

The Customs Journal

No. 623

September 8th, 1928

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.

NIGHT DUTY AND HEALTH.

IN a letter to one of the daily papers a correspondent writes: "One only needs to be ill for a few months to make sure what one would do if one had one's life to live again." He goes on to say that if he had another opportunity he would take a little more notice of the articles by Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane and endeavour to forestall such an illness; an illness, we should imagine, contracted as a result of defying the rules of life.

A keen observer of Waterguard conditions remarked last week that he had noticed the increasing number of members of the Preventive Service who made a practice of studying methods of diet in relation to night duty. We do not know if Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane has made mention of this, but we do know that a large number of our members have found, through bitter experience, that the stomach does not stand the strain of night duty for many years without protesting. Once it commences, the protest is insistent; and if neglected, often gets into a state that is well-nigh incurable. We shudder to think of the number of our people whose lives have been cut short by stomach trouble, and whose latter years have been nothing more or less than continual torture.

On the face of it, it is perfectly natural. Everyone knows that the body gets used to, and needs,

regularity of habits, and especially is this the case in feeding. The Waterguard officer, in most cases, turns night into day every four weeks or so, and in between does his turn of duty alternately by day and evening watches. In the first few years of service the unsuspecting officer, with a young man's healthy appetite and a mind above such things as dietetics, feeds well during the day when on the civilised turns of duty, and feeds well during the night when on night duty. Innocent youth! Your eyes are closed to what lies ahead of you if you persist. We have all treated with lofty disdain the cranks who preached to us during our early days, and expected to be treated just the same—as cranks, and probably it serves us right, too. But the young man will turn the deaf ear to us under the same conditions as we did, at his peril. Many of us have learnt our lesson under the doctor's hands, and are profiting by it.

Let us give just a little advice without going into details of food, beyond the fact that your food should be as simple as possible. When on night duty, take your meals as near as possible to the times they are taken when on day duty. If you must feed at night, feed before midnight, and have no more all night. We know of one who has practically cured himself of gastritis by limiting himself to two meals a day when on night duty, neither of which is taken during the night.

CURRENT COMMENTS

THE chief cause of discontent amongst the rank and file of Civil Servants regarding the reduction in bonus this month is the belief that the Ministry of Labour figures do not truly reflect the actual cost-of-living conditions. In some quarters the opinion has been expressed that the index figure has been deliberately manipulated to the detriment of the wage-earners. It is to the interest of everyone that this idea should be dispelled. What should be kept in mind is that the identical system is still operating which gave us substantial increases in bonus immediately following the Cost-of-Living Agreement in 1920. At that time the whole Service was very well satisfied with the system, and it was considered that the National Staff Side had achieved something worth while. But, even had it been possible to secure a more favourable agreement, the present situation could not have been avoided, because it is the natural outcome of any wage system based upon a fluctuating cost of living.

No responsible official of any Civil Service Association would agree that there is anything dishonest in connection with the cost-of-living figures published by the Ministry of Labour. As a matter of fact, a great deal of the work of compiling the figures is in the hands of people who are themselves affected by the rise and fall of the bonus.

The fact of the matter is that the method adopted for measuring the fluctuations in the cost of living is very rough and ready. It can never be anything else, and there is no doubt that those who took part in the negotiations that led up to the Agreement had no illusions on this point. It would have been mere foolishness to have imagined that any system could be devised for accurately determining the variations in the purchasing power of wages in the different grades of the Service. The bonus system can never be equitable, and must be regarded as a necessary evil arising from the abnormal conditions following the War. From this it can be argued, of course, that the earliest possible opportunity to consolidate should be seized, but there are many things to be thought of before that step is taken. For one thing there must be reasonable evidence that the conditions which brought the bonus into being have quite disappeared. The fact that the existing system, working in a perfectly normal manner, is now causing a steady decline in the bonus is certainly not evidence for this purpose.

