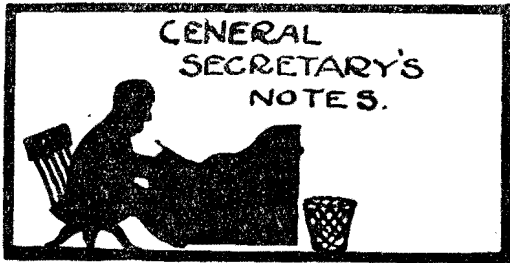


The Customs Journal.

No. 586.

April 9th, 1927.

Fortnightly.



Communications relative to this column should be addressed to Mr. J. Merron, 167, Clive Road, West Dulwich, London, S.E.21.

The publication of Exchequer returns showing a substantial deficit in the national balance sheet has provided a fresh occasion for hysteria on the part of the public Press. As usual, this takes the form of venomous and indiscriminate attack upon the Civil Service. Some of the leading dailies seem absolutely incapable of sound and sane expression of opinion on this subject.

Not so long ago the Civil Service Defence Committee were successful to a very great extent in silencing these purveyors of inaccurate information. They could not have thus succeeded against so powerful an adversary had they not been well armed with truth with which to demolish falsehood. Their success positively proved that the Press could not substantiate the numerous charges constantly being made regarding the Civil Service.

Yet, here they are again, unable to forego the opportunity presented by the disturbing financial situation, making attempts to play upon the feelings of a discontented public by laying the blame for the whole business at the door of the Civil Service. Cunning advantage is taken of that human failing which, at a moment like this, makes people only too apt to accept without examination any ready-made scapegoat upon which to vent their feelings.

References to "unwanted departments," "swollen bureaucracies," and "superfluous staffs" are now broadcast in those same newspapers which during the recent influenza epidemic were guilty of panicky urgings to the Government to set up a new scientific department for the special purpose of inquiring into the causes of these epidemics, and the possibility of preventing them. There is not the slightest doubt that had their suggestions been adopted, the new department would have been an additional excuse for the war-cry "squandermania." There is nothing resembling logic in

the utterances of these irresponsible news-mongers, and there is not one amongst them who would risk a reduction of "net sales" by stating boldly and specifically which of the Civil Service Departments really can in their opinion be abolished—the repercussions would be much too inconvenient.

It would not be a bad idea for the Government to appoint a special committee to inquire into the effect upon industry of Press propaganda. A very influential section of the newspaper world pursues a policy that undoubtedly has a bad moral effect upon the community. Continuous misrepresentation of the truth, no matter what are the excuses for it, can have no other effect. The danger of this pernicious influence is well illustrated in the evidence, provided by a recent House of Lords discussion on the Civil Service, that even prominent politicians and leaders of industry rely upon newspapers for their information. This being the case, it is not a bit of wonder that the country's industrial affairs are in a bad state. That they are in this condition is due to the incorrigible insincerity and mischief-making practices of modern newspapers.

A typical instance of this insincerity is the common charge that the cost of the Civil Service is the cause of high taxation. This charge has been proved over and over again to be definitely untrue. It is also stated that high taxation is strangling industry, and it has been stated so often that industrial people have come to believe it—much to their own detriment. Yet, this also has been proved to be without foundation. Press writers must be fully aware of the true facts in both these cases, but, the mis-statements continue.

The recent Report of the Colwyn Committee on National Debt and Taxation dealt with the effect that present taxation has upon industry. It is quite understandable that the Press has not given due prominence to this really first-class news matter, because it explodes the theory upon which most of their attacks upon the Civil Service are based. The Committee's findings make interesting reading, but the most important and interesting of all is that "In our opinion the present taxation—even in conjunction with the loss of material wealth due to war expenditure—is not one of the main causes of industrial difficulty." It is worthy of note that the leading trade journals have shown no inclination to dispute the reasons given by the Committee for coming to this conclusion.

* * * *

It is also stated in the Colwyn Committee's Report that "real earnings of the employed wage-earner at the end of 1925 were, on the general average, much the same as in 1914."

This, of course, applies equally in the Civil Service, but it is the first time it has been stated so definitely and supported by statistical evidence.

* * *

Mr. Henry Ford's new scheme for providing food and clothing for his employees at a reasonable cost is causing a storm of protest amongst retailers in Michigan. He has opened a number of retail shops at which it will be possible for the average family to reduce their weekly expenditure by about £1. This is a businesslike move on the part of a large manufacturer, because there is no doubt that one of the main causes of industrial unrest is the inability of the wage-earner to pay the high prices charged by retailers for food and clothing. As the pay rises, so does the cost of these commodities. If a man has to spend his all in keeping his family just living, there is not much chance for the big manufacturers to feel the benefit of his purchasing power. If someone in this country would follow Mr. Ford's example, the effect on retailers might result in a reasonably contented wage-earning class. There is ample evidence from the Food Council that consumers are not getting a square deal.

