in lieu of Sunday attendance of Clerical, etc., Classes, set out in paragraph 3 of Treasury Circular No. 27/21 of 29th July, 1921, are not affected by this Agreement. Similarly no alteration should be made in the existing arrangements as to Sunday attendance of Established and Unestablished Messengers and analogous grades.

5. I am to add that the arrangements set out above are to be regarded as applicable generally to all classes normally eligible for overtime payments within the scope of the National Whitley Council (other than, e.g., Timekeepers at His Majesty's Dockyards who were the subject of Award No. 1226 of the Industrial Court), subject to the following provisos:—(i) The Agreement applies only to cases in which overtime payment is proper to be made under existing Departmental regulations; (ii) in the case of staff employed on shift systems or charted attendance (under which officers' attendance over a period of, e.g., a week or a fortnight, amounts in the aggregate to the normal hours per week, but extends to more than the normal hours on certain days), the agreement applies only to hours, in excess of those charted, in respect of which overtime is payable.

6. Any case of doubt should be referred to this Department.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

R. R. SCOTT.

## Correspondence

*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.*

### RESPONSIBILITY.

Sir,—I read with interest in the last issue that the London A.P.O.s. have passed a resolution "that the Council shall appoint a committee to explore the possibilities of transferring some measure of responsibility to them."

Undoubtedly this is a thing that is long overdue, and should be supported by both ranks in the P.S.A. when it is placed before them at their Branch meetings. The greatest surprise to me is that with all the different proposals that have been introduced from time to time—reconstruction, change of title, salary claims, etc.—one of the most important (in my estimation), that of the London A.P.O.s. has never been mentioned before; at least, not at any of the meetings the decisions of which have been published in the "Customs Journal," although occasionally it has been the subject of "Watch-house debates" (N.E., 45 minutes). When one considers the relative positions of Preventive and Assistant Preventive Officers it certainly does appear farcical, as at present we have the former expected by the Hon. Board to put into operation at any time the regulations as laid down in Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 4, and Miscellaneous, plus numerous General Orders, while the responsibilities of his "Assistant" do not extend beyond wax and tape. However deplorable, we cannot deny this, as there is not one reference in the regulations which states that the A.P.O. has a single responsibility. Surely this is a sad state of affairs when we consider that the A.P.O. of to-day is normally the P.O. of to-morrow, and that to pass from one stage to the other a thorough knowledge of the regulations is required; but during his period of A.P.O.-ship he performs no practical duties whatever (except, of course, rummage), and the only time he puts his pen to paper is when signing on and off.

As at present constituted, the A.P.O. certainly has not a great inducement to show a live interest in the Service, except studying prior to his examination for promotion; for we must admit that his particular job does not call for an extensive use of the "little grey matter," whereas with a few minor duties assigned to him, for which he would be mainly responsible, the aspect would be considerably altered, with a beneficial effect on the staff generally.

This, of course, sir, is just my opinion, but I certainly think that the time has arrived when the position of an A.P.O. just "tailing" a P.O. on board calls for an adjustment, and that the Assistant Preventive Officer should be allowed to justify his name, to say nothing of substantiating at a later date his salary claim.

Yours, etc.,

" EN AVANT."

### PROMOTION TO C.P.O.

Sir,—On reading the result of the last interviews before the Promotion Board for C.P.O. (Lower Section), one is absolutely dismayed. Seven out of thirty-two is, I believe, the number approved.

I hear several have a second chance which, to my mind, is sheer bunkum. Very probably these will be called in a few weeks. By what process are these men to be made fit in a few weeks? A lot of tosh, sir. If they are not fit now they never will be.

I personally know some of the failures. I know their past records as Revenue officers, and also their work in every particular; also their worth as steady, reliable and trustworthy officers, and I trust, sir, that I am not alone when I say that I consider that a gross injustice has been done them in turning them down.

