

The Customs Journal

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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.

EDITORIAL

THE remark made some time back by the General Secretary regarding the failure of the "Customs Journal" to adequately convey the true expression of Waterguard opinion was probably, at the time, deserved. It certainly is true that, for a considerable time, the P.S.A. membership generally failed to put this publication to the use for which it was intended, and this despite various means adopted to convince subscribers of the value of a journal that was essentially their own property. It is quite possible that the appearance of the "Customs Journal" did not appeal as a medium for expressing opinions and the setting forth of views on the many and varied subjects which appeal to P.S.A. members. With the alteration in the lay-out of the pages, however, and the greater prominence we are now able to give to certain contributions and features has come a speedy recognition of our possibilities and value. Contributors are hastening to keep us supplied, and their articles are assuming a much greater importance in subject and character. It is quite probable that the twelve-page issue will become normal, and that the eight pages will be a thing of the past. The "Customs Journal" is once again assuming that "kick" which it had in the past, the absence of which has been a reproach for some months.

Few Civil Service journals can boast a greater age than this one, for it is one of the oldest, and in times has proved of inestimable value to the Association of which it has always been the official

organ. In this issue appears an extract from an issue which was published in 1904, and with the kind co-operation of a contributor it is our intention of reprinting in each number an interesting item culled from our pages of a couple of decades ago. The reference to the "Harpy," the floating office of the Waterguard in front of the London Custom House, will particularly appeal to all officers who have served in London, and will recall many vivid recollections of official Waterguard life during a period that has, after all, been crowded with change. To write a history of the "Harpy" would be to make a record of evolution.

But we digress; we were on the subject of our journal. We had hoped for criticism on our new appearance, and we have not hoped in vain. The criticism has been far from adverse. The change is widely appreciated. People outside our own membership have expressed their approval. The last issue has been described as the most interesting for years, and congratulations have been unstinted. This success is due as much to the membership as to anybody else. The Editorial staff are willing to take what credit is due for producing a journal worthy of the Association to which it belongs, but to the membership belongs the credit of realising the utility of these pages and of giving that support which is perceptibly growing issue by issue. We are confident that the time has arrived when the Districts will commence to make full use of their journal, and enable it to hold its head high in the front rank of Civil Service publications.

CURRENT COMMENTS

THE chief characteristic of any sound system for governing the community, or any section of the community, is the smooth working of that system in producing benefits for those whose welfare it controls. The more easily the system works the less noticeable are its operations, and the people concerned are inclined to forget its existence, and to regard the privileges derived as being the natural development of things generally. This is more often the case when the members of a body are suffering under some specific dissatisfaction, which prevents them from viewing in its true perspective the value of general conditions enjoyed.

Civil Service Whitleyism controls the official lives of Civil Servants, and in the Customs and Excise it functions as near perfection as possible. Yet, even in this Department, though the reforms it has achieved could be set out in black and white sufficiently convincing almost for the unreasonable being, members are apt to doubt its effectiveness. Failing to realise that every problem cannot be settled in a day, they do not see, also, that Whitley is working efficiently and unobtrusively in all their everyday affairs and producing a cumulative effect of substantial benefit to the rank and file. Frequently we hear it said that we would get on just as well without Whitleyism. Unfortunately the only way to convince these people, who insist on blinding themselves to pre-Whitley conditions, would be to adopt the dangerous experiment of suspending all Whitley activity for a period. So long as we retain our sanity that experiment will not take place.

* * * *

Just at the moment there happens to be some valuable evidence as to the desirability of Whitleyism, which, to the more reasonable of the sceptics, might be regarded as acceptable. The "Immigrator," the recently-inaugurated official organ of the Immigration Staff Association, is developing into a periodical with a punch. There is no doubt that the vigorous thinkers of the Immigration Staff are putting their backs into it. From the beginning the "Immigrator" has urged upon the membership the necessity to abandon old-fashioned methods of negotiation, and it has been quite evident that the members were only too ready to follow the good advice. Their experience of proceeding by other means seems to have driven them to Whitleyism for refuge. The current issue of the journal is illuminating. It contains an insistent demand throughout for the establishment of the Association on a proper Whitley basis. A very instructive article on Whitley procedure, contributed by Mr. C. A. W. Sanders, the well-known expert in these matters, is published.

* * * *

That ancient and historic establishment, the Custom House, Lower Thames Street, which has lorded it over London shipping for many a long year, has suffered a grave indignity. Passenger vessels from abroad pass, with lofty indifference, right over its venerable roof. This pathetic scene is depicted in the February issue of "Airways," the

air travel magazine. The photograph published shows an Armstrong-Whitworth "Argosy" airliner in flight over the City. Just at the moment of taking the picture the liner appears to have been right above the Custom House. Could anything more strikingly impress one with the rapid march of progress?

* * * *

There has been much public interest in the opening of the new London Terminal Aerodrome at Croydon, and it is evident that Waterguard Officers have been specially interested. The P.S.A. keeps a close eye on all that happens at Croydon, and members can rest assured that their claims regarding Waterguard work at these places is kept well in view.

In the new Customs building, accommodation for the Waterguard is allocated. The plans for this were submitted to the Whitley representatives and approved. It is difficult to foretell how long it will be before that accommodation will be required; things move so rapidly in these days.

* * * *

Before the next issue of the Journal the candidates for the Preventive Officer examination will have experienced the great ordeal. Most of them are V.E.S. students, and it would be interesting to hear from them afterwards their views as to the helpfulness of the tuition under the scheme. Those responsible for the educational scheme are as keenly interested in the results of this examination as are the candidates themselves.

The oral test seems to be the chief worry for some candidates, but if it is kept in mind that, from experience, trick questions are not given, no candidate who has studied intelligently and well, need dread this part of the examination.

* * * *

Good luck to them all!