* * *

The Educational Scheme continues to progress. The first quarter is now well under way, and every A.P.O. who has not yet taken up a course should, in his own interests, be preparing to do so for the coming quarter. The lessons are most interesting, whether the student has the examination immediately in view or not.

The Central Committee are sticking well to their task. New ideas are developing which will widen the scope of their activities. The issue of a small booklet of tabulated rates of duty is now under consideration. It will be of great practical value to any Waterguard Officer, and is just the sort of thing that Preventive Officers have wanted for some time.

* * *

There was a full meeting of the Suggestions Committee on March 23rd, and a fairly long agenda was disposed of. One notable feature of this Committee is the number of Agreements effected. There was quite a good crop at the last meeting. The proceedings are usually very interesting, and the discussions that take place are most valuable in enabling each side to obtain a good idea of the views and difficulties of the other.

The question of the supply of fountain pens to the staff is still undecided. In these days economy has to be carefully considered. The fate of the request for "padded stationery" is now known. Only in special cases where padding can be shown to be necessary, such as "messenger slips," is there any possibility of the staff claim being conceded. The Staff Side intend giving consideration to the matter with a view to making requests for the padding of documents of this nature.

* * *

I notice that the "London Illustrated News" made a special feature in a recent issue of the

Cunard liner "Mauretania," and her return to commission after an extensive overhaul. This vessel is, of course, one of the most popular passenger ships afloat. But what interested me most was the detailed description of the vessel's accommodation and of the various departments on board. The whole was summed up as "all the amenities of a modern town upon the high seas." This is a fitting description, and, most Waterguard Officers, having had experience of this type of vessel, will agree that they are "towns" where business is done at a very brisk pace. The Preventive Officer's duties in connection with these very large vessels is very responsible, but this fact usually goes unrecognised when the value of Waterguard work is being considered. It ought not to require a great deal of imagination for anyone experienced in shipping to realise how needful it is for a P.O., dealing with one of these leviathans, to be self-reliant, efficient and tactful. He comes in contact with all grades of society, and with representatives of practically every trade of any importance.

* * *

The appointment of the independent arbitrator in connection with outstanding cases under the Single Men's War Bonus case has not yet taken place. Until this happens it is not known whether the terms of reference will cover claims arising out of the "Earmarked" appointments case.

Officers concerned will be kept informed as soon as definite news is available.

J. MERRON.

PRESENTATION TO Mr. T. COLLINS, P.O.

In the person of Mr. "Tim" Collins, the Liverpool staff has lost another of its well-known and familiar figures in his retirement after 35½ years' service.

At a pleasant little function held at the Stage on March 22nd, Mr. Collins was presented with a beautiful gold Waltham watch, suitably inscribed, which was subscribed for by his colleagues in Liverpool. The Chairman, Mr. Carstairs, Waterguard Superintendent, said it gave him much pleasure to preside over a presentation for the first time in Liverpool, and he was impressed by the amount of esteem the staff had for Mr. Collins, as was evidenced in the handsome present they were giving him. He advised Mr. Collins to take up some hobby in his retirement. The Latins realised the value of this truth when they coined the phrase, "Mens sana in corpore sano."

Mr. Moss, W.S. U., sent a letter regretting his inability to attend and paying tribute to the splendid character of Mr. Collins.

Several of Mr. Collins' colleagues, including Messrs. Melross and Keiran, C.P.O.'s, Messrs. Slade and Hargreaves, P.O.'s, and Messrs. Henry and Baxter, A.P.O.'s, paid warm tribute

to his fine upright qualities. Mr. H. Atwill, P.O., a very old colleague and friend of Mr. Collins, then made the presentation amidst applause.

BETWEEN TIDES.

PARAGRAPHS FROM THE DISTRICTS.

LONDON.

In response to the Chess Challenge from Newport (Mon.) issued through the medium of the Editor's column in the last issue, I am able to say that acting up to our motto we have accepted the challenge, and hope by the time this issue appears to have well started the contest. The players for London are Messrs. Smallwood, Percival and Dudley, P.O.'s, and for Newport, Messrs. Boodle, Matthews and Sandford, A.P.O.'s.

* * * *

I am asked to draw the attention of London members to the fact that a meeting has been arranged, to be held on April 13th at the Water-guard Office, Shadwell Pier Head, time 4 p.m., to discuss ways and means with a view to forming a team or teams with which to compete at the fast approaching C. and K. Sports Meeting at Stamford Bridge.

This is evidently the result of "Old Athlete's" letter in "Journal" No. 584, and it is hoped that all those interested will make special endeavours to be present, including the "old timers," with their valuable experiences to pass on.

Now then, you sport enthusiasts, now's your chance!

* * * *

The result of the local election of District Secretary was in favour of Mr. F. R. Fisk, A.P.O., to whom we extend our congratulations; and to the unsuccessful, better luck next time.

Mr. J. T. Sutton has been elected Vice-Chairman of the Local Whitley Council.

GRAVESEND.