Another point for consideration is that the Treasury would almost certainly desire to effect consolidation at a figure considerably less than that operating at the moment, and it is not impossible that new and unfavourable cost-of-living data might be produced in support, based partly upon the present depressed standard of living existing in those industrial areas where unemployment and part-time employment is rife.

There are, indeed, many factors to be considered before coming to any definite conclusion on this subject, and our members would be well advised to loyally support the Civil Service leaders in their efforts at finding a solution to the problem. It can

safely be said that they are only too well aware of the general feeling regarding the bonus, and they are as anxious as the most disgruntled of the lower-paid Civil Servants, to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

One of the lessons to be learned from the operations of the bonus system is that high wages having a comparatively low purchasing power are more satisfactory to the average man than low wages with a comparatively high purchasing power. It would be difficult to give a theoretical explanation for this, but one cannot get beyond the practical fact that a rise in the prices of food and other commodities is generally welcomed for the sole reason that it will result in increased pay, even though such increase is never regarded as quite covering the actual rise in prices.

As has already been said, the bonus is a very unsatisfactory business. The sooner we can get rid of it, without loss to the wage-earners, the better it will be. One of its effects has been the cloaking of the extremely poor wages paid to numerous Civil Servants. The meagreness of the pay becomes more and more apparent as the bonus falls away. As he gets gradually nearer to his bare basic salary, the average Civil Servant begins to realise fully his poverty-stricken condition, and it is no wonder he becomes disgusted.

The right line to take for all Civil Servants, just at this moment, is to give vigorous support to the All-Service Programme of the National Staff Side. A successful campaign to improve wage standards all round is probably the only effective antidote to the existing discontent regarding the bonus.

The issue of G.O. 82 has caused much satisfaction amongst Waterguard Officers. The inclusion of Assistant Preventive Officers as eligible to apply for promotion to the Officer Grade indicates that the representations made by the Association in this matter have received due consideration. The exclusion of Preventive Officers from this opportunity for promotion is probably due to the fact that, with the exception of one or two from the last examination, none of them would be within the prescribed age limit. Inquiries are being made on this point.

It is anticipated that the number of applicants from the A.P.O. Grade will be fairly large, but it is more than likely that preference will be given to suitable officers whose domestic circumstances would enable them to fall in with the conditions of unattached service to which they would be liable for a number of years after entering the Officer Grade.

Another examination for Chief Preventive Officer has come and gone. Out of the large number called, nine have been declared successful. Their names are as follows:—Messrs. A. W. Purdye, A. Thomson, I. Jones, F. J. Lundberg, D. Wilson, R. Connor, G. W. Evernden, W. F. E. Goddard, W. A. Girvan,

All the following Chief Preventive Officers who were recently before the Promotion Board for interview in connection with advancement to the Upper Section, have been successful:—Messrs. P. Keele, A. Feli, J. Thomas, J. C. Burkey, T. E. Hargreaven.

* * * *

It is interesting to note that the Customs and Excise Federation are tackling the problem of re-organisation of the Officer Grade. There is reason to believe that the proposals which are afoot will affect other grades in the Service, including the Waterguard. Developments are awaited with some interest, and members can rest content that the P.S.A. Executive are fully alive to the situation.

* * * *

By the time this issue appears the Headquarters Staff at Beer Lane will be back to normal conditions, and holidays will be a thing of the past. A more than usual amount of correspondence for this time of year has been received at the Association offices during the past week or two. Every effort has been made to avoid undue delay in dealing with this, and members awaiting replies are assured that things are being speeded up as far as possible.

General Order 82/1928

With reference to the above order Preventive Officers within the age limit laid down are notified that they, as well as Assistant Preventive Officers, are eligible to apply for provision to the Officer Grade.
J. Merron, Gen. Sec.

In the absence of the Editor (who is away on leave) I sincerely apologise to those gentlemen whose contributions, intended for this issue of the "Journal" have been unavoidably held over.

P. Spear, Sec.

London North Side Club.