* * * *

Strong rumours as to an early call-up of Preventive Officers for promotion to the Chief Preventive Officer grade are going the rounds. It is estimated that the numbers called will be round about 25 to 30.

The V.E. Committee have already launched their scheme of tuition for this examination, and it is now in full swing. Many prospective candidates have enrolled, and, by all accounts, the question papers are so good that students are anxious to get as many of them as possible.

It might be pointed out here once again that none of the work submitted for criticism, by the student, is seen by the Central Committee. All correspondence between student and tutor passes through the hands of the Committee in sealed envelopes only. Under the system the tutor does not know whose papers he is examining.

The questions are framed by an official who has an excellent knowledge of what is required of candidates for the C.P.O. Grade. They cover a wide field, and would afford even the most up-to-date P.O. a splendid opportunity to practise framing concise reports on any Waterguard subject.

Single papers can be supplied to candidates who think they will not be able to take a full course owing to lack of time. Applications should be made to Mr. C. R. Purser, 13, Beer Lane, E.C.3.

It is gratifying to note that all the members who took advantage of the special facilities offered to Association members to participate in the advantageous terms offered in connection with Boot's Booklovers' Library, have this year bombarded the Association with requests for renewal forms.

Apparently they are well pleased with the Library service at their disposal. Particulars regarding these special terms have been published in the Journal, and all members wishing to join can have the necessary forms from the Association by applying to the Assistant Secretary, Mr. W. H. Powell.

Swansea's first Waterguard Dinner appears to have been an unqualified success. It is now definitely decided that this is to be an annual event.

News comes to hand that another function is being organised, probably for the 18th March. This is to be a smoking concert. The promise of the attendance of the entertainers who were present at the Dinner is sufficient indication that it is likely to be a jolly evening.

Swansea is coming into the limelight!

There is nothing yet to report regarding War Bonus claims submitted for Arbitration. The same applies to "Earmarked cases." Members concerned should clearly understand that these matters are right out of the hands of the Association. Some of the officers seem to think the Association is in some way to blame for delay in reaching a settlement.

It is understood that examination of the numerous claims is being proceeded with, and that results will be forthcoming within a few weeks.

In view of the claim now being put forward in connection with monthly pay for A.P.O.s, it is interesting to note that in the War Office, Grade II and III Clerks at present being paid weekly, are to be placed on a monthly basis, and that, where necessary, special arrangements will be made to cover the period of transition.

The Labours of the Joint Committee of the National Staff Side regarding Nursing Homes for Civil Servants seem about to bear fruit. A definite scheme is expected soon, and it is understood that the method of contribution under this scheme will be on salary basis.

In some ports it appears that the Waterguard is required to measure deck-cargoes for the convenience of railway companies and local authorities. Though, of course, there can be no objection to outside bodies being supplied figures and information gathered in the ordinary course of Waterguard duty, it seems strange that the Waterguard official should be compelled to obtain these particulars for other people even when the Customs Department does not require them.

The officers feel very strongly on this matter, and the fact that these local authorities are at times inclined to be high-handed does not improve things.

Notice has been given of a question to be asked in the House of Commons regarding alleged smuggling in the Thames estuary. It will be interesting to see what transpires.

There is a growing feeling in London port that the North and South Social Clubs should combine for one big event to mark the close of a successful season for both clubs. This could take the form of a smoking concert at a central hotel in the City. The tickets could be at a reasonable price, and there is every reason to anticipate a very successful evening.

We have all the material to at least rival the "Riverites," and have every prospect of producing something better.

The cost-of-living figure for February has dropped to 66. This is attributed to a decline in the price of butter and eggs.

The bonus will remain as it is for the next period of six months. The figures for the past six are 65, 67, 69, 69, 68, 66.

PRESENTATION TO MR. D. H. THORNTON, P.O.

On Tuesday, February 14th, the Chief Preventive Officers' room, Belfast, was the scene of a presentation to Mr. D. H. Thornton, P.O., to mark his retirement from the Department after thirty-eight years' service.

The Chairman, Mr. H. Creighton, C.P.O., paid high tribute to the sterling qualities of Mr. Thornton, and said that, although he had not known him long, he had seen quite sufficient of his work to regret the loss of such a competent officer; always ready for anything. He wished him long life and happiness in which to enjoy his well-earned rest.

Letters of apology, regretting enforced absence, were read from Mr. J. Brames (W.S., Glasgow), Messrs. M. Hartnett (P.O./C., Larne), and J. G. Flynn, A.P.O.

Mr. G. V. Acheson, Surveyor, spoke of Mr. Thornton's capabilities in a witty little speech and trusted he would have a pleasant time in his retirement.

Messrs. A. H. Fitzsimmons (Retired P.O.), J. Hill and F. Nightingale, P.O.s, A. J. Nash and P. A. Richardson, A.P.O.s, and T. Shannon (Landing Staff), all spoke in high praise of Mr. Thornton, who was always ready to assist his colleagues.

Mr. M. McDonald, A.P.O., made the presentation. In asking Mr. Thornton to accept a clock (Westminster chimes—suitably inscribed), and Tobacco Jar, as tokens of regard and respect from the Waterguard and Landing Staffs, he hoped he would keep it going with the Wireless and Big Ben.

Mr. Thornton, in a brief but very typical speech, inferred that it would be futile for him to attempt to make adequate response to the nice things that had been said about him. Seeing the clock would always remind him of old times. Many changes for the better had taken place since he joined the Service at Gravesend in 1889, and he hoped for continued improvement.

Preventive Staff Association

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LONDON.

The District meeting is fixed for Monday, February 27th, and is timed to commence at 6 p.m. sharp. There is a well-loaded agenda for discussion, and it is anticipated that there will be a large attendance. The place of meeting will be the St. Katherine Dock Hotel.

NEWCASTLE.

