

The Customs Journal

No. 637

March 23rd, 1929

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.

Medals and Ribbons

THE letter we published in the last issue on the subject of decorations, with particular reference to medals of the Great War has brought forth a number of letters from readers who agree or disagree with the writer or who wish to offer some other suggestion. Space is fairly well monopolised in the correspondence column, and it may be difficult to preserve sufficient continuity to sustain the general interest of the subject. Perhaps it would be as well to make some reference here to a matter that is certainly exercising the minds of some of our members who saw active service during the period between 1914 and 1918. Curiously enough, the discussion centres around the wearing of decorations which the holders are perfectly entitled to "put up." We know of nothing to prevent all ex-service men wearing the ribbons corresponding to their medals. What strikes us is that those who want to wear them are waiting for a lead in that direction from those who do not want to wear them. Those who are content to keep their decorations at the bottoms of their collar boxes ask the natural question "Why not 'put 'em up' if they wish to?" One writer suggests that if the whole of the Waterguard officers in London were to make a practice of wearing their ribbons they might form the nucleus of a sort of "Waterguard British Legion," and would like to see May 1st chosen as the first day on which they all displayed their decorations. Another says that ribbons can be purchased and worn by anyone (and quotes recent cases) and that there are more reasons than one for wearing them. Still another rules the whole idea of organised ribbon wearing as absurd

and childish. To tell the honest truth, we are averse to allowing our columns to be used for hard hitting on such a subject as this which, if it leaves a large number cold, certainly appeals to the hearts of others. Some of the medals bring back memories that are sacred. The subject would not take us very far, and wherever it led would not affect the mutual aspirations that bind us together. It is much better to leave the matter in the hands of each individual concerned to do as he thinks best, to follow the dictates of his own common sense as to what he considers correct. There are occasions and ceremonies when it is decidedly the correct thing to wear medals and ribbons, and everybody expects to see them displayed; but as to the rest, surely it is for the individual to decide, and who is going to say him nay? And here we will leave it, and we think our correspondents will agree with us that we are serving the interests of both sides by devoting an editorial to the subject instead of carrying on a discussion that may lead to dissension where no dissension should be.

* * * *

By the way, while on the subject, is it not true that the "Customs' Journal," which celebrates its twenty-fifth birthday in a fortnight's time, and is one of the oldest products of Civil Service journalism, should have a special medal struck in honour of the occasion? After all, through the past quarter of a century the attitude of the "Customs Journal" has always been militant in the interests of the Waterguard Associations.

CURRENT COMMENTS

THIS year's springtime seems to have brought forth a blossom of salary claims. In addition to the Waterguard, the Surveyors and the Officer Grade are putting forward proposals; and it is understood that the Immigration Officers have commenced Whitley negotiations for increase of pay. Let us hope that in due course the fruit will be forthcoming—particularly in our own case. On past occasions we have had to put up with the stones from other people's plums. This time, however, we have an advantage in the fact that *our* soil is not impoverished.

To forecast the result of a salary claim is about as difficult these days as foretelling the outcome of a General Election. In either case some revelation at the critical moment might change the whole course of events. Nevertheless, there are many anxious enquiries as to the chances of success in the Waterguard claim.

It is a peculiar thing regarding these claims that before they come to a head, the noisy section of the claimants are constantly urging precipitate action, but, as soon as action is taken the same individuals become dismal and depressed in talking about possible failure. Through it all the men whose job it is to distinguish substance from the shadow, the solid ground from the quicksand, keep punching steadily ahead.

At the present moment non-members must, if they have any feelings at all, be faced with an awful problem. If they join up for the "duration" and victory is not achieved, what a terrible waste of good money it will have been. On the other hand there is a good chance of success, and in that case the man who has not done his bit will, on pay days, feel something like a "conchy" being presented with a victory medal—perhaps. Non-members would be well advised to pay up and so ensure against such humiliation. But, as these gentlemen do not read the *CUSTOMS JOURNAL* this advice is not likely to be of much use.

In view of the amount of information given in the Journal on numerous occasions as to the Association attitude towards the grievances of the 1923 entrants, one might have been forgiven for thinking that every interested member was fully aware of all the details. It would appear, however, that further repetition of the facts is necessary. A letter in the last issue dealing with the wage grievances of members in this class, calmly states that "no response is forthcoming from the powers that be in Association matters." Now that statement is wholly inaccurate, and it is surprising that so vigorous a writer should have failed to keep in touch with matters which closely affect him.

The truth is that the Association *has* responded, and has produced practical results. A very strenuous fight was made to improve the wage conditions of the 1923 men, and the effort was successful. More-

over, every one of these entrants who were in the Service at the time expressed satisfaction with the increase offered, before the Association accepted on their behalf.

Since that time no regular steps have been taken by the 1923 men to have their case discussed by the Association with a view to further revision of wages. Yet, the proper way to secure such discussion is quite simple. An appropriate resolution placed on the Annual Conference agenda is all that is required. To write ill-informed letters in the Journal is merely beating the air.

Before the 1928 Conference, resolutions were invited in order to have the matter fully thrashed out and so dispose of the erroneous ideas held by many of the officers concerned. It was a fruitless invitation however, and, therefore, the Association leaders determined upon the unusual course of themselves initiating discussion. The 1923 men are well represented on the Council and so the case was gone into very fully. The unanimous decision was that everything possible had been done in the interests of these officers.

"C. T. K." seems to be slightly off the mark in accusing the Association officials of neglect. He should really be thanking them for their active interest. It might also be pointed out that of the four A.P.O.'s on the Executive Committee, two are 1923 entrants.