We hear from the Secretary of the North Side Club, Mr. G. H. Clague, that arrangements are well in hand for the coming winter season. Dances have been fixed at the New Harmonic Hall, Plushet Grove, East Ham, the dates being October 5th, November 2nd, December 7th, January 4th, February 1st, March 18th, and April 5th. With pleasant recollections of last season's functions, we are anticipating a joyous time this winter. The Club is hoping to see members of other sections of C. & E. sport at these dances.

The football season opens on September 19th at Hford, when the Grace and Club will be the visitors. Home and away matches will be arranged for alternate Thursdays throughout the season, e.g., Home—September 19th, October 4th and 18th, November 1st, etc.; Away—September 27th, October 11th and 25th, November 8th and 22nd, etc.

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.

THE FAILED A.P.O.

Dear Sir,—It seems that all efforts are stagnant to make the lot of A.P.O.s who have, through various reasons, failed to gain promotion. It is a difficult problem, I admit, and we cannot all be "sergeants," as the private said. No doubt my suggestion will be scorned by many and absolutely refused by the "Powers" that reign. Nothing attempted, nothing gained; so here goes:—As an outlet for promotion, and some consolation to these Officers, i.e., A.P.O.s who are bound to mark time for the rest of their official careers, I venture to suggest a new class is formed, viz., "Coast Preventive Officer." The main duties would be (1) to supervise and assist in guarding the coast; (2) visit and supervise rummage of coasting vessels, etc.; (3) examine cargo books and certify carving notes; (4) instruct C.P.M.s in the regulations; (5) relieve P.O.s from visiting unapproved places for examining passengers' effects, etc.; (6) visit C.P.M.s daily and report to C.P.O., as arranged.

Often a P.O. has to leave his station in order to R. and C.I. a vessel at an unapproved place, and on returning to his neglected station finds vessels awaiting clearance, stores for shipment, etc. Of course, the P.O. clears up the station and it passes "All well" on paper.

Last, but not least, after 20 to 30 years' of meritorious service to be classed as a drone is enough to upset the whole bee-hive.—Yours, etc.,

"MISERERE NOBIS."

ECONOMY.

Sir,—Another odd thing which comes to one's notice, is that in these days of rigid economy, the e should be such a waste of official documents, and of official time in preparing them. Particular reference is made to the wastage of Pratique forms.

For example, we will think of a Port which we will call Caergybi. Here the number of arrivals from the Irish Free State each week is about thirty. Also there may be possibly three other foreign arrivals.

Now in every one of the thirty cases herein noted, the Preventive Officer asks the usual questions—see Code, Vol. iv, Part iv, pages 5/6. If the answers are satisfactory, and *only* in such cases, the Preventive Officer gives a certificate to the following effect:—

"This is to certify that I have examined Mr. R. E. Ply, the master of the vessel 'Wave,' lately arrived from Avoca (or some such place), and that it appears from the verbal answers to the questions put to him that there has not been on board during the voyage any infectious sickness demanding the detention of the vessel, and that she is free to proceed."