A meeting was held at the Clock Vaults Hotel on January 25th, with a representative attendance.

Discussion on the subject of the issue of the "Customs Journal" followed the minutes and correspondence. The meeting decided that a vote of the members would be the most satisfactory method of deciding the matter.

The question of taking over all aerodromes was again brought up for discussion. The whole matter seems to be of more than ordinary interest so far as the Waterguard is concerned.

Regarding Landing-duties, it was pointed out that in the absence of a Landing Officer the duty of examination in certain cases devolved upon the Preventive Officer, and that, in so far as the examination of Free Goods was concerned, there was little or no difference between bulk goods and free goods, and the performance of this duty would be distinctly advantageous to the Waterguard.

The further discussion of the Failed A.P.O.'s question did not reveal any working arrangement whereby the situation could be met.

The question of Leave was vigorously gone into, and it was the unanimous opinion of the members that the matter should be one of the items on the agenda of the next Conference.

A general discussion followed regarding local matters.

The enthusiasm displayed by the members present and the intelligent interest taken in all Association matters is a most encouraging sign.

CARDIFF.

A District meeting was held at the Old Arcade Hotel on Friday, February 3rd, the Chairman being Mr. G. O. Warne. It was very encouraging to the officials to have such a good attendance of members, and it is hoped that future meetings will be as well attended.

Mr. Densley gave an explanation of the proposed scheme to reorganise the Districts.

A resolution that a scheme to govern promotion from P.O. to C.P.O. be drawn up by the Executive

Committee and circulated to the Districts for discussion was, after a lively discussion, carried by a unanimous vote.

The meeting was also unanimously of opinion that the "Customs Journal" should continue to be issued fortnightly as at present, and agreed that the journal should be supplied to retired members on application for same.

On the subject of Revised Instructions, the need for a reprint of these regulations was emphasised, and a strong suggestion was put forward in a resolution that the Revised Instructions should be reprinted and issued at stated intervals not exceeding five years.

Landing and Shipping duties claimed the attention of the meeting, and it was decided that the Association should be instructed to claim for the Waterguard the whole of the Landing and Shipping duties at present performed by the Landing Staff.

Auditors for the District accounts were elected, Messrs. Hills, P.O., and Steadman, A.P.O., being chosen.

The past quarter has been a record one in the matter of subscriptions, and a vote of thanks was tendered to the local organisers for their efforts.

A vote of thanks was also passed to the Chairman, and to those who had come from the outlying districts.

Customs Journal

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LANDING AND SHIPPING.

By "PREVENTIVE OFFICER."

THE interest shown in these columns in the matter of the performance of Landing and Shipping duties is, to the mind of the present writer, a feeling in the right direction.

Least surprise be felt in some quarters by the prospect of agitation to this end, it may be observed that such duties ARE performed by officers of this department, *i.e.*, free goods in bulk, inwards, and highly dutiable goods outwards, the latter as ships' stores, and the work is accomplished with characteristic efficiency. We therefore ask for an extension of responsibilities which have already been conceded, and are included in the ordinary daily routine of the Preventive Officer.

At the moment the present writer is employed on a station where the duties are extremely varied. They range all the way from the issue of pratique to vessels which do not require it (the importance of this work need not be stressed) to taking ships' reports. Amongst Landing and Shipping duties the shipment of explosives is frequent. That the Preventive Staff should be delegated to supervise this work is an indication, not only that the average Preventive Officer is equal to any emergency, but also that when expediency demands it, he is equally capable and efficient as his brother of the Landing Staff.

An incident of a few years ago is worth noting in this matter under review. Two Landing Officers were discussing a difficulty. A Waterguard Officer chancing by was able to advise them, and quoted the precise regulation to cover the point. Incidentally, it may be said that the regulation referred to was of a kind not to be expected in a "Waterguard Code." Mr. Angus has pointed out the need of being conversant with Landing and Shipping regulations. We will not do that by throwing away our Codes for the doubtful blessing of a Waterguard book. If it be true that we have more oil than is necessary for our immediate requirements, it need not be wasted. We can make our light burn more brightly by absorbing more fully from the codes now at our disposal.

The following excerpt from one of them is of interest:—"Promotion by merit is the established rule in the Service, and to every young man who becomes a servant of the Crown in the Civil Service a way is open to independence, and even eminence."

To become eminent, one must specialise. Today, the regulations falling to be carried out by Officers of Customs and Excise are varied in the extreme, and officers of both departments could serve those departments better were all the Landing and Shipping duties delegated to the Preventive Staff.

Rightly or wrongly, Waterguard Officers incline to the opinion that the prospects suggested above are to some extent barred, and it is with the object of helping to accomplish what are considered to be legitimate aspirations on the road to "independence and even eminence" that these views are expressed,

LANDING AND SHIPPING.

By W. M. SHEEHAN.

IT is quite possible that some opportunity now exists for advancing our outstanding claim to Landing and Shipping duties. We are informed that the question of Officer grade recruitment has been the subject of "lively discussions" at the Joint Committee of C. & E. Associations. There appears to be some squabbling over "percentage of vacancies," and, as usual, the C. & E. Federation, ever anxious to foster and display the Whitley spirit, is out again to oppose people with whom they are expected to co-operate. What a mighty giant this C. & E. Federation must be, and how its big noise causes others to quail before it!

To talk of reserving a percentage of vacancies, unless that percentage represents those performing landing and shipping duties, is a thing apart from P.S.A. policy. The policy adopted, and which the Association is bound to pursue, involves a claim to the whole of the landing and shipping duties. During the whole period of my Association activities, which covered a number of years and embraced various Conferences, the idea of standing on the doorstep waiting for a few vacancies never occurred to any of our representatives. We have certainly been hard driven along the road of post-war reconstructions, but surely we are not yet reduced to seeking the crumbs which fall from the table of our more fortunate brothers in the sister department.