The interviewing of candidates for promotion to the Officer Grade commenced on Monday, the 18th inst. There were about 19 Waterguard Officers, and a number of Clerical Officers. It is probable that the number of promotions will not exceed 10 or 12. The result of these interviews will be watched for with very great interest by all members of the Preventive Staff.

It is understood that five Chief Preventive Officers, lower-section, have been called for interview in connection with promotion to the upper-section.

There is no news of any "call up" for promotion to lower-section C.P.O., but rumours of all kinds are afloat. Judging from the present popularity of the V.E.S. course of tuition in this connection, there are quite a number of probable candidates who are not letting the grass grow. It is doubtful yet whether the next examination for C.P.O. will be the last under the old system or the first under the new.

The report of the Executive Committee meeting, held on the 6th and 7th March, appears elsewhere in this issue. It will be seen that quite a large amount of work was got through in the two days.

It was reported by the secretaries that the volume of work at Headquarters was growing so large that the Executive would very shortly have to give serious consideration to the position. As a measure of

relief it was decided that the Committee would elect a small number of members to assist in Suggestions Committee work. Nominations for this are to be submitted by the London Branch.

* * * *

On the evening of the 6th inst., a Staff Side meeting of the Waterguard Sectional Committee was held. At this meeting a satisfactory decision was reached as regards the scales of salary to be claimed by all the Waterguard Grades. Having settled this matter it was possible to send forward the necessary references to appear on the agenda of the full Committee. This has now been done, and it is hoped to arrange a meeting with the Official Side at an early date.

* * * *

The Annual Smoking Concert of the Customs and Excise Sports Club, an account of which appears in this issue, had a very large attendance this year. The number of Waterguard Officers present showed a big increase. Two members of the Preventive Staff contributed items to the evening's programme. Mr. W. E. Standing, whose singing is always well appreciated, rendered a good account of himself in spite of his having only just recovered from a sharp attack of flu. Mr. Sid Bennetts did very well with his humorous turns.

It was a very enjoyable evening.

Presentation at Aberdeen

At the Stanley Hotel, Aberdeen, on March 8th, a presentation of an adjustable suit case, pipe and tobacco pouch was made, by his colleagues and friends, to Mr. W. A. Girvan, P.O., who is soon to be promoted to the position of C.P.O. Mr. J. Leith (W.S.) presided, and in a racy speech commenced what was to prove the happiest evening of its kind ever spent by those present.

Excellent speeches were made by Messrs. D. Mackenzie (P.O.), K. Sutherland (A.P.O.), J. Robertson (Offr.), J. Duncan (Offr.), and J. Settle (Wr.).

Excellent speeches were made by many of those present, all testifying to the official worth and personal popularity of the recipient. The presentation was made by Mr. J. A. Houston, P.O., and in his reply Mr. Girvan expressed his regret that promotion meant the severance of many friendships, and was sure he would have to travel far to meet a staff that was as happy and as efficient as those good friends he was soon to leave in Aberdeen.

A first-class Smoking Concert followed and was greatly enjoyed by all. With Mr. J. Pearson, B.A. at the piano, Messrs. J. Robertson, W. Bain, A. Thomson, K. Sutherland, P. Angus, D. Mackenzie and W. A. Whyte contributed materially to the enjoyment of the evening.

In moving a vote of thanks to the Chairman Mr. Angus said that Mr. Leith had much to do with the great success of a very pleasant evening.

Obituary.

Mr. H. ACTESON, C.P.O.

The many friends of Mr. H. Acteson (C.P.O., London), will regret to hear of his death, in a London Hospital, on Friday, February 22nd. Although he had been suffering for some time with an internal disorder, it was not until quite recently that it took a more serious turn, and so rapid was its progress in the later stages, that it was impossible to carry out a projected operation owing to physical weakness.

The remains were laid to rest at Barkingside Church, Essex, on Thursday, February 28th.

We have since received the following letter from Mr. W. H. Acteson, son of our late colleague:—

Dear Sir.—On behalf of my mother, sisters and self, I shall be grateful if you will allow me space in your valuable Journal in which to tender our thanks for the kind expressions of sympathy and the beautiful wreath received from the London Waterguard Officers on the occasion of the death of my father, Mr. H. Acteson, late C.P.O. Royal Albert Docks.

Yours faithfully,
W. H. ACTESON.

The many friends of the late Mr. W. H. Jones will learn with regret of his sudden death on March 12th. He was apparently in his usual health and engaged in boarding a vessel when the illness overtook him. He was immediately removed to the Infirmary, where life was found to be extinct.

The interment took place on Saturday, March 16th, and was of a most impressive character. A considerable number, representative of every branch of the Department were present to pay their last respects to their departed colleague, who had endeared himself to all by his sterling worthiness.

Many friends were present to accompany the cortege to the Northern Cemetery, Hull.

THE CUSTOMS FUND.

NOTICE.

The Annual Meeting of Subscribers to the Customs Annuity and Benevolent Fund, Incorporated, will be held in the Refreshment Club, Custom House, London, E.C.3, on Thursday, the 18th April, 1929, at Five o'clock p.m., in accordance with the provisions of Rule 28; also for the purpose of electing Three Directors and One Auditor in the place of the undermentioned Gentlemen, who, in accordance with the provisions of Rules 20 and 21, go out of office on that day, but are respectively eligible for re-election.

Directors: GEORGE DINGLEY, Esq.
J. H. MACRAE-GIBSON, Esq.
J. S. SUTTON, Esq.

Auditor: CHARLES BROWN, Esq.
H. H. HOLLAND, Secretary.

Customs Fund Office,

H.M. Customs and Excise,

London, E.C.3, 23rd March, 1929.

Preventive Staff Association

Head Office

Thames Chambers,
18, Beer Lane,
London, E.C.8.