Continued on page 187

Customs & Excise Preventive Staff Association

Statement of Accounts. Year ending 31st March, 1928

INCOME.				EXPENDITURE.			
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
<i>Balances brought forward ...</i>				572	14	8	
<i>Amounts received from Districts:—</i>							
LONDON	...	229	0 0				
LIVERPOOL	...	84	0 0				
MANCHESTER	...	42	11 0				
CARDIFF	...	145	0 0				
BRISTOL	...	39	0 0				
PLYMOUTH	...	49	0 0				
SOUTHAMPTON	...	87	19 0				
DOVER	...	46	14 0				
GRAVESEND	...	79	0 0				
GRIMSBY	...	65	3 6				
HULL	...	89	17 5				
HARTLEPOOL	...	57	10 0				
TYNE	...	57	11 0				
LEITH	...	71	0 0				
ABERDEEN	...	48	10 0				
GLASGOW	...	63	0 0				
				1,236	6	11	
				£1,809	1	7	
<i>Affiliation Fees, etc.—</i>							
Civil Service Confedera-				140	16	4	
tion				47	5	0	
C. & E. Joint Committee				13	15	0	
Labour Party (1926) ...							291 16 4
<i>Representatives' Trav. Subs., etc.—</i>							
Council (July, 1927) ...				166	19	8	
Ex. Comm. & W.S. Com-							
mittee				124	11	0	
Dept. Council and Joint							
Committee				36	5	9	
Civil Service Confederation				5	6	5	
Various				2	1	10	
							335 4 8
" Customs Journal " Account				369	15	5	
Rent				57	18	0	
Stationery				20	0	5½	
'Phone				18	7	9	
Typing				14	0	3	
Publications, etc.				13	2	6	
Postages, etc.				12	7	5½	
Sundries				12	1	10	
Office Cleaning, Decoration,							
etc.				11	19	9	
Furniture and Fittings ...				19	13	7	
Heating and Lighting ...				10	3	2	
Bank Charges, Cheque							
Book, etc.				1	6	3	
<i>Honoraria:—</i>							
General Secretary ...				165	0	0	
Organising Secretary ...				60	0	0	
Assistant Secretary ...				60	0	0	
Auditors				2	2	0	
							287 2 0
Total ...				£1,366	10	5	

We have examined the Books and Vouchers of the Association and hereby certify that the foregoing Statement of Accounts, dated the 31st March, 1928, is drawn up to present a correct view of the accounts of the Association as on the 31st March, 1928, as shown by the Books.

(Signed) A. N. LAKE,

G. E. N. CAMBURN, *Auditors.*

J. T. SUTTON, *Organising Sec. and Treasurer.*

Balances carried forward:—

Bank A/c—Midland Bk.	127	13	11			
Cash A/c—Org. & Sec.						
and Treasurer	285	8	7			
General Secretary	6	8	8			
V.E.C. Advance	20	0	0			
Gas Deposit	3	0	0			
				442	11	2
				£1,809	1	7

Summary of Audited District Accounts

for the Year ended 31st March, 1928

INCOME.

District.	Balance Brought Forward.			Subscriptions.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
LONDON	5	10	10	228	6	6	233	17	4
LIVERPOOL	2	9	3½	99	2	6	92	11	7½
MANCHESTER	8	12	11½	37	17	6	46	10	7½
CARDIFF	1	10	0	159	2	0	160	12	0
BRISTOL	0	10	10	39	19	9	40	10	7
PLYMOUTH	—			51	13	6	51	13	6
SOUTHAMPTON	4	8	3½	94	11	6	98	19	9½
DOVER	0	0	4	49	17	6	49	17	10
GRAVESEND	6	1	9	89	19	2	96	0	11
GRIMSBY	0	7	19	68	8	0	68	15	10
HULL	0	6	7	82	8	6	82	15	1
HARTLEPOOL	0	17	5	61	19	0	62	16	5
TYNE	0	2	5½	61	4	0	61	6	5½
LEITH	0	19	11	76	4	0	77	3	11
ABERDEEN	0	11	0	59	1	0	50	12	0
GLASGOW	1	10	1	66	13	6	68	3	7
TOTALS	£33	19	5	£1,308	7	11	£1,342	7	4

EXPENDITURE.

District.	Expenses.			Amount to Gen. Fund.			Balance C/D.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
LONDON	9	9	10	226	0	0	4	7	6	233	17	4
LIVERPOOL	8	11	6½	84	0	0	0	0	1	92	11	7½
MANCHESTER	3	16	6	42	11	0	0	2	11½	46	10	5½
CARDIFF	14	0	9½	145	0	0	4	11	2½	160	12	0
BRISTOL	1	9	0½	39	0	0	0	1	6½	40	10	7
PLYMOUTH	0	11	5½	49	0	0	2	2	0½	51	13	6
SOUTHAMPTON	6	19	11	87	10	0	4	9	10½	98	19	9½
DOVER	3	3	3	46	14	0	0	0	7	49	17	10
GRAVESEND	14	10	5	79	6	0	2	10	6	96	0	11
GRIMSBY	3	1	6½	65	3	6	0	10	9½	68	15	10
HULL	1	15	2	80	17	5	0	2	6	82	15	1
HARTLEPOOL	4	1	1	57	10	0	1	5	4	62	16	5
TYNE	3	9	4½	57	11	0	0	6	1	61	6	5½
LEITH	4	0	4½	71	0	0	2	3	6½	77	3	11
ABERDEEN	1	5	5	48	10	6	0	16	7	50	12	0
GLASGOW	4	12	8	63	0	0	0	10	11	68	3	7
TOTALS	£81	18	4½	£1,236	6	11	£24	2	0½	£1,342	7	4