When the question of post-war reconstruction was ripe, over six years ago, the mighty giant said to the Waterguard in effect: "Forbear! or I will oppose you." And the Waterguard forbore. Now once again we hear that mandate, but this time it is addressed, not only to the Waterguard, but to other branches of the C. & E., amongst which are a number of mushroom grades with less standing and importance than this department, that seriously pretend prior consideration. Truly we are getting pushed further back with all our forbearance.

Has it ever occurred to the powers-that-be that the Waterguard are seriously entitled to some voice and consideration in the administration of the Customs branch of the Department? The business man utilises the material at his disposal in a way which will ensure the highest degree of economic success. Must we believe that there is no business acumen in Customs administration, or is it possible that the terrible voice of the mighty giant vibrates beyond the Staff Side Committee walls, and strikes terror even into the hearts of our rulers? It would almost seem to be the case, for we are told "it is to be expected that the Federation will oppose the Promotion Board method"! Apparently the Federation will oppose anybody and anything - unless it is the Treasury handing them out more money. Their love for Whitleyism is such that they will even oppose an institution created by Whitleyism! This is surely a cue for our people. Our forbearance in the past has been actuated by a sincere desire to prevent any breach of the etiquette of Whitleyism. We should now proceed with an economic proposition for the acquiring of Landing and Shipping duties. It can be, and should be, done at once. If there be any interference from the mighty giant we must retort: "Forbear! or we will EXPOSE you."

SMALL PORT WORK

By "VAGRHETH"

REGISTRY OF SHIPPING

AT certain small ports the Preventive Officer-in-Charge is also Registrar of Shipping, and "old ports" are generally Registry ports. The duty of a Registrar of Shipping is generally acknowledged to be the most complicated of the work performed by a Preventive Officer-in-Charge. Competence in this work is attained by practice over many years, combined with a first-hand knowledge of Registry law. There are so many different types of transactions in regard to Shipping Registry, so many pitfalls for the unwary officer that, even after years of experience the Registrar performs his duty in this respect with the greatest care. In fact, a wrong entry on the "statutory" side of the Register of Shipping can only be altered in a Court of Law, whilst a mistake beyond anything trivial on the "summary" side of the Register must not be altered without official sanction. The Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1907, contain provisions relating to Ships' Registry, and they are so extensive that, in order to confine myself to the general purpose of these articles, I must only outline those ordinary transactions which will be of interest to students without bringing myself within gun-range of the experts.

Under the Registry law (part I of the M.S.A., 1894, etc.), a ship is not a British ship unless owned by natural-born British subjects, by naturalised British subjects, corporate bodies established under British law in British Dominions, or by persons made denizens by letters of denization, and provided the owners have not taken the oath of allegiance to any foreign power. All British ships shall be registered excepting those not exceeding fifteen tons burden employed solely in navigation on the rivers or coasts of the United Kingdom, or on the rivers or coasts of some British Possession within which the managing owners of the ships are resident.

An application to register a ship must be made by the owner or his agent. If an agent is making the application on behalf of the owner, he must produce an authority from the owner to that effect. As the ship must be surveyed before registry, the owner makes an application for the attendance of a Board of Trade Surveyor for this purpose. This he does on Form Surveys 6, and the Registrar takes a deposit covering the stipulated fee tabulated in the Board of Trade fees book. The amount received is noted on the form, which is then forwarded to the Board of Trade Surveyor for the District. The fee received is brought to account by the Registrar in Schedule 5. When the Surveyor has measured the ship he hands a Certificate of Survey, a Certificate as to crew space, and if the ship is being re-registered, a Certificate of Seaworthiness, to the owner or his agent. Owners often make application for Survey direct to the Board of Trade Surveyor. The owner then forwards the Certificates of Survey

to the Registrar. The proposed name of the vessel must be approved by the Board of Trade, unless the vessel is a yacht belonging to a recognised yacht club and used for pleasure only, or a fishing boat registered under Part IV of the principal Act. The Registrar will examine the Mercantile Navy List to see if the proposed name is given to any other ship. He will then forward an application by the owner (on Form G R 342) to the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen, and, if the name is already registered, giving owner's reasons for requiring name. The application with regard to name must be given at least fourteen days before registry is desired, and the owner is to be informed of the Registrar-General's decision on the matter. If the owner of a yacht claims exemption from marking and approval of name, he must furnish a certificate of membership from the Secretary of a recognised yacht club. In the case of a new vessel, the builder must furnish a certificate giving the description of the ship, to whom the vessel was sold, and the number of sixty-fourth shares in the ship held by the new owners. This certificate must be signed by a partner in the firm of builders. If the owners of the ship applying for registry are not the first owners, the transfer of shares in the vessel from the time she left the builders' hands must be covered by documents of sale or transfer prior to registry. The idea is to record the history of a vessel from the time she was completed until the date of registry. Bills of Sale with regard to any such transactions need not be in the approved form, but the Registrar must be careful to observe that the documents in question accurately describe the vessel, etc. The owners applying for registry must furnish a declaration of ownership in the approved form stating that they own so many shares in the ship and comply with the condition that British ships are owned by British subjects, etc. The declaration must be made before and signed by a Registrar of Shipping, a Justice of the Peace, a Commissioner for Oaths, a British Consular Officer, or some other person authorised to administer oaths by the Commissioners of Oaths Acts, 1889 and 1891.

When all the above documents are in order, and on payment of the appropriate fee (according to tonnage), the ship may be given a number. Every Registrar has so many numbers allocated to his port, and these are recorded in the Official Number Appropriation Book. The Registrar prepares a "Carving Note," showing thereon the name of the ship, the official number, the port of registry, and the registered nett tonnage. The official number and tonnage must be permanently cut in the main beam of the ship, and must be witnessed by a responsible officer. When the Registrar is satisfied that the ship has been "marked," he may proceed with the registry.