Telephone ROYAL 4279

President: *W. G. Thomson*

General Secretary: *J. Merron*

Organising Secretary: *J. T. Sutton*

Assistant Secretary: *W. H. Powell*

Notice to Members.

ELECTION OF ADDITIONAL COUNCILLORS.

Ballot papers in connection with the above election are circulated with this issue of the Journal. Only members of the Preventive Staff Association are eligible to vote.

Full particulars are given on the ballot-paper, and members are requested to ensure that their vote is registered. Every member of the P.S.A. is entitled to vote irrespective of grade or District.

Should further ballot papers be required, they may be obtained from the District Organiser or the undersigned.

For the Executive Committee,
J. T. SUTTON,
Organising Secretary.

Preventive Staff Association.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The Nineteenth meeting of the Executive Committee was held at 10 a.m., on the 6th and 7th March, 1929 at the Association Offices.

Present: Messrs. W. G. Thomson (Chairman), J. Merron, J. T. Sutton, G. W. Grace (Vice W. A. G. Colwill), S. E. D. Ball, A. W. P. Densley, A. E. Farmer, and W. H. Powell (Minute Secretary).

By means of the replies to the circulars on *Deck Cargo Measuring*, the Committee was able to localise the complaints to two or three districts. Detailed consideration of the type of complaints resulted in the recommendation that the question relating to interference by individuals and inadequacy of staff to comply fully with local requirements as to deck cargo measurements be tabled for local discussion. The question of alteration of the method of measuring inaccessible places by introducing specified "standards" is under consideration by the Suggestions Committee.

On the question of *Lanthes and Boats*, the Committee was pleased to learn that a definite programme of yearly replacements had now been approved.

Notice was given that the Annual Meeting of the Civil Service Confederation would be held on the 30th May, 1929.

The Quarterly P.S.A. and "Customs Journal" accounts were adopted and also the detailed report by the Organising Secretary.

Arising on the General Secretary's Report, instructions were given to the representatives on the Departmental Council to support the disagreement from Southampton L.W.C. referring the telephone duties on Sundays.

The increasing volume of work in connection with the Suggestions Committee, consequent on the wholesale revision and reprint of the Codes and Books of Instruction called for some consideration. It was eventually decided that the Executive Committee shall elect a "panel" sub-committee to act in an advisory capacity.

Instructions were given on various suggestions from Members.

The report on *Vocation Education Section* gave indication that good progress was being maintained. The Central Committee is to be advised to launch an intensive campaign in reasonable anticipation of an examination for Preventive Officerships within the next twelve months.

The Secretaries reported on informal discussion given to representatives on the Waterguard with the Official Side. The proposals regarding *Promotion by Merit*, P.O. to C.P.O., were considered and it was decided to lay the position before the Council by means of a circular letter.

WATERGUARD SALARY, etc., CLAIMS.

The draft statement in support of the claim, having been circulated to the members of the Committee, was considered in detail; various amendments were suggested and adopted, and instructions given to representatives in the Waterguard Sectional Committee to seek an early reference.

The Staff Side meeting of the Waterguard Sectional Committee was due to be held on the evening of the 6th March, and instructions were given to the representatives on the following subjects:—

- Appreciation of services of late secretary.
- Promotion, A.P.O. to P.O.
- Promotion, P.O. to C.P.O.
- Abolition of Pocket Journals.
- Medical Examinations.
- Seizure Rewards.
- Change of Titles.
- Salary, etc., Claim.

A report of the W.S. Committee appears elsewhere in this issue.

W. H. POWELL.

LONDON.

A Meeting of the Branch was held on Friday, March 8th, many members being in attendance.

The agenda called for a good deal of discussion, and interest was not lacking. Both in local and general topics the pot was kept boiling throughout the meeting. Mr. J. T. Sutton, the Vice-Chairman of the Local Whitley Committee, certainly required his usual keen manner in dealing with the burning question of Rotation of Duties which, owing to the size of the port, contains many complications. However, satisfaction was registered on all the

main issues, and the Local Whitley representatives' action was accordingly endorsed. Action regarding other local matters, such as Thames Launches and the Upper Coast Station was also approved. A decision to approve the Council's proposal to seek amalgamation with other grades was arrived at, and the Local Secretary was instructed to notify the E.C. accordingly. Great interest was shown in the General Secretary's summary of the Salary Claim which, although it did not contain details, was sufficiently broad to foster a little hope in the heart of the most hardened pessimist. A hearty vote of thanks to the officers responsible for the compilation of the Salary Claim was carried unanimously. Several resolutions dealing with local matters, including locker accommodation, came under other business, and following a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Mr. C. R. Purser, a most interesting meeting came to a close.

LIVERPOOL.

A meeting of the Liverpool Branch was held on the evening of Monday, March 11th, at the Cafe, Moorfields.

The subject of amalgamation with analogous grades was carefully gone into, and the meeting passed a resolution approving the principle of federation.

Office accommodation was discussed. In Liverpool there is much to be made up in this matter. At none of the offices, excepting the new Gladstone Dock office, is there any provision for officers' retiring rooms, and in some cases the floor area falls short of the standard. Advice was given on the preparation of statements on the subject as required by the Office Accommodation instructions.

Mr. Farmer, who had returned from the Executive Meeting, had some interesting information to impart on the subject of the meeting. We were particularly struck by the salary claim and the excellent statement which had been prepared. Our congratulations on the statement are tendered. Mr. Farmer also read a letter on the subject "Promotion to C.P.O. Grade." There was some discussion, and eventually it was decided to appoint a committee to consider and report on the Board's proposal.

ABERDEEN DISTRICT--

The Annual Meeting for the election of District Officers will take place in Aberdeen on April 2nd, at 7.15 p.m. Nominations should be in the hands of the District Secretary by March 30th. Members desirous of having any competent business placed on the agenda should communicate their wishes to Mr. D. Mackenzie, D.S., by March 30th.