THE COST-OF-LIVING BONUS.

By J. T. SUTTON.

THE burning topic at the moment in the Service world is the inevitable drop in the bonus consequent upon the percentage figure published by the Ministry of Labour. Once again we hear the outcry for a revision of this system of assessing salaries, and there much talk of stabilisation. The "Fodder basis"—as it has been aptly named—will be discussed at the Trade Union Congress at Swansea this month, a resolution by the National Union of General and Municipal Workers appearing on the Agenda.

Considering the importance of the matter to Civil Servants, it is surprising how few there are who have any idea of the method by which the Ministry of Labour assess this percentage figure. Commenting upon the calculation, the *Ministry of Labour Gazette* says:—

"The result of this calculation (in which the same quantities and, as far as possible, the same qualities of each item are taken in 1926 as in 1914) is to show the *average increase in the cost of maintaining unchanged the pre-war standard of living of working-class families* (i.e., the standard actually prevailing in working-class families before the war, irrespective of whether such standard was adequate or not). Owing to the variations in the amounts of increase in the prices of different commodities it is probable that economies or readjustments in expenditure have been effected in many families, especially in those cases where incomes have not increased so much as prices. On the other hand, it is probable that the standard of living has been raised in some families in which wages have been increased in greater proportion than prices. No allowance is made in the figures for any such alterations in the standard of living, as to which trustworthy statistics are not available."

The items included in the statistics fall into five main groups, viz., Food, Rent, Clothing, Fuel and Light, and other items. In the food group practically every article of food is included, but the most important omission is that of fruit and vegetables (other than potatoes). The explanation given for this omission is that "it is impracticable to include in a series of retail prices index numbers, owing to the wide variations in quality, the reasonable variations in supplies, and the consequent impossibility of obtaining continuous and comparable records of prices." In the opinion of many this explanation is unconvincing. The same conditions apply to articles that are included, and we all appreciate the influence of seasonal variation in the cost of eggs. Having in mind the trouble taken to ascertain the prices ruling for food generally, it would not appear to be difficult to obtain reliable information of the increase in the cost of vegetables and fruit, and it is certain that this increase is considerably higher than most of the items taken into account. According to the *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, "information as to the predominant

retail prices of articles of food is collected at the beginning of each month, by the Managers of Employment Exchanges and Branches, from representative retailers (including Co-operative Societies, large 'multiple' firms and private shopkeepers) conducting a working-class trade. Information is obtained in all towns with a population exceeding 50,000 at the Census of 1911, and in a representative selection of 540 smaller towns and villages distributed throughout the United Kingdom. Altogether 630 towns and villages are reported upon. The total number of retailers applied to is about 5,500 at present (1920), but this is not a full indication of the basis of the returns, as many of these retailers have a number of shops at which identical prices are maintained."

A somewhat similar method of assessing the price ruling for the other items is adopted, and leaving apart the contention upon the basis of the system, it must be admitted that, despite ill-informed criticism to the contrary, the Ministry adopt the best method in the compilation of the statistics. Upon this latter point, the Editor of *The Post* (the organ of the U.P.W.), states that "If you want the serious-minded officials of the Ministry of Labour to laugh, mention in their hearing the 'exposure' of the Ministry's methods"; but it is regrettable that so many Civil Servants appear to be willing to credit their own cloth with "wangling."