Surely we are not going to leave the matter of promotion without a strong protest, are we? I think it is about time we cleared the decks for a big row. I should be glad to know what others are thinking regarding this question. We are going from bad to worse. Discontent is rife. Let us up and at the System that slaughters men's hopes and aspirations in so cruel a fashion, and demand an enquiry. Why not a Press campaign? The public know our worth and will judge us fairly, which is more than can be said has been done by the powers that be.

Trusting that this question may be ventilated in the columns of your valuable little paper, and thanking you.—Yours, etc.,

" OBSERVER."

## Civil Service Confederation.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Monday, 7th May, 1928, at Central Hall, Westminster. Mr. W. H. James presided over an attendance of 23.

On the subject of Motor Car Insurance, it was reported that this matter was under consideration by the Association of Officers of the Ministry of Labour and the Customs and Excise Federation, and that a definite motion for consideration by the Confederation was being drafted by the first-named Association.

It was reported that further assistance had been rendered to representatives of the Irish Treaty Pensioners' Association, and also to representatives of the Irish Transferred Officers' Protection Association, and that the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party had agreed to receive a deputation from the Confederation on the subject of the issues arising from the Wigg and Cochrane Judgment.

The resignation of Mr. R. L. Elkington, of the Customs and Excise Federation, from membership of the Subsistence Committee of the National Staff Side was reported, and it was agreed to nominate Mr. T. W. Rogers, Secretary of the same Federation, to fill the vacancy.

A resolution was received from the Inland Revenue (C.S.S.) Minor Establishment Association on the subject of the Cost-of-Living Index Figure, and arising out of a discussion on this subject, it was agreed that the question be referred to the General Purposes Committee for consideration and report.

A report was given by Mr. G. Chase of National Whitley proceedings, dealing especially with the subjects of Higher Grade negotiations; Substitution Pay; Increases on Promotion; Appointments conditional upon Professional or Specialised Qualifications; Nursing Homes; Tropical Diseases; Blind Persons in the Civil Service; Provincial Differentiation; Complements; and Super-cut. On the subject of negotiations with the Joint Consultative Committee, it was reported that these had now broken down, and that the National Staff Side was issuing a statement on the matter. This statement is being printed, and the Confederation will be supplied with copies for distribution to constituent organisations.

With regard to the claims for representation on the Outstations Committee of the War Office Administrative Council being put forward by two constituent organisations of the Confederation, it was reported that a deputation from the Confederation dealing with one of these claims had been received by the Trade Union Side of the War Office Industrial Council on the 2nd May, and that the reply of the Trade Union Side was being awaited.

At the request of the Accountant of Court's Clerical Association, a communication had been addressed to of the recently agreed reorganisation scheme for that the Scottish Office on a promotion matter arising out office.

A special Report of the General Purposes Committee on proposed improvements in Whitley and Arbitration Machinery was considered at length, and certain recommendations were adopted for transmission to the National Staff Side.

A report was presented by the Special Committee on Sick Pay for Unestablished Classes to the effect that an unfavourable reply had been received from the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, following upon the deputation of Members of Parliament (arranged by the Confederation), which had been received by the Financial Secretary. A further approach to the Treasury had been made, but without success. The Executive Committee decided that a meeting of the Sick Pay Committee should be convened to consider the present position.

At the conclusion of the proceedings, the Chairman, Mr. W. H. James, said that, as he was not standing for re-election to the Presidency of the Confederation, this would be the last meeting of the Executive Committee over which he would preside, and he desired to thank the members of the Committee for the support and assistance they had given him during his term of office. It was unanimously agreed that the Executive Committee place upon record its appreciation of the services of Mr. James as President.

## CHANGES IN THE STAFF

TO MAY 7th, 1928.

### APPOINTMENTS.

#### ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Emery, F., Gotts, F., Hunter, E. L., Lacey, H. F., Macbeth, A. F., McKnight, G. W., Moore, J. N. S., Morrison, D. C., Turner, R. J.