GLASGOW--

A District Meeting was held at Mavisbank, on February 28th, with Mr. T. J. McGlennon in the Chair. The attendance, which was good, included members from Greenock, Ardrossan and Clydebank.

The resolution passed at the Conference regarding co-operation with other grades was discussed, and it was decided to support the resolution.

The question of Deck Cargoes was also the subject of discussion, and the District Secretary was

instructed to forward full particulars of the present practice in this District to the General Secretary.

The District Secretary intimated that a scheme of relief for Preventive Officers had been submitted to the Waterguard Superintendent for his consideration, and the staff would be pleased to learn that it had been approved. As this has been a vexed question for a number of years, all previous grievances and difficulties will now be removed.

Several items of local interest were dealt with, and the District Secretary was instructed to submit these to the proper quarter.

The Annual Meeting will be held at Mavisbank on Thursday, April 25th, at 7.30 p.m., when it is hoped that there will be a good turnout of members.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF.

TO MARCH 11th, 1929.

APPOINTMENTS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:--

Baker, H. R., Berry, W. B., Bonnar, J. C.,
Bowen, W. D., Eudge, D. N., Clarke,
G. T., Dinsdale, J. W., Ellis, E.,
Grantan, E. L., Gray, W., Hall, R. D.,
Head, G. W., Jackson, F., Jenkinson,
R. T., Lee, W. J., Martin, C. E., Martin,
W. R., Matthews, R., McIntock, S.,
Middleton, F. E., Robertson, W. P.,
Saunderson, C. H. G. T., Simson, C.,
Smith, J. J. G., Spence, J., Tindale, R. B.

TRANSFERS.

WATERGUARD SUPERINTENDENT:--

2nd class, McLaren, J., unattached, Office of I.G.W., to Swansea.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER:--

Lower Section, Norman, E. R., unattached, Office of I.G.W., to Lerwick, Aberdeen.

PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:--

Booth, R. W., Newcastle to Hull.
Clayson, W. B., Hull to Liverpool.
Maynard, R. H., Shoreham, Brighton to Southampton.

Russell, J. S., Burntisland, Edinburgh to Hull.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:--

Ashington, E. J., Fishguard, Swansea to Gravesend, London.

Burke, P. G. R., Rochester, Dover to London.

Drury, T. J., Glasgow to Hull.

Ford, O. T. G., Swansea to Southampton.

Heaver, P. H., Southampton to Newcastle.

Knox, J., Newcastle to North Shields, Newcastle.

Marley, F. C., West Hartlepool, Sunderland to Hull.

Mayne, R. J., Holyhead, Chester to Liverpool.

McNaught, E. A., Cardiff to Briton Ferry, Cardiff.

Parker, C., Plymouth to London.

Phillips, T. F., Newcastle to Folkstone, Dover.

Scarle, C., Barry Dock, Cardiff to Plymouth.

Smith, A. E. J., Folkstone, Dover to London.

Sutherland, D. T., Eriton Ferry, Cardiff to London.
 Sykes, H. V., Gravesend, London to Rochester, Dover.
 Wood, J. H., Southampton to Hull.
 Wood, R. E., Grangemouth, Edinburgh to Glasgow.
 Worner, F. S., Bristol to Avonmouth, Bristol.

PROMOTIONS.

WATERGUARD SUPERINTENDENT :—

2nd class to 1st class. Gordon, F. E., Swansea to Hull.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER :—

Upper Section to Assistant Inspector (unattached). Sharpe, R., Plymouth to Office of I.G.W.

Lower Section to Upper Section. Fell, A., Lerwick, Aberdeen to Plymouth.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER :—

Lower Section (unattached). Connor, R., Liverpool to Office of I.G.W.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS TO PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Cheyne, E. N., Leith to Burntisland, Edinburgh.

White, P. C., Swansea to Newcastle.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

RETIREMENTS :—

Waterguard Superintendent, 1st class. Johnson, L., Hull.

Preventive Officer. Tooley, E., Boston, Grimsby.

DEATH :—

Chief Preventive Officer, Upper Section. Jessey, G. E., Manchester.

Preventive Officer. Symons, J. F., Southampton.

Assistant Preventive Officer. Roberts, T. M., London.

OTHER CAUSES :—

Finch, S. R., Assistant Preventive Officer, Liverpool (to Tax Clerk, Inland Revenue Department).

VACANCIES.

Chief Preventive Officer, Upper Section, Aberdeen. 13.3.1929.

Preventive Officer, Larne, Belfast. 2.4.1929.
 (An allowance of £35 per annum for performing Long Room work is assigned.)

Preventive Officer, Ipswich. 17.4.1929.

Assistant Preventive Officer, London. 15.4.1929.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNATED OFFICERS.

Moses, T., Chief Preventive Officer.

Stevens, E. P., Preventive Officer, Lower Section.

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 EX-SERVICE A.P.O.

Sir.—What I have regarded as a lost cause has been resuscitated by "C.T.K." in the last issue of the "Customs Journal." It is evident that the "grouse still remains" and is likely to remain so long as indifference is shown to the demands of the ex-Service A.P.Os. Much has been said in the past few years to prove the injustice to these officers, and no one has disputed their rights; sufficient proof in itself of the strength of their arguments.

Those arguments are strong enough without being reiterated, but we have further cause for complaint. We read in "General Orders" from time to time, of the "graciousness" of the heads in allowing Waterguard Officers to compete in examinations for entrance to the Officer and Manipulative grades, but **COMPETITORS MUST BE UNDER THE AGE OF 30.** I ask, is this a deliberate attempt to exclude ex-Service men? I joined H.M. forces in 1914 at the age of 16, and I am now too old to compete. What a farce! Are we always to be so handicapped? If so, the Honourable Board would favour us by letting us know our fate at once.