It is with the system of "weighting" adopted that the main criticism is directed. The "weights" used are as follows: Food, 7½; Rent (including rates), 2; Clothing, 1½; Fuel and Light, 1; Other items included, ½. The percentage increase ascertained for food is multiplied by 7½, that for Rent by 2, and so on with the other groups; the results are added together, and the total is divided by 12½ (the sum of the multipliers or "weights"). The effect is to obtain the average percentage increase in the cost of maintaining the pre-war standard of living.

It will be seen, therefore, that any fluctuation in the price of foodstuffs is of vital importance to the index figure, and, of course, only those who actually are required to expend three-fifths of their income upon "fodder," feel the full benefit of any reduction. Still, it must not be forgotten that when food, owing to its high price, and high "weighting," was forcing the index figure upwards, the same people were reaping the benefit.

In addition to the undue influence that variation in food prices gives to the percentage figure, the main objection that Civil Servants have to the system is that, being based on a working-class household budget, no account is taken of school fees, doctors' bills, etc., which absorb a large proportion of Civil Servants' expenditure; that no provision is made for the increase in Rent consequent upon decontrolled houses; and that it bulks with the household fraternity those who are obliged to exist in apartments, and would have some little difficulty in persuading landlords that the cost of living had fallen in any great degree.

It must, however, be borne in mind that the Service adopted the Cost-of-Living system with its eyes wide open, and that during the peak year of 1921, when the average index figure was 165, it was considered by all to be a very fine settlement of the bonus problem. It is certain that had there been no

automatic adjustment such as obtained, the Service would have felt a draught during those years when the Geddes Committee was set up, and that unprincipled campaign for reduction of Civil Service expenditure was being waged. It should also be remembered that at that time, we were not slow to talk of "bargains" and "agreements," and although the better paid were hit by the Super Cut, we of the lower classes continued to benefit by the agreement. At the time the agreement was registered, in 1920, the index figure of the Ministry of Labour was the safe guide to the increase of living costs. It still remains so, and it must not be overlooked that the Labour Party and the T.U.C. have failed in an attempt to prove the unreliability of the system.

It is the opinion of many well qualified to speak upon the subject that stabilisation would be a dangerous course to pursue. In the first place it is certain that, bearing in mind the existing tendency for the bonus to fall, the Treasury would want some recompense for the same. Stabilisation at a lower figure, therefore, appears to be the only course unless the Treasury Lords, and those whom they advise, have more generous proclivities than we have yet discovered. Further, we would have no guarantee that in the event of the cost of living actually falling there would not be a demand for reduction of C.S. salaries, and in this connection the Super Cut provides an object lesson that cannot be ignored. Finally, it is still doubtful that the Index Figure will not rise, in which case those who now speak so glibly of stabilisation would be conspicuous by their silence, and there can be no doubt that the mere fact that so many workers are paid in accordance with the percentage figure must have an influence upon it. The interest that "Big Business," as represented by the *Financial Times*, is taking in the T.U.C. resolution upon the subject is in itself significant. To consider stabilisation at the moment when conditions are so unsettled, and when the National Union of Railwaymen, even, is forced to agree to reduced wages, in my opinion, is foolish.

It is, however, consoling to know that important discussions are taking place in Civil Service quarters regarding this vital question of the C/L. Agreement. The Civil Service Confederation have decided to institute an inquiry into the matter from the Service viewpoint. The Executive have instructions to thoroughly cover the whole ground, and authority has been given to incur the heavy expense necessary to ensure that authoritative statistics will be available for use in deciding upon action essential to promote our individual interests. There is no doubt that a good case can be produced on our behalf, and nothing can be gained by precipitate action at the present time. We can rest assured that the best brains in the Service are examining the situation, in order that our interests may be protected and advanced.