### TRANSFERS.

#### CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICERS (UPPER SECTION) :—

Booth, A. C. Dover to Sunderland.  
Cornish, F. Grimsby to Barry Dock, Cardiff.

#### CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICERS (LOWER SECTION) :—

Keefe, P. Unattached, Office of I.G.W., to Fishguard, Swansea.  
Keiran, J. Barry Dock, Cardiff to Hull.  
Riordan, T. Unattached, Office of I.G.W., to Belfast.  
Shearman, W. P. Unattached, Office of I.G.W. to London.  
Thomas, J. Unattached, Office of I.G.W., to Falmouth, Plymouth.

#### PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Kitchener, F. J. Londonderry Land Boundary, Belfast to Belfast.  
Lumsden, F. North Shields, Newcastle to Silloth, Preston.

#### ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

King, R. Milford Haven, Swansea to Sharpness, Worcester.  
Ray, L. London to King's Lynn, Norwich.

### PROMOTIONS.

#### CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER (LOWER SECTION TO UPPER SECTION) :—

Creighton, H. Belfast to Dover.  
Macdonald, J. Hull to Grimsby.

#### PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, LOWER SECTION (unattached) :—

Dobrzanski, I. J. Cowes, Portsmouth to Office of I.G.W.  
Murchie, J. Glasgow to Office of I.G.W.  
Roberts, W. J. Newport (Mon.) to Office of I.G.W.  
Slade, C. H. Liverpool to Office of I.G.W.

#### ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO PREVENTIVE OFFICER :—

Smith, F. G. H. Dartmouth, Plymouth to Londonderry Land Boundary, Belfast.

### OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

#### RETIREMENT—CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER (UPPER SECTION) :—

Boyle, C. Sunderland.

#### OBITUARY OF SUPERANNATED OFFICERS.

Agar, E., Mate-in-Charge.  
Collishaw, W. N., Preventive Officer.  
Cottle, T., Preventive Officer (Lower Section).



**FILL IN THIS FORM NOW.**

The Secretary (V.E.C.),  
 Preventive Staff Association,  
 13, Beer Lane, London, E.C.3.

Preliminary Course

Please enrol me for Intermediate Course (delete Courses not required) in Waterguard.

Advanced Course

Departmental Regulations. Postal Order payable to S. C. Steel, London, value..... (insert amount), enclosed.

Name .....

Address .....

Tutors:—Messrs. Angus, Finley, Gardiner, Jeffreys, Lake, Sheehan, and Thomson.  
 Please indicate Tutor desired, and choice of Tutors will be given as far as possible.  
 Fees: 10/0, 15/0, and 20/0 per term respectively.

## CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL.

The ninety-fourth meeting of the Council was held in the Custom House, London, on April 25th, 1928, the Chair being taken by Sir F. L. C. Floud, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise, at the outset of the proceedings, and subsequently by A. J. Dyke, Esq., C.B., C.B.E., Deputy-Chairman of the Board.

At the commencement of the meeting the Chairman referred to the Council's serious and lamentable loss in the death of Mr. E. A. Harris, the Chief Inspector, who had died in harness within a day or two of the 43rd anniversary of his entry into the Department. He had occupied many important posts with signal credit to himself and to the Department, and at the same time he had earned the esteem of the staff. His loss was greatly regretted throughout the Department. The Chairman added that, on learning of the death, he had addressed a letter of sympathy to Mr. Harris's son on behalf of the Council, and that a reply of appreciation and thanks had been received.

The Vice-Chairman thanked the Chairman for including the whole Council in his letter of condolence and regret. The Staff Side endorsed all that had been said by the Chairman, and they felt their regret to be keener because of the element of tragedy in Mr. Harris's passing, as it was realised that he had not attained the highest dignity nor reaped the full reward which would have crowned the last years of his official life. He had enjoyed the great gift of being able to carry out to the full his very sharp sense of obligation to the State as a trusted high official, and at the same time to gain and maintain the esteem of his subordinates. His name and qualities would remain a lasting memory and inspiration.