I have been interested in the glowing tributes paid to "Our Boys" in the journals issued during the war. Isn't it wonderful how soon "our parents" forget?

However, as the Official and Staff Sides seem to have laid the matter aside permanently, I think we ought to assist them to revive it by offering suggestions to "win the peace." I offer a suggestion in the hope that it will start the ball rolling for others. In 1925, to enable us to qualify for the examination, we were allowed to deduct from our ages the number of years spent on active service. As in a previous examination successful candidates had been awarded a "wage-for-age," it would surely not be too much for us to ask for *an increment for each year's active service.* This would help to compensate those (too old at 31), who were on His Majesty's Service for the duration of war, *without bonus.*

Yours etc.,

"W.F.G."

THE FAILED A.P.O.

Sir.—In reply to "The Galloping Major," and many others who have written on the above subject, has not valuable space been wasted in the "Journal" with this nonsense?

While admitting that there are a few cases of real hardship when Assistant Preventive Officers have failed in consequence of some domestic reason (for these gentlemen I feel particularly sorry), the majority have failed without a doubt, for the following reasons:—

Lack of knowledge of the Regulations,
Lack of general interest or zeal, or
Too tired to study.

It may seem blunt to make such a statement, but it nevertheless is true. The truth often is unpleasant.

Those Officers who have failed, but who know themselves that they do their bit to the best of their ability, need not take these remarks to heart. I refer to those who have failed for either or all of the three reasons given above. There are many among the failed who, like some people on the dole, do not want promotion but are willing to live on the efforts of others to get some recompense.

Many suggestions have been put forward, but none have suggested separating the sheep from the goats. As one who is interested in the good officers may I suggest the following:—

Special promotions have existed in the past—they could, in special circumstances, exist to-day.

When examinations are about to be held, the Hon. Board could call upon superior officers for reports on a certain number of failed A.P.Os. and P.Os. should be required to give their opinion of any officer whom he has found to be really good and zealous. The P.Os. know who are the genuine workers who are not the type that thinks mainly of signing on, and signing off.

This would settle the question in one hit, and would give the genuine men some hope. It would keep the interest of many alive and put those that I refer to in their proper class.

Yours etc.,

" PREVENTIVE OFFICER."

EX-SERVICE MEMBERS.

Sir,—With reference to the letter by " C. T. K." published in the last issue of the CUSTOMS JOURNAL, I take exception to some of his remarks, of which I am sure he has been misinformed. He states that his brother entrants prior to 1923 entered with the grateful thanks of the nation, and a living wage to boot; also that the entrance examination now prevailing is much more difficult.

I joined the Service at the beginning of 1921 after a preliminary examination, and after ten months' service on a salary of £2 11s. 8d., during which time I had no overtime, I was then allowed to sit for an examination which was just as difficult as any recently set. Another probationary period of one year followed before I received my commission.

My salary at the present time is only £3 5s., so " C. T. K." can imagine how much I have progressed in eight years.

The entrants who joined in 1923-25 got better conditions than any previous entrants, and have nothing to complain of on that score, but the fact remains that none of us are adequately paid, and the sooner our Association procures for us some measure of responsibility the better. Then our worth might be recognised.

Yours, etc.,

" GREEN HOWARD."

More Election Correspondence

GRIMSBY.

Gentlemen.—The last issue contained a suggestion that this issue would not be complete without a statement from each of the candidates for election to the Council.

I believe that, compared with other Civil Service Associations, we are in a very favourable position or an advance. Our membership is relatively small in comparison with such Departments as the Post Office and the Clerical grade, and therefore, it should be much more possible for us to attain unity and the co-operation of all our members. I strongly advocate co-ordination between Districts, and of co-operation with other Associations whose welfare is linked with our own. Indeed, if we are to advance, such a scheme is an imperative necessity, and should be undertaken at once.

Anyone looking ahead, is bound to foresee that, at the present rate of promotion, a slump is bound to come in a few years' time. I therefore believe that to avoid this, we must widen Waterguard activities wherever practicable, by pressing to the utmost our legitimate claims for the control of Free Goods and of Waterguard attendance at the proposed Air Stations to be established throughout the country.

For the Salary Claim, you all probably know the story of the man who met the wolf at the door, and his wife went out the next morning in a fur coat. Many an A.P.O., when he looks at his salary, and wonders how his wife is to manage, must feel that the wolf is not far off. Well gentlemen, I cannot say she will have the fur coat, but I support our claim because I believe that we are justly entitled to it for the services we have to render.

Trusting to have your support,

I am, Gentlemen, Yours faithfully,

D. R. CRONIN, A.P.O.

HOLYHEAD.

Gentlemen.—Having been nominated as a candidate in the election for the four additional representatives on the P.S.A. Council, can I crave your votes on a promise to do my best to further the interests of our Department? My endeavours in the Social Side, are I think, well known, and as I have had service as a Boy Messenger, and in the fighting forces during 1914-19, also being a pre-war entrant, I claim to have an unbiassed opinion of the post-war entrants' claims, and a reasonable knowledge of smallland large port work.

Thanking you, I am,

Yours, etc.,

W. W. BISHOP, (P.O.)

SWANSEA.

Gentlemen.—Having been nominated to stand for the position of Councillor (P.O. Grade), under the new District scheme, I earnestly solicit your support at the forthcoming election.

My experience of P.S.A. matters is wide and varied, and covers many years, for I have held all District offices, my present being District Organiser (three years).

I am not making any rash promises, but should I be successful at the ballot, I can assure you of my wholehearted support for the general betterment of the Waterguard Officer, and my Association activities greatly increasing, when I shall be delighted.