(To be continued.)

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.

LANDING AND SHIPPING.

Sir,—As one who has had a very lengthy connection with all that appertains to Association matters, perhaps a suggestion or two would help to clear the ground for building up a more healthy and contented Service, and create a more keen and lively interest in matters which concern our immediate welfare and help the flow of promotion. This can only be done by giving full support to the Association, attending the meetings and ventilating our views, and offering suggestions and criticisms so that a programme stimulated by argument and supported in numbers can be presented. It may be well in passing to recall that the early period of our existence was full of the gravest difficulties, demanding courage and boldness, and any words of tribute to the champions of our cause in those days have been worthily bestowed. To-day, thanks to these pioneers, the Waterguard has been transformed out of all recognition, and through the advent of Whitleyism and the Association we are on the highway to a more contented Service. But there is still a great deal of hard work to be accomplished. The conditions prevailing at the present time, and the opportunities afforded, are, we must admit, a great deal better than they used to be, but they are far short of what is required if we are to make the Waterguard what it has the right to expect and what it ought to be. All sorts of schemes can be suggested, but what I think would go a great way towards solving the difficulties of the situation now and in the future would be to seek new avenues of increased work, and no better outlet could be found than by taking over the examination of Free Goods. A great deal can be said in favour of this, and perhaps an interest may be created in this direction if I stated my reasons for holding that opinion. It is well known to all Waterguard officers that there is little or no difference between free goods and bulk goods, except the wrapper or outside covering. A cargo of grain in bulk is no less grain because it happens to be in bags, and one could go on drawing comparisons which seem so obvious in themselves, but which make all the difference in the world in the matter of examination. While comparisons are odious they are at times necessary, and one has to stress these peculiarities when the right is being denied. Again, from another point of view, who is more admirably fitted than the Waterguard officer for this work? Before a Preventive Officer can take over his duties he serves a very rigid and strenuous number of years, dealing with all sorts of bulk cargoes, gaining an experience which no other department can inculcate to its staff. This is in itself an invaluable asset, and it could be used to advantage by the Service and benefit to the class, and would go a long way in solving the many difficulties arising out of the present state of affairs.

Yours, etc.,
"SCILLY,"

LANDING AND SHIPPING.

Sir,—With reference to the many articles and letters dealing with Landing and Shipping duties that have appeared in your columns recently, the one great point that I fail to understand is, why does the membership of the C. & E. Federation tolerate such a short-sighted policy of dilution of their ranks instead of shedding their minor responsibilities?

There must be some explanation. Can any of your correspondents inform me?

Yours,
"INTERESTED."

Sir,—“ Our little systems have their day;

They have their day and cease to be.”

Is this couplet, one wonders, to be the epitaph of what once was a distinguished and lively branch of the Preventive Staff Association? I refer to a port in the north-west of England—no guessing, please—in which the membership should reach about one hundred and fifty.

But a few years ago large and enthusiastic meetings were regarded as normal. To-day, that is to say on the occasion of the last meeting a few days ago, there were present the District Secretary, District Organiser, Vice-Chairman, and three others. As only one of these was of the P.O. grade, it was impossible to discuss such subjects as Landing and Shipping and examination for promotion to the rank of C.P.O. Incidentally, the money wasted on the rent of meeting-room amounted to approximately thirteen pence per member present.

One wonders why such apathy should prevail. For several months past the important subject has been the domestic one of re-staffing. In this matter we allowed ourselves to be misled by ill-informed and irresponsible rhetoric. We had, so we were led to believe, scored a great victory, whereas the plain truth is that we requested the Board to temporarily postpone the case. This request was granted, and the facts have had to be faced as they exist.

May I quote from “Current Comments” (January 28th)? “At the present moment Waterguard members have every reason to be alive and wide awake. It is up to us to see that nothing occurs to interfere with the trend of events . . . our upward progress. Apathy is the worst thing for clogging Association machinery. Members guilty of this unpleasant attribute are deliberately damaging the prospects of their own colleagues.” *And so also are the non-members.*

Perhaps the grounds for complaint, if indeed these words should be read by any person to whom reference is herein made, may find ventilation in these columns. If so, so much the better.

If members are disappointed in any line of policy, let them alter it. After the end of March officers of the Association are to be elected—Chairman, District Secretary, etc. In the interval, why not develop good ideas, and then select the proper person to carry them out? But please do not give up the ghost.

Yours etc.,
“DUM SPIRO, SPERO.”

THE WATERGUARD AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

Sir,—The amalgamation of the Customs and Excise in 1912 had the effect of abolishing the 1st Class Examining Officers' examination, and also the grade of 2nd class, with salary increased to £300 p. r. annum. This was particularly fortunate for the excise Officer, whose salary at that time went up to £160 as a 2nd Class Officer, but which has now been increased to £450 per annum for all.

Lately the Board have been promoting Departmental Clerks to the Officer grade, on the recommendation of Collectors, which, to say the least, is a very substantial rise for a subordinate grade of very short existence. I would like to suggest to the Hon. Board, for their consideration, that there is a very deserving class in the Waterguard, known sometimes as failed A.P.O.s.

As many of these men were over 40 years of age before being considered for advancement, although they had for years performed all duties required of them in a satisfactory manner as Waterguard officers, and are still regarded as capable and reliable officers, I would venture to suggest that the Board might be pleased to adopt the same attitude as in the case of the clerks recently, by promoting them on satisfactory report from the Collector or Waterguard Superintendent, to a grade known as Preventive Officers II, with a salary of £160 to £200. This would not only be the means of many worthy men making some advancement, but might be termed "cases of real or proved merit."

There appears to be much need for a similar class on all stations, the effect of which would be a saving to the Crown, for acting, subsistence, and occasional overtime incurred under present conditions.