### DUTIES OF CLERKS.

The Council adopted the agreed portion of a Report from the Outdoor Service Sectional Committee on the duties of Clerks in the Outdoor Service (excluding Collectors' Offices), and adjourned consideration of the remainder.

### TITLES OF CLERKS.

The Staff Side proposed certain titles for use on all official occasions by members of the Departmental Clerical Class. The Official Side concurred in the desirability of establishing regular practice in this matter, but suggested two alternatives to the titles proposed, and the subject was adjourned.

### APPOINTMENTS.

It was agreed that unless the Board's permission has been obtained for further delay, unattached Officers shall take up appointments as Fixed Officers or Fixed Officers within two months of the date of the order making the appointment.

### OVERTIME.

The Council adopted a Committee's recommendations on possible methods of reducing the amount of overtime worked in the Outdoor Service, including Collectors' Offices.

### RETIRING AGE.

It was agreed that, so long as the Women Pension Officers remain an integral part of the Department, members of the Grade will normally be retired on attaining the age of 60, but, subject to the Board's general powers to retire any officer after reaching the age of 60, a W.P.O. who has not completed 40 years' pensionable service when she attains the age of 60 may be allowed to remain in the Service, provided that her health and efficiency continue to be such as to enable her to perform all the duties of her grade, until either she completes 40 years' pensionable service or attains the age of 65, whichever is the earlier.

### SCHEMES OF STATIONS.

Disagreement was registered on an Official Side proposal for the basis of scheming the amount of work proper to Women Pension Officers' Stations. During the discussion it was elicited that the biennial delivery of books was intended to be a permanent feature of the work, and that proposals would be made for modifying the unit for men's Stations accordingly.

### LEAVE.

The question of the scale of Watchers' leave was re-adjourned after further consideration, the Official Side indicating their inability to accept the Staff Side's proposals. The Staff Side undertook to submit a memorandum on the subject.

### SENIORITY.

The Staff Side made proposals to establish the relative seniority of members of the "P" Class. The Official Side mentioned certain special cases which had not apparently been provided for, and the item was adjourned.

### EXPENSES.

The Official Side undertook to publish a General Order covering the recent Treasury Circular on the removal expenses of members of the "P" Class.

It was agreed that the question of the removal expenses of Unattached Officers should be regarded as settled by the February agreement on Disturbance Allowances, etc.

### OTHER MATTERS.

A schedule of suggestions which had been forwarded to the Board by the Suggestions Committee, with notes of action taken, was presented to the Council.

Committee decisions dealt with included those on the Staffing of the sub-offices at Harwich and Folkstone. The Council considered a number of other decisions advised by Sectional, Grade, Local and Office Committees, with results that have been advised to the Committees concerned.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on May 30th, 1928.

## Hospital Saving Association.

### NOTES ON WORKING.

#### GARDEN PARTY.

An H.S.A. Garden Party is being held at the Alexandra Palace, Wood Green, on Saturday, June 9th, commencing at 2.30 p.m. The price of tickets is 1/- (children under 14 being 6d.). Any Water-guard Officers desirous of attending can obtain tickets from Branch Secretary, Western District, H.S.A., 77, Cambridge Terrace, London, W.C. Please state group and number. Arrangements are being made for an afternoon of music, jollity and entertainment.

The following paragraphs should be noted:—

#### DEPENDENT RELATIVES.

The Association is frequently requested to give assistance in the case of dependent relatives who are not dependents within the Association's definition, such as relatives-in-law and parents who are not entirely dependent upon the contributor. It should be borne in mind that a very wide range of dependent relatives is already allowed, and it is impossible for the Association to extend that range. Mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law are accepted as dependents only when they are acting in the capacity of housekeeper to a contributor in the place of his wife. Where parents of a contributor are partly supported by other members of the family who are not themselves contributors, they cannot be considered the dependents of the contributor for benefit purposes.