Tendering my sincere thanks for your generous support,

I am, Yours fraternally,
WALTER J. BOTTEL, (P.O.)

Gentlemen,—In appealing for your support in the forthcoming election of Councillors, I desire to state that since joining the Service I have been actively and almost continually connected with Association affairs, having held the offices of Local and District Secretary, Councillor, Whitley Representative and District Organiser.

My sincere aim throughout has been to improve Waterguard conditions by determined but carefully considered effort and with due regard to both sides—Official and Staff. I am also always willing to support claims for improvement and advancement.

Before concluding, I wish to ask those officers stationed at ports not in the Bristol District, with whom I am acquainted and known, to kindly act as my election agents during this election.

Thanking you, I remain,
Your obedient servant,
ALBERT GRIFFIN (P.O.),
(D.O., Bristol).
Avonmouth,
Bristol.

Gentlemen, Having been nominated for the forthcoming election of additional Councillors, my services are willingly offered to champion the interests of the young school of Waterguard Officers which need further representation on the present Council.

I remain, Gentlemen,
Yours faithfully,
F. G. LOGAN (A.P.O.),
Great Yarmouth.

Gentlemen,—Once again I must take advantage of these columns to solicit your votes in the forthcoming election for Additional Councillors.

As I stated quite recently in this Journal (during the election in the Gravesend and Harwich area), I have no special cause to champion except to improve the conditions of the Waterguard generally.

Should I be elected, I promise faithful service to all.

I am, Gentlemen,
Yours faithfully,
C. A. TIMBY (A.P.O.).

Customs and Excise Sports Club.

ANNUAL SMOKING CONCERT.

The Annual Smoker was held on Friday the 15th inst. at the Cannon Street Hotel, when about 130 members and visitors were present under the chairman-ship of the Chairman of the Club, Mr. A. J. Dyke, C.L., C.B.E., who was supported by

the Vice-Chairman, Mr. F. G. H. Tate, Messrs. J. Ritchie, T. Jameson, W. J. Haines, O.B.E., C. E. Fitzroy, C. V. Walker, Surg.-Commander W. K. Hopkins, O.B.E., R.N. (retired), Dr. W. J. Galt, Messrs. W. J. L'Amie, J. S. Sutton, E. S. Bertenshaw, and others.

Among the members of the Waterguard Department present, were Mr. J. G. Fitzsimons (Deputy I.G.), Mr. E. W. Jones (W.S.), Mr. F. C. Warne (W.S.) and a good number of the London staff.

In the excellent programme arranged by Mr. R. W. Soffley and his committee it would be unfair to select any number for special praise. Suffice it to say that the several John Peels who achieved lyric fame in Mr. Woodford's topical budget thoroughly enjoyed the sallies at their activities—or inactivities. And the spontaneous impromptuism of another artist led one to think that he had missed his calling.

During the evening the Chairman made presentation of the Sir Horace Hamilton Cup and replica (presented by C. B. Grylls, Esq., C.B., C.B.E.) to Mr. H. A. Mather, and briefly referred to the record of the Club in Civil Service sport during 1928, a record of which they might be proud. Reference was also made to the publication during the year of the C. & E. Sports Club Magazine under the Editorship of Mr. W. H. Powell, of H.M. Customs and Excise Waterguard.

The proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chairman, accorded with full musical honours, and the National Anthem.

Civil Service Dramatic Society

It is one of the chief functions of a company of actors to convey their audience right into the scenes which they are presenting, and the degree of success depends upon their ability to faithfully portray the characters and types they are representing. Everybody who makes a practice of attending the theatre knows that this success is often wanting, simply because there is an air of unreality in interpretation which often leaves us with a sense of something wanting and sends us away disappointed.

The cast which presented "The Last of Mrs. Cheyney" on March 11th and 12th, at the New Scala Theatre, certainly did not fall under this latter category, for this delightful comedy, given by the Civil Service Dramatic Society, was given with a faithfulness to detail and expression that would have done credit to many a company of professionals. The parts had been allotted with a degree of care that was amply repaid by the success of the production. I was particularly struck by the manner in which the players were able to "hold" the audience, especially in the love scene between Lord Dilling (Blake J. C. Greenwood) and Mrs. Cheyney (Joan Crisp). The relief from tension at the close of this episode was decidedly audible. Charles (Henry Hewatson), a gentleman crook in Mrs. Cheyney's service as butler, was very convincing. Indeed, it would be extremely difficult to improve upon any single member of the cast, and the C.S. Dramatic Society is to be congratulated upon its ability to stage a company capable of performing work of such a high order.

Cost of Living Bonus.

For a long time past there has been serious discontent with the Cost of Living Bonus in the Civil Service.

The present Cost of Living Settlement gives to Civil Servants full compensation only on the first £91 5s. of salary. On salary between £91 5s. and £200 it gives only one-half compensation; on salary above £200 one-third compensation or less.

When the Cost of Living Agreement was signed in 1920, it was recognised that less than justice was being done to the Staff, but this was justified on the ground that it was necessary, while the country was recovering from the War, that each section of the community, including Civil Servants, should be prepared to make sacrifices.

At the time when the agreement was signed, however, it was assumed that one of two things would happen within a reasonable period of time—either (a) prices would gradually revert to pre-war levels, or (b) Civil Service remuneration would be put upon a new post-war basis.

If prices had reverted to pre-war level, we should now be receiving the full purchasing power represented by our basic scales. If, alternatively, Civil Service wages had been put upon a post-war basis, the claim for the restoration of the purchasing power of our basic scales, would undoubtedly have been pressed in connection with this re-assessment.

Neither of these things has happened. The result is that a sacrifice which was intended to be temporary is, in effect, becoming a permanent sacrifice, and the purchasing power of the scales of many grades is lower than pre-war.