By this arrangement ports and stations might be described as self-contained, i.e., no reliefs, etc., required, and by some local adjustments and a system of grading stations, might eventually mean further saving to the Crown, combined with efficiency, notwithstanding any possible extra duties which might arise as time goes on.

Yours truly,

"OBSERVER."

TO THE MEMBERS, TYNE DISTRICT.

Gentlemen,—On January 25th, at the invitation of the District Secretary, I attended a meeting of the P.S.A. held at North Shields, hoping that there would be a good attendance, and that I would be able to obtain the views of the members regarding the items on the agenda.

Imagine my surprise when I found that only seven members were present!

I think you will agree that our time and the Association's money was wasted.

Now, gentlemen, if you wish me to make the voice of the Tyne heard at the next Conference, I must ask you to attend the meetings and give me your views on the various matters under discussion. Without your help I can do nothing.

Yours faithfully,

W. A. COLWILL.

TO THE A.P.O.s, HULL AREA.

Gentlemen,—I take this opportunity of thanking you for the honour you have accorded me in electing me as your representative on the Council, and to assure you that I will carry out my duties to the best of my ability.

From now on, therefore, my services are at your command, and I hope sincerely that you will make full use of same.

Yours sincerely,

J. SHOOTER.

TO THE ASST. PREVENTIVE OFFICERS, SCOTLAND AND N. IRELAND.

Gentlemen,—Having had the honour of being nominated for the position of Executive Councillor for the Scotland Area, I would respectfully solicit your votes in the forthcoming election.

If elected, I will endeavour to carry out the wishes of the staff in the most expeditious and economic manner. It is my intention to concentrate on the officers who are not stationed in large ports, and to foster and maintain their interest in the Association by a better and more prompt supply of all Association news and activities.

My experience of Association affairs has been limited to Local Secretary and Whitley representative, but members can rest assured that this need not be a drawback. A representative who knows a little and tries a lot would be better than one who knows all but does nothing.

It has been suggested that as I am stationed in the thinly-staffed Northern Ireland, I will stand no chance at an election; but I can rely upon the majority of the Asst. Preventive Officer Grade to give at least fair play to

Yours fraternally,

P. A. RICHARDSON, A.P.O.

Civil Service Dinner

The Civil Service Annual Dinner took place at the Connaught Rooms, London on Friday, February 10th. It was as usual, a most successful function. Speeches were delivered by the Duke of York, Sir Russel Scott and Mr. Winston Churchill. Among the members of the Waterguard Department present were Mr. Valentine (Inspector), Mr. C. E. Egan (C.P.O.), Mr. S. E. Romans (C.P.O.) and Mr. M. P. O'Flynn (P.O.)

The speeches were this year broadcast from Daventry (5 GB)

Changes in the Staff

To February 13th, 1928

Obituary of Superannuated Officers

Hicks, H., Preventive Officer

Massey, F., Preventive Officer

West, H. H., Preventive Officer

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL.

The ninety-first meeting of the Council was held in the Custom House, London, on 25th January, 1928, the Chair being taken by Sir F. L. C. Floud, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

OLD AGE PENSION WORK.

The Official Side stated that there was no likelihood of an early transfer of non-Contributory Pensions work from the Department. As regards the Contributory Pensions work, this would be transferred by a gradual process commencing within the next few months, but there was no danger of any serious upheaval in the pensions work now being performed by officers of the Department for a considerable time to come.

REORGANISATION.

Arising out of the agreement, previously notified, on the staffing of the Statistical Office, the Staff Side called attention to apparent delay in filling certain posts provided for in the new scheme. It was stated that appointments to the substantive posts would be announced immediately, that an appointment to the post of Acting Staff Officer would be made at an early date, and that there had been no avoidable delay.

An Office Committee disagreement on a Staff Side proposal that provision be made for the work of the Principal in the Secretaries' Office, at present on prolonged sick leave, from within the Office, was referred back to enable the Staff Side to raise the broader question as to whether the Office should be self-contained for leave purposes.

PROMOTION.

The Staff Side proposed that at least **50 per cent.** of all existing vacancies and vacancies occurring during the next three years in the basic grade of the Departmental and Treasury Clerical Classes in the Department, occurring in the London offices, which it is the intention of the Board to fill with entrants from open competitive examinations, shall be filled by the promotion of Shorthand Typists and Typists, Writing Assistants (ex-Temporary Clerks), and Writing Assistants who entered by open competition, in the ratio of 3 : 1 : 2, and in that order.

The Official Side undertook to examine the proposal, but pointed out that it involved questions extending beyond the Department. The Staff Side explained that they did not intend their proposal to delay any steps now contemplated in connection with such promotions, but pressed that it should be borne in mind.

With regard to the prospects of promotion from the "P" Class to the Clerical Class, the Official Side stated that they were unable to give any indication at present as to the position. Information would be given simultaneously to the Staff Side and any interested Association not represented thereon when such was available.

DUTIES OF CLERKS.

The Official Side undertook to do everything in their power to expedite further Whitley discussion on this subject.

RECRUITMENT OF OFFICER GRADE.

The Official Side stated that at least thirty more appointments would be made from the last examination list, and this decision did not preclude appointments being made from other sources. Any interested Association could make representations to the Board on the subject, and the Board might delegate the reception of such to any suitable body, e.g., the Promotion Board. If it were decided to fill any posts by promotion the Promotion Board would function in the usual way.

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION.

Further discussion ensued on the question of reopening the 1922 agreement on standards, and the subject was again adjourned.

IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS.

The Council received a schedule of suggestions which had been forwarded to the Board by the Suggestions Committee, with notes of action taken thereon.

OTHER MATTERS.

The Council dealt with a number of other decisions advised by Sectional, Grade, Office and Local Committees, with results that have been communicated to the Committees concerned.

The last meeting of the Council was held on 22nd February, 1928.