#### CONTRIBUTIONS.

It should, of course, be understood that all contributions, whether paid weekly, quarterly or yearly, should be paid in advance; otherwise the contributor cannot be considered in benefit. Half a dozen yearly contributions are overdue in London.

#### ORSETT, GRAYS AND TILBURY DISTRICT EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

Contributors in this district are requested to make a special note of the fact that this Committee now accepts Green Vouchers in cases of treatment of tonsils and adenoids of school children in lieu of payment by the patient.

#### SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Green Vouchers may be presented to the following Education Authorities to cover operative treatment of tonsils and adenoids of school children:—Middlesex County, Surrey County, Wimbledon, Orsett District (Essex), Tottenham, Beckenham, Dagenham, and Barking.

#### ADDITIONAL HOSPITALS ON H.S.A. LIST.

Dilke Memorial Hospital, Cinderford, Glos.; Harrow Hospital, Rosteth Hill, Harrow; Eltham and Muttonham Cottage Hospital, Eltham, S.E.9; Bromley Union Infirmary, Farnborough, Kent.

#### VISIT TO ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

Arrangements can be made for a visit, but date cannot be given yet. Contributors and dependents who desire visit should send their names to the Group Secretary, who will make the necessary arrangements.

W. W. BISHOP,  
Group Sec., D. 582.

## MONTHLY PAY?

In view of the discussions at present taking place among the Assistant Preventive Officers on the subject of monthly versus weekly pay, the following two letters, which appeared in *The New Civilian* of May 2nd, will prove of special interest:—

### MONTHLY OR WEEKLY?

To the Editor of *The New Civilian*.

Sir,—Surely there cannot be many Clerical Officers who agree with your correspondents "N.C. Subscriber" and "A.J.S." Obviously, if those "thousands of married post-war entrants" who are members of the C.S.C.A. felt at all keenly about the matter they would have seen to it that there were resolutions in plenty on the Conference Agenda.

It cannot be agreed, either, that Lytton and Southborough entrants are inarticulate. Are they not eligible for membership of their appropriate Staff Associations? As to the question of expenses, surely they can be adjusted to a monthly basis, in some cases with advantage—particularly so in respect of railway seasons, where quarterly tickets show a great saving, as also does a quarterly gas account over a slot meter.

The great point, though, is the bearing upon Service conditions. Call it snobbery if you will, it is actually a hard fact that a salaried officer "cuts more ice" than a weekly wage-earner in the eyes of employers—whether Government or private.

Some of us now on the salary system have recently left a class, which, although now on the weekly wage basis so much desired by your correspondents, have striven for years to be replaced on that salaried basis, involving monthly payments, from which a benevolent Department removed them.

I should advise your correspondents to give the matter a little more thought, and consider whether it is better to be at the top of weekly wage-earners, looking down, or at the bottom of salaried classes, looking up.—Yours, etc.,

L.T.S.

W. S. L.

To the Editor of *The New Civilian*.

Sir,—I gather that your two correspondents "N.C. Subscriber" and "A.J.S." are condemning the method of monthly payments, and advocating a weekly method of paying salary.

I should like to call attention to the fact that the manipulative classes (sorters and telegraphists) also raised the same question successfully (?) about twenty years ago.

The direct result was that they were transferred from almost the lowest-paid salaried class to the highest-paid weekly class.

Then, their maximum was £160 per annum, the Assistant Clerks' £150; now, the Sorters' maximum is 67s. 6d. per week, the Clerical Officers' £250 per annum. *Verb. Sap.*

I push no theories forward. I simply state facts.

EX-SORTER.

## SLOW AHEAD OR SLOW ASTERN?

By "VULCAN."