Last September, the Staff Side of the National Council succeeded in securing the setting up of a Cost of Living Review Committee of the National Council.

To this Committee the Staff Side took the following programme:

- (1) No September drop.
- (2) No subsequent drop for Civil Servants getting less than £3 10s. a week inclusive.
- (3) An improvement in the percentage of compensation beyond the £91 5s. point.
- (4) Restoration of the Super Cut.

This programme, which was a just and reasonable programme, was rejected by the Official Side of the Review Committee. The utmost that the Official Side were prepared to do was to even out the incidence of Bonus as between one six months and another; they were not prepared to effect general improvements in the nature of the Cost of Living Settlement itself.

Stabilisation of the present Bonus was not a thing that could be accepted by the Civil Service without the gravest prejudice to the question of consolidation which, sooner or later, will have to be faced. What was, and is, necessary is a new and better Cost of Living Settlement. Accordingly, it was decided to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to receive a deputation.

But it is idle to expect the Chancellor of the Exchequer to spend large sums of money necessary to effect reasonable improvements in the Cost of Living Settlement merely because the Staff Side asks him to do so. It is necessary that the Chancellor should be convinced of the discontent of the Civil Service with the present Bonus and its determination to secure a more adequate settlement.

Unless the Government can be brought to realise how strong is the feeling of the average Civil Servant, there is little hope of being able to make a serious impression upon the Government.

In these circumstances, the Civil Service Confederation has decided to convene an *All Grades Demonstration of Civil Servants* for the *Albert Hall*. The purpose of this meeting will be to make plain to the Government how strong is Service feeling on this issue, and to strengthen the hands of the deputation from the Staff Side which the Chancellor has been asked to receive.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that it will be fatal to the interests of the Service, having made a claim for a new Cost of Living Settlement, to allow that claim to be brushed aside as it has been. To accept this position would be not only to acquiesce in the present inadequate compensation for the rise in prices, but to cripple the hands of the Staff in the consolidation negotiations which, sooner or later, must take place.

The drop in the remuneration last September has been restored by the March rise, but a further drop in September is probable and it is necessary not only to prevent this but to force a new and more just Cost of Living Agreement.

We appeal, therefore, to all Civil Servants to rally to the Albert Hall Meeting on THURSDAY, the 11th APRIL, 1929.

Distress in the Coalfields.

Long Room,
Custom House, E.C.3.

25th February, 1929.

Up to date £750 have been forwarded to the Lord Mayor's Fund as a result of the Customs and Excise appeal. A cheque for £20 5s. 9d. has also been forwarded through the London Committee to the Outram Press Fund in respect of collections in certain Scottish areas.

These amounts do not represent the whole of the Customs and Excise January and February contributions as a large number of lists remain outstanding, and in the case of Scotland many of the areas are making contribution direct to local funds.

H. WESTON WELLS,
Hon. Secretary,
Avonmouth,
Bristol.

Waterguard Sectional Committee

STAFF SIDE.

A meeting of the Staff Side took place at the Preventive Staff Association Offices, London, on the evening of the 6th March, 1929.

Representatives present:—

W. *Supts. and Insptrs. Assn.*, Mr. C. F. Stuart; *C.P.O. Assn.*, Mr. A. Woffenden; *Launch Service Assn.*, Mr. R. G. Jones and Mr. Nightingale; *Preventive Staff Assn.*, Messrs. J. Merron (Chairman), J. T. Sutton, S. E. D. Ball, A. W. P. Densley and W. H. Powell (Secretary).

A Joint Meeting (with the Official Side) has not been held since the last Staff Side meeting, therefore, there is nothing to add to the previous report on many of the items.

The discussion on the Official Side proposals re Seizure Rewards was adjourned pending the compilation of certain statistics—it is understood that they should be available at the next meeting.

The P.S.A. representatives obtained adjournment of the question of Promotion by Merit, P.O. to C.P.O., in order that further instructions could be sought.

Under "Correspondence" consideration was given to a letter from the Official Side referring to an application from a Waterguard Superintendent asking to be allowed to extend his services eleven days beyond the three months period permitted under the agreement in order to complete another pensionable year. Whilst sympathetic regard was taken of the peculiar circumstances of the case, the Staff Side could not agree to depart from policy already laid down. Enquiries are to be made and the meeting will then consider other means of remedying the situation.

Several items of new business were introduced—

FROM THE LAUNCH SERVICE ASSOCIATION

- (i) Proposals for re-grading Launch Service ratings.
- (ii) Proposal that vacancies in the established grades be filled without undue delay, by the next senior man on turn for promotion.
- (iii) Proposal that unestablished service, prior to promotion to established rank, should count towards pensionable period.

The discussion on the above proposals disclosed the fact that the grade of Steersman-Deckhand had been introduced into the Launch Service without Whitley discussion. The Staff Side expressed regret at not having been notified earlier of this situation.

The Secretary was instructed to seek the references.

FROM THE W. SUPTS. and INSPTRS. ASSN.

Proposal to seek reinstatement (with retrospective effect) of the pensionable emoluments previously appertaining to the rank of W. Supt. London. After some discussion, the item was adjourned in order that further facts could be obtained before the reference is sought.

FROM W.S. & 1. ASSN., C.P.O. ASSN., & P.S. ASSN.

- (i) Proposals for the revision of Waterguard Salary Scales.

The Secretary was instructed to seek the reference.

FROM THE P.S. ASSOCIATION.

- (i) Proposals for the revision of Waterguard hours of Service.
- (ii) Proposals for the revision of Waterguard overtime rates.

The Secretary was instructed to seek the references.