PROSECUTIONS.

NORTH SHIELDS.

The discovery of twenty bottles of rum, concealed behind the linings of a berth, by Mr. A. Beck, A.P.O., working under the direction of Mr. E. O. G. Ashford, P.O., led to the appearance of a greaser from the steamer "Cairngowan" at the North Shields Police Court, on February 7th. The offender was fined £8 18s. 1d.

Mr. T. Forth, W.S., conducted the prosecution.

SWANSEA.

At the Swansea Police Court on February 6th, the steward of the Danish steamer "Skaane" was charged with concealing, in a false bottom of a stores locker, twenty-four bottles of brandy (2.88 galls. proof). The concealment was discovered by Mr. Legg, A.P.O., who was on boarding duty with Mr. R. E. Jones, P.O.

Mr. F. Blewitt, C.P.O., prosecuted, and the steward was ordered to pay double value and duty, amounting to £24 4s. 10d., and court costs, or two months' imprisonment.

LIVERPOOL.

At the Dale Street Police Court on February 6th, a pumpman of the tanker "Agwistone," from Curacao, was charged with concealing 1 5/6 galls. of Wine, 1 10/100 gall. Liqueurs, and 22/100 gall. Spirits (Geneva). A fine of £20 was inflicted and paid. The goods were discovered under the donkey boiler above the stokehold by Mr. Longmoor, A.P.O., under the supervision of Mr. C. H. Slade, P.O.

Mr. H. Melross, C.P.O., conducted the prosecution.

GOOLE.

A fireman of the steamer "Harfy," from Antwerp was, on February 4th, fined £28 16s. 4d. under Section 185 of the C.C. Act, 1876, for illegally landing 1.98 proof galls. of Imitation Rum, .30 proof galls. of Geneva, 4 lb. Tobacco (o.s.), 15 oz. of Cigars, and 4 oz. Cigarettes. The fine was paid. The officers concerned in the seizure were Messrs. Hurr, P.O., and Osborne, Loeber and Barrett, A.P.O.s.

The prosecution was conducted by Mr. O'Malley, C.P.O.

At the same court on February 9th, a seaman from the steamer "Nidd," from Antwerp, was fined £8 2s. 8d., under Section 186 of the C.C. Act, for illegally landing and harbouring .78 galls. proof Brandy and 4 oz. Cigars. The fine was paid. The officers concerned were Messrs. J. W. T. Smith, P.O., and H. Collier, A.P.O., Mr. O'Malley, C.P.O., conducting the prosecution.

GLEANINGS FROM THE PAST.

By **DIGGER.**

(Reprinted from the "Customs Journal" of December 31st, 1904.)

THE FIRST FLOATING CUSTOM HOUSE.

A novelty which London has invented to deal with the Worlds' commerce.

The Pool below London Bridge will shortly receive a new and permanent feature.

The Pool itself is generally more busy with foreign shipping than some of the down-river docks. Fleets of galliots come to Billingsgate from the Netherlands; steamers come in every tide from Germany, Belgium, Spain, Holland, France, etc., and the fish carriers to and from the trawling grounds are constantly arriving.

All this means that a large outdoor staff of Customs Officers are kept continually busy. The great building at Lower Thames Street has not the facility to cope with this kind of work, and to meet modern conditions the enterprising officials have conceived the bright idea of having a Custom House floating in the Pool itself.

This office afloat will shortly be towed up river from Edward's shipbuilding yard at Millwall, where it has been constructed, and placed in the river opposite Custom House Quay, to which it will be connected with a bridge 100 feet long.

It is in the shape of a pontoon, and about the offices, which are grouped in the centre of the structure, there is a clear promenade space. It has two decks, and there is a promenade on the upper deck as well. The offices are many, and are fitted with complete requirements and comforts for the superintendent, examining officers, boatmen and watchers.

It will be manned with a night and day staff, and will be greatly to the convenience of vessels frequenting the Pool.

NOTE.—A reliable encyclopedia gives the following definition:—*Harpy-eagle* (*Thrasetus harpyia*), a diurnal bird of prey which inhabits tropical America. It is extremely powerful.

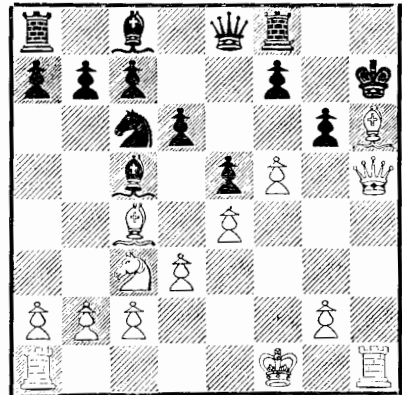
SPORT AND SOCIAL.

CUSTOMS WATERGUARD CHESS CLUB.

PROBLEMS, GAMES, STUDIES, etc.

Problem No. 9.

White to mate in two.



Solution to No. 8.

1. Kt—Q 8.
1. K—Kt 4.
2. Kt—Q B 7.

Cup Contest.

SECTION I.—Round 5: Mr. Hardie, Ayr, lost to Mr. Clark, Weymouth (a).

Round 6: Mr. Clark draws with Mr. Kidman, Liverpool (a).

Final Round: Mr. Hargrove, Eastham, lost to Mr. Hardie.

SECTION II.—Round 3: Mr. Sandford, Newport, lost to Mr. Vigeon, Ridham.

Round 8: Mr. Knight, Sfarpnass, and Mr. Williams, Ayr, draw.

(a) Adjudicated.

ANNUAL GENERAL CONFERENCE.

Will members please note that Rule 5 should be altered to read "The Annual General Conference shall be held during the last month of the season"? Will members therefore submit the names of any members for election as Officers of the Club, or any motions for consideration at the Conference, so as to reach the Hon. Sec. on or before March 13th? The Committee have next season's programme under final consideration, and the number of players comprising sections have been reduced so as to ensure, as far as possible, only one game at a time in this tournament.