Several correspondents have recently written in a rather optimistic strain about the future of this, the Cinderella of Departments. While far from wishing to discourage any hopes, but with memories of the last reconstruction fiasco, it is advisable to take stock of recent happenings, endeavour to judge which way things are moving, and see if such optimism is justified. A most simple method is to peruse Current Comments in the last issue of the "Customs Journal," and having done so, to interest ourselves in the following rough review of results as recorded there.

The first paragraph with which we will deal is that which refers to G.O. 28, and we are apparently to assume from that that the administration of "oil duty" so little concerns, or is likely to concern, the Waterguard, that the order has been so framed that no reference has been made to the Waterguard; rather, by the specification of certain ranks interested, the exclusion has been made rather pointed. Gliding from oil to promotion, we find that the present method of promotion from P.O. to C.P.O. does not satisfy the staff idea of fairness; the existing system is declared "obviously inequitable," a declaration that is its own comment. Our old, almost ancient, friends, mackintoshes and electric lamps, next reappear on the scene. Now, in fairness, it must be admitted that these are two good concessions, rather overdue, but notwithstanding that a benefit to the Service. Perhaps we may hope that another friend of equal age, "fountain pens of the Blackbird type for P.O.s," may also one day materialise. Monthly pay for A.P.O.s., at present adjourned after discussion, is not, perhaps, of equal importance to other matters under consideration--the cash is the thing, whether paid weekly, monthly, or daily. That seizure rewards are also to have further consideration is not too bad, but it appears that the sting is in the tail, and Current Comments close in a minor key and tell us that a disagreement was registered on the most important topic, Waterguard Annual Leave. A very unsatisfactory ending to deliberations that have been under way since the last reconstruction.

If the foregoing is conceded to be a fair commentary on current happenings, then why the prevailing note of optimism?

It may be said that notwithstanding these points the prospects in other directions are bright, Landing and Shipping Duties and Free Goods being given as examples. Ah, yes, but we have not got them yet, and if the prevailing policy of enlargement of the tariff is continued, what will Free Goods be worth, providing that we do eventually get them? Without trying to understudy "Dismal James" of

"Customs Journal" fame one can, it is to be feared, see no rosy future for the Waterguard.

In conclusion, it is only just to add that this is not to be considered as an attack on the Association, its officials, nor its policy, but an attempt to point out what the writer, at all events, considers to be the course that we are nilly-nilly following; hence the title of this article.

What think you—is it slow ahead, or slow astern?

## Vocational Education Scheme.

The result of another examination for promotion to the rank of Preventive Officer has been announced, setting at rest the minds of those who, for the past few weeks, have been uneasy and anxious as to what fate had in store for them.

A word of sympathy is extended to those who have failed to satisfy the examiners.

I desire to draw the attention of those who anticipate being called for the next examination to the number of successes in the examination just passed, a number which I think represents 76 per cent. of the number which actually sat. This surely must be unprecedented in the history of the Waterguard department. Furthermore, the percentage of successful candidates who were actually students under the auspices of the V.E.S. is somewhere in the vicinity of 90. It is also a noteworthy fact that a record percentage succeeded, on this occasion, at the second time of asking.

I do not propose to elaborate further on facts and figures; neither do I suggest that these abnormal results are entirely due to the efforts of the personnel of the V.E.S. It is, however, a remarkable fact that the recent examination was the first since the scheme was introduced, and, as I have already stated, it has been attended by a record number of successes, the majority of whom were V.E.S. students.

These results must be particularly gratifying and encouraging to the tutors and to those who have devoted their untiring efforts to make the scheme the great success it has proved itself to be.

It now remains for the future aspirants to do their part of the business by enrolling, thus ensuring the future success of both themselves and the V.E.S., and also improving the standard of efficiency of the Waterguard as a whole.

One term has already commenced. Another will commence about the beginning of July—so lose no time in making application.

S. C. STEEL,

Sec., V.E.S.



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