Possibly I will be excused for closing this lengthy article upon a parochial note. Previous reductions in the bonus have resulted in certain members deciding to make the Association pay for part of the reduction by dropping out of it, or by getting into arrears with their subscriptions. I appreciate, as a result of practical experience, the hardship in a reduction

of the bonus, and I realise its effect upon many paid less than I am, and frequently with greater responsibilities. I do hope, however, that in their own interests, members will not cease from giving their active and financial support to the Association. These are difficult days, and there will be a hard fight before us if we are to remedy the situation. Unless we have strength and unity in our organisation, we will gain nothing and lose much. We have a moral obligation to our colleagues and to the rest of the Service, and there ought to be no "back-sliding" on the part of any of us that would in anyway prevent our own Association from bearing its full share of the task that confronts the Service.

'Economy'—continued from page 183

There is, of course, an alternative form of certificate, used when there has been infectious sickness, and issued to certify that the danger has passed, and that all and sundry may breathe freely again. There does not appear to be any record of such a certificate being issued to a vessel from the Irish Free State.

What I do not thoroughly understand is the wonderful way in which the Revenue and Public Health regulations have got so absolutely mixed in matters pertaining to the Irish Free State. Perhaps there is something Irish about it.

Endeavouring to elucidate the business, recourse was made to "Lumley's Public Health Acts," a work analogous to, and authoritative as "Highmore." Here it was seen that so much of the Public Health Acts as is necessary for this Department to know is printed in Code, Vol. iv. Looking up "Highmore," on the Irish Free State, it is observed that as far as "Quarantine" is concerned, the whole of Ireland is still part of the United Kingdom, as indeed it is for Aliens administration.

Further, under the Royal Titles Act of 1927, we find that Acts of Parliament passed since that date refer only to Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Act is not retrospective. It follows, therefore, that in those matters which are not included in the rights of a Parliament in Ireland—and *Quarantine* is specifically excluded, the procedure should be precisely the same as that prior to April, 1923.

There was not at any time round about this particular date, nor at any time since, anything done, nor did anything transpire to encourage the idea that in the setting up of the Irish Free State there was a new menace to Public Health, and insisting that vessels from the Irish Free State must bring up for boarding as prescribed in the Code, Vol. iv, Part iv, i.e., Public Health Regulations.

Considering the facts very carefully, it is now urged that we no longer pretend to suspect our Sister Isle as the possible cause of infectious disease. Let us be done with this Public Health restriction, and incidentally, let us economise in official stationery.

Yours faithfully,
R. E. VENEW.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 1928



Back row: W. A. G. Mason (Scotland), T. R. Knightley (Tyne), S. L. D. Ball, E. P. Wherdinghall (South Coast), M. J. Griffiths, J. T. Sutter, (London), J. O'Connor (Gravesend), P. Smart (London), E. L. Sharrock (Gravesend), J. Shooter (Hull & Grimsby), A. E. Farmer (Liverpool). *Front row:* A. W. P. Densley, G. E. N. Griffiths (Wales), R. O. Kewley (Liverpool), W. H. Powell, J. Merron (London), W. G. Thomson (Binger), W. E. Sturding (London), P. W. Howard (Hull & Grimsby), J. Johnston (Scotland), W. A. Colville (Tyne).

Passengers by Air.

With the figures for July before us, one may well ask, what is the Wharfedale doing? During each week of July this year, more than 2,000 people have flown across the Channel. Such a large number of air travellers have never been recorded before. During July nearly 10,000 people flew across, and there is every indication of the August figures being even greater.

People of all ages are taking to the air. Advance bookings at Orly go on, and, indeed, on both sides of the Channel, are higher than ever before. Over the week-end nearly 100 great passenger-carrying air buses are plying to and fro with full loads.

OUR SHORT STORY.

By "GFX"

A journey is, on one of the leading dailies, walking down Fleet Street one day, was bitten by a Civil Servant. Besides incoherent conversation and the occasional remark, "he is a man some are even proud to read of," he finally when the Civil Servant was mentioned.

His editor ultimately had him destroyed.

Moral: Give a dog a bad name, but keep out of his way.