

New York, N.Y., July 9th, 1901.

To the Officers of the Revenue Cutter Service,

Gentlemen:

An informal meeting of the officers of the Service on duty in this city and the vicinity was held on board the U.S.S. Manhattan on May 13, 1901, to discuss the best methods of promoting the legitimate interests of the Service before the next session of Congress. Officers from the cutters Gresham, Dexter and Dallas, which vessels were in port, were invited to be present. After considerable general discussion a committee was appointed consisting of one officer from each grade of the Service and one retired officer to consider thoroughly the whole subject and make report thereon.

After consultation with those who in the past have so earnestly given their best efforts to effect the passage of the bill before Congress last session and who are best informed on all matters pertaining thereto, this committee have the following to submit:

That a bill be presented before the next session of Congress substantially the same as the bill advocated last year with the following exceptions:-

(1.) At the end of Section 4 (old bill) is inserted,

"Provided that whenever forces of the Navy and Revenue Cutter Service shall be serving together, pursuant to law, the officers of the Revenue Cutter Service shall rank as follows, captains with and next after lieutenant commanders in the Navy; first lieutenants with and next after lieutenants in the Navy; second lieutenants with and next after lieutenants (junior grade) in the Navy; third lieutenants with and next after ensigns in the Navy."

(2.) Section 7 is entirely omitted, as are also sections 17, 18 and 19.

(3.) Section 23 is altered to read as follows:-

"That all officers borne upon the retired or waiting orders list shall receive seventy-five per centum of the duty pay, salary and increase of the rank upon which they are retired."

(4.) Section 24 is entirely omitted.

These minor changes, which affect none of the material benefits carried by the bill, will, it is hoped, remove the strong naval opposition it experienced and improve the lot of our officers on the retired list.

At this stage the committee is informed by those best posted in legislative matters by long personal experience on behalf of the Service that they deem it absolutely essential to have a fund available, prior to December 1st, 1901, to promote the legitimate interests of the Service in the matter of employing counsel, etc.; in this view we unanimously agree with them.

We consider that an assessment should be made of \$250.00 for each officer on the active list and of \$125.00 for each officer on

the waiting orders list. This is not large when the benefits, pecuniary and otherwise, to be derived, should the bill pass, are considered. An assessment was necessary to secure the meagre legislation of 1895. It is not thought any favorable issue will be arrived at this year without this fund. Our bill has many friends and was given last year wider publicity than ever before; we most earnestly urge each officer to make a determined effort by every means in his power to raise this assessment promptly. Pledges to pay at a later time or after the passage of the bill will not do. No better investment can be made even if the money must be borrowed at a temporary disadvantage and inconvenience. We are informed that certain officers of the Service stood ready last year (without waiting for concerted action from all hands) to make up a smaller fund than the one now contemplated, for what was then thought the need, nor is there any doubt that the pledges so assured were largely instrumental in advancing our bill to the notice it finally obtained. We can further assure you that when the bill is brought up again these pledges will have to be renewed on a broader basis and no means will be so potent as the actual knowledge of a reserve fund of cash (not promises), obtainable contingent on success.

After our representatives have exhausted every resource of interest and obligation; every argument of justice, reward and right, they, and this committee, have come to the business like conclusion that a fund must be available to promote the legitimate interests of the Service. None of this fund, aside from a few hundred dollars for contingent expenses (probably \$1000.00 at the outside), is to be disbursed to promote the legitimate interests of the Service until such measures as secure said interests become a law; though should, say, one half of the benefits be secured financial compensation would be expected in proportion thereto. Should we meet with failure the fund (less contingent expenses) will at once be returned pro rata to subscribers. It is thought best that this fund be deposited in bank subject to the check and disbursement of a financial committee of officers.

We propose Capt. Robert M. Clark, Lieut. Percy H. Brereton and Chief Eng'r George C. De Reamer (retired) for members of such committee without whose joint signatures no check shall be drawn. You are requested to notify this committee, through its secretary, at your earliest convenience, if it is your intention to subscribe to this fund promptly, in the amount indicated, to assist in this renewed effort to pass the bill so long pending before Congress. Further action is dependent upon the number of favorable replies received.

By order of the Committee,

W. W. Joynes, 2nd Lt., R.C.S.,

Secretary.