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SENATE.

} REPORT
No. 96.

COMPENSATION OF ASSISTANT APPRAISERS OF MERCHANDISE.

JANUARY 29, 1916.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. HUGHES, from the Committee on Finance, submitted the following
REPORT.

[To accompany S. 2730.]

The Committee on Finance, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2730) to fix the compensation of assistant appraisers of merchandise, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report thereon with a recommendation that it do pass.

A letter from the Secretary of the Treasury is attached hereto and made a part hereof, Senate bill 6680, referred to in the Secretary's letter, being an exact duplicate of S. 2730, to which this report relates.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, January 28, 1915.

The CHAIRMAN COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,
United States Senate.

SIR: I have to acknowledge the receipt of your committee's request, dated the 7th instant, for a report on the merits of a bill (S. 6680) to fix the compensation of assistant appraisers of merchandise, and for other purposes.

The said bill provides that assistant appraisers of merchandise shall hereafter receive a compensation fixed by the Secretary of the Treasury, not to exceed the sum of \$4,000 per annum, and shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury in accordance with the provisions of the act of Congress approved June 16, 1883.

There are at the present time 18 assistant appraisers of merchandise in the customs service, 3 of whom are designated as deputy appraisers and receive a compensation of \$4,000 per annum and 15 of whom receive compensations of from \$2,000 to \$3,500 per annum. The said bill will not, therefore, require any increased compensations to be paid to such assistant appraisers. The duties required of assistant appraisers are exceedingly technical, involving as they do the supervision of employees engaged in passing upon the values and dutiable classification of imported merchandise, the performance of which work requires extensive technical knowledge of the composition, use, manufacturing processes, and cost of production of imported merchandise and the varying conditions of foreign markets. They should, therefore, be appointed because of their technical knowledge of such matters and their demonstrated ability to supervise the performance of such work, which in the department's opinion can

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best be acquired by actual experience in the performance of the duties of examiners of merchandise, who are appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury under the civil-service rules. This can best be accomplished by placing such assistant appraisers within the classified civil service, as is provided for in the said bill.

Moreover, such assistant appraisers are subordinates of the appraisers of merchandise at the ports at which they are stationed, and their appointment in the same manner as the appraisers of merchandise does not tend to the maintenance of the efficiency that is essential to good administration.

At a conference of appraisers of merchandise held in July, 1914, a resolution was introduced by the appraiser at the port of New York, and unanimously adopted, recommending that all assistant appraisers be placed within the classified civil service.

I am of the opinion that the enactment of the said bill will increase the efficiency of the customs service and that it should, therefore, be passed.

Respectfully,

W. G. McADOO, *Secretary.*