An early meeting with the Official Side is being pressed for, and the agenda of that meeting will be very heavy. In addition to old business, nine references have been obtained as the result of the last Staff Side meeting and six others have now to be sought.

W. H. POWELL.

Prince George's New Career

Prince George and Mr. Baldwin were the principal guests at the Annual Dinner of his Majesty's Civil Service at the Connaught Rooms on March 18th. Sir Warren Fisher, Secretary to the Treasury, was in the chair, and over 500 Civil servants attended.

Mr. Baldwin read the official announcement of the retirement of Prince George from active participation in the work of the Royal Navy and his attachment to the Foreign Office, and added:— "This is a particularly auspicious occasion for me to make an announcement that gives me, and I am sure the Civil Service as a whole, great pleasure. His Royal Highness Prince George will shortly take up at the Foreign Office his new interests and activities in which we all wish him enjoyment and success. I feel sure that the Service will desire to take this opportunity of joining me in welcoming him as a colleague."

The Chairman read the following message which had been sent to the King at Bognor:—"All grades of your Majesty's Civil Service represented at the Annual Dinner desire, with a dutiful profession of their devotion and loyalty, to express their joy at the sure and steady re-establishment of your Majesty's health. We welcome the presence in our midst to-night of Prince George with special gratification inasmuch as his Royal Highness is to be closely and actively associated with your Majesty's Civil Service."

The following reply had been received from the King's private secretary:—"I am commanded to express to all grades of the Civil Service represented at their Annual Dinner the King's sincere thanks for their touching references to his Majesty's gradual progress towards recovery. It is a source of gratification to the King that Prince George should be among them this evening. The King is glad to think that one of his sons is about to assume an active part in their life and feels sure that Prince George will derive both happiness and benefit from his association with this great Service."—*The Times*, March 19th, 1929.

Customs and Excise Departmental Council.

The 103rd Meeting of the Council was held in the Custom House, London, on 20th February, 1929, the Chair being taken by Sir F. L. C. Floud, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

PROMOTION.

The Staff Side developed a case for the appointment to the Clerical Class of all "P" Class Clerks now serving in the Department. The Official Side noted the points made and undertook to utilise as far as possible any opportunity available for making such appointments, but stated that the treatment of the whole subject was not within the scope of Departmental discussions.

With regard to the batch of such appointments forming the subject of a previous announcement, it was stated that the interviews would shortly take place, and consideration would be given to the possibility of increasing the number.

The Staff Side intimated their readiness to proceed with the committee investigation of the question of extending certain panels of the Promotion Board for purposes of "mass selections."

On the adjourned Staff Side motion for a Special Committee on the question of promotion of the Clerical and Allied Classes, the Official Side expressed their views in detail on the schedule of items previously presented by the Staff Side. In their opinion no useful object would be served by the comprehensive survey proposed, but they were willing to refer to a Committee certain matters relative to promotion from the Clerical Classes to the Officer Grade. After discussion, the question was re-adjourned.

In response to enquiry, it was stated that notices calling on candidates for interview for promotion to the Officer Grade would be sent out very shortly.

"ACTING" POSTS and SUPERANNUATION.

The Staff Side now withdrew their motion, adjourned from September, 1928, as to counting for pension purposes the "acting" service of certain Higher Clerical Officers, the point sought for having been secured through an agreement on the National Council.

RETIRING AGE.

It was agreed:—

1. That Established members of the Treasury Clerical Class, Writing Assistant and Typing Grades will normally be retired on attaining the age of 61.

2. Higher Clerical Officers, Chief Superintendents and Superintendents of Typists who on reaching the age of 61 have not completed 40 years' service may be allowed to complete an uncompleted year of service.

3. A Clerical Officer, Shorthand-Typist, Typist or Writing Assistant who has not completed 40 years' pensionable service when he or she attains

the age of 61 may be allowed to remain in the service, provided that his or her health and efficiency continue to be such as to enable him or her to perform all the duties of the grade, until either he or she completes 40 years' pensionable service or attains the age of 65, whichever is the earlier.

4. Unestablished members of the Clerical Class will normally be allowed to remain in the Service provided that their health and efficiency continue to be such as to enable them to perform all the duties of their grade, until they attain the age of 65.

5. These arrangements do not affect—

(1) the general powers of the Board,

(a) to call upon any official to retire at any time after reaching the age of 60, or

(b) to retain any official, with his consent, beyond the prescribed age of retirement; or

(2) the existing rights of officials to apply for retirement on reaching the age of 60.

UNITS OF WORK.

On the report of the appropriate committee a unit for Betting Duty work was agreed to, and has been notified to the Staffs concerned.

REMOVAL EXPENSES.

The Council adjourned *sine die* the question of the rates applicable to "P" Class Clerks transferred on promotion, on the understanding that should a case arise no adverse decision would be given without the matter being re-introduced to the agenda.

ALLOWANCES.

It was agreed that, as a personal concession to present holders only, the 3s. weekly allowances to Unestablished Messengers for supervising cleaning work should be continued during absence on leave and considered when assessing sick pay, but that no further allowance would be paid to any officiator during the holder's absence on private leave or paid sick leave.

OTHER MATTERS.

The Official Side stated that further representations had been made, as promised, to the Inland Revenue authorities on the subject of income tax deductions, but that no reply had yet been received.

Arising from the consideration of a Local Committee discussion, the Official Side stated that there was no intention of interfering with the understanding already reached in regard to the hours of attendance of Warehouse Officers in London Port during the winter months.

The question of discussing District schemes in Local Committees was re-adjourned.

A number of decisions reported by Local, Office, and Grade Committees were dealt with by the Council, with results that have been communicated to the Committees concerned.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on 20th March, 1929.

[We regret the delay in publishing the above report. The reason was given in the last issue. E.L.]