LIVERPOOL WATERGUARD SOCIAL CLUB.

"A delightful evening" was the comment at the termination of a smoking concert, held at the Angel Hotel on Thursday, February 16th.

Under the capable Chairmanship of Mr. Atwill, ably assisted by the committee, a programme was arranged which, when rendered by the artistes, was heartily enjoyed.

It was regrettable that, owing to inclement weather, the attendance was not all that could be desired. Our thanks are due to Messrs. Failes, Hughes, Turner, Farmer and Coady, who so ably entertained us, the latter two travelling from Manchester to do so.

A feature of the entertainments arranged by the Social Club is that all officers of Waterguard and friends are welcome, so please, when the next social event is announced, see that you obtain your tickets early to avoid disappointment.

CUP CONTEST.

The Club Cup Contest will be conducted on the knock-out principle, without entrance fee, and is open to ALL members. The Contest is due to commence May 1st, 1928, and all members, new or old, wishing to enter should send in their names and addresses (please note Rule 9 (1)) to Mr. F. G. Boodle, 18, East Cliff, Dover, not later than April 18th 1928.

New Members.—Several new members are joining the Club, and a Section of Beginners is being formed. Officers wishing to join should send their entrance fee of 2/6 and annual subscription of 2/6 to Mr.

R. E. Dudley, P.O., 20, Acre Lane, Carshalton, Surrey, and their names and addresses to the Hon. Sec. Join the Club and become acquainted with your brother officers. Present members not wishing to rejoin should notify the Hon. Sec. as soon as possible. Annual subscriptions are now due, please. There are seven prizes to be won this season, 1928-9.

LONDON SOUTH SIDE SPORTS CLUB.

Arrangements have now been completed for the use of Tilling's Sports Ground for the coming cricket season. The ground is situated adjoining the Sidcup Road, Eltham Road, Lee, S.E., and is a vast improvement on the ground used last year. It is well drained, stands on high ground, and the danger of flooding is not likely to be repeated this year, be the summer ever so bad, which the powers forbid. Facilities are also greatly improved, and there is better seating accommodation, both for watching the matches and for teas. The fixture list is nearly complete, and the members are eagerly looking forward to a highly successful season.

FORTHCOMING FOOTBALL MATCH WITH GRAVESEND.

LONDON.

The date fixed for the match between the London North Side Sports Club and Gravesend is Wednesday, March 14th.

Gravesend colleagues are anxious to know how many of the London staff will take this opportunity of visiting Gravesend, so that arrangements can be made for providing teas. Arrangements with the railway company are being made for cheap party tickets from East Ham to Gravesend on this date. All officers wishing to avail themselves of these facilities should submit their names to the Hon. Sec. as early as possible.

The Club's activities should be strongly supported. With more enthusiasm and less apathy among the members the Club would develop by leaps and bounds. A small band of keen and tireless workers are doing their utmost to extend the Club's activities.

The annual general meeting will be held in April, and it is hoped that all subscriptions will be in the hands of the Treasurer by that date. The cost of a cricket outfit is causing some concern at the moment, and the Secretary would be pleased to hear of a club willing to part with some of its material.

The last dance of the session will be held at the New Harmonic Hall, Plashet Grove, East Ham, on March 9th. Get your tickets early.

DAN'S FORTUNE.

(ANONYMOUS.)

"I made my fortune once," said Dan,
 "A nice little pile for a sailorman,
 Along o' salving a Dago barque
 We picked up once on the edge o' dark,
 The time I was bound from 'Frisco 'ome
 In Clay's old 'ooker Eurynome,
 An' the mess she was in 'ud make you shudder,
 But we rigged 'er up with a jury rudder,
 An' brought 'er 'ome in a beast of a gale,
 Under what could be spared o' the mate's shirt tail;
 An' they treated us 'andsome, so they did,
 For they dished us out a hundred quid,
 Bill an' Ginger, an' Shorty an' me—
 An' that was the end o' that"—said he.

"An' I thought as I'd marry a gal I knowed,
 An' set up shop off o' Redriffe Road,
 An' call it the 'Occidental Bar,'
 Or 'The Sailors' Delight,' or the 'Baltic Bar,'
 With a wonderful of chops an' steaks,
 An' pickled cabbage an' fancy cakes,
 An' the model I'd make o' the 'Eurynome,'
 For to make old shellbacks feel at 'ome,
 An' chaps from Boston to Bombay,
 They'd say, 'If ever you're London way,
 You jus' drop in at Dan's,' they'd say,
 'For the best of grub both cold an' hot
 You'll get it all at Dan's, that's what.'

"But I blowed the lot on a nine days' spree,
 Both ends an' the bight of a jamboree;
 It went in bowlers an' blue serge suits,
 An' stick-up collars an' square-toed boots;
 An' 'orseshoe tipin fit for a king,
 A watch an' drops an' a diamond ring;
 It went in treating a 'undred pals,
 Blouses an' brooches an' fun for the gals,
 Beer an' whiskey an' cheap champagne;
 Drinks for the crowd an' drinks again,
 An' just another afore we go—
 An' where the rest went I dunno.

"But I come to myself 'alfway down Channel
 With an 'ead like lead an' a tongue like flannel,
 An' a down-east mate with a face like a foot,
 Ticklin' my ribs with the toe of 'is boot;
 An' I 'adn't no watch an' I 'adn't no pin,
 An' I 'adn't no tie for to stick one in;
 An' the sharks an' the lubbers you bet they was gay
 A-licking their chops on Ratcliffe 'ighway,
 Over one more fool of a sailorman—
 An' that wa, the end o' that," said Dan.

Customs & Excise Orphans', Widows' & War Memorial Fund

ESTABLISHED 1866



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