Our Sports Club held their final Whist Drive and Dance of the season on Thursday, March 24th, 1927. We were rewarded with a splendid attendance despite the inclement weather prevailing. Mr. F. M. Stanford once again most ably carried out the duties of M.C. for the whist, and Mr. H. C. Palmer was the M.C. for the dance.

It was announced during the evening that arrangements were being made for the running of a series of Flannel Dances during the coming summer months.

We are eagerly looking forward to our visit to Ilford on April 20th, when we meet our London colleagues at football; an exciting game should be witnessed. We shall also be paying a visit during the summer to play the "South Side" at cricket, when we hope to have another exciting contest.

CIVIL RIGHTS.

The following letter has been addressed to Members of Parliament by the Civil Service Civil Rights Defence Committee:—

38a, St. George's Road, S.W.1.
March, 1927.

Dear Sir,—It is understood that the Government proposes to include in its forthcoming Trade Union Bill a clause which would make illegal the affiliation of Civil Service Associations to outside industrial and political bodies. In this connection, the above Committee, which represents some 70 Service Associations, of which some are affiliated to "outside" bodies and some are not, and which comprise a total membership of nearly 150,000 Civil Servants, desires to ask that you will be good enough to give consideration to the following statement:—

(1) Civil Servants are denied the right to strike, and are subject to the deprivation of many civil liberties enjoyed by the private citizen. For example, a Civil Servant may not stand for Parliament without resigning his post, he may not serve on any Committee designed to promote the Parliamentary candidature of another person, his right to stand for election to local authorities is limited, and he is subject to many restrictions in regard to public writing and speaking. Any further restriction on the liberties of Civil Servants is therefore a serious matter to them.

(2) It is understood that the purpose of the proposed clause is to prevent Civil Servants being the subjects of a "divided allegiance" in the event of another General Strike. Inasmuch as the Government, it is understood, proposes to declare the General Strike illegal, there is no purpose to be served in compulsorily disaffiliating Service Associations. In any case, however, affiliation to "outside" bodies involves no liability on the part of Civil Servants to act contrary to their own rules and Civil Service regulations. Service Associations which are so affiliated preserve their complete autonomy, and therefore no question of divided allegiance can arise.

(3) If the State recognised the obligation of providing security and adequate wage conditions to all its servants, it might argue that affiliations to outside bodies were unnecessary. In fact, thousands of permanent employees are denied pension rights, and wage conditions among Civil Servants are very bad. Of 300,000 Civil Servants, 150,000 receive a total remuneration of less than £3 a week each, and 225,000 less than £4 a week each.

(4) Moreover, when wage claims are under consideration the Treasury and the various Departments quote against Service Associations the rates of pay current amongst "outside" workers. It is surely unreasonable in these circumstances to attempt to prevent Civil Service organisations associating with "outside" bodies.

(5) Not only are conditions bad, but the machinery for settling disputes in the Service

is inadequate. Efforts made by Staff Associations to enable the National Whitley Council to secure the proper application of its own agreements in the Departments have been frustrated by the Government, and as regards the Civil Service Arbitration Court, access to the Court is refused by the Treasury and by Departments in many cases. Civil Service Associations have no redress when access is refused, and no right of appeal against the decision to refuse access, however wrong the decision may be.

(6) Civil Servants, and Civil Service Associations, are divided amongst themselves as to the merits of the policy of affiliating to outside bodies, but they are at one in holding that the right to affiliate, if the members so desire, ought not to be interfered with.

(7) Many Civil Service Associations have been affiliated to "outside" bodies for many years past—some Post Office organisations for as long as a quarter of a century. It cannot be shown that the Public Service has suffered in consequence.

We are to ask that you will be good enough to give the foregoing considerations your earnest attention, and to say that we shall be happy to hear from you as to your attitude towards the Civil Service Clause of the proposed Bill.

Faithfully yours,

J. W. BOWEN, Chairman.

W. J. BROWN, Secretary.

C. H. SMITH, Treasurer.



It is with great sorrow that we have to publish in this issue the announcement of the passing of one of the pioneers of the "Customs Journal." The launching of this venture was a matter which required much more pluck and initiative than we are apt to think of in these days, when our own paper is naturally taken for granted. The maintenance of the "C.J." in its early days was a task of no small magnitude, and Mr. Duke and his colleagues have bequeathed to us, through their untiring energy and determination, the most valuable instrument we possess, one of the oldest publications of its kind in the Civil Service.

Mr. Duke's interest in the "Customs Journal" has never waned, for he contributed to our columns as recently as the Christmas Number of 1925, and we have corresponded with him since.

A LONG FELT WANT.

The Vocational Education Committee intends publishing, as soon as possible after the Budget has been announced, a booklet of 24 pages, containing tables of duties showing full and preference rates, values and seizure penalties for all goods liable to Customs duties, particulars of sampling of drawback stores, and other useful information.

Further particulars will be found in the next issue of the "Customs Journal."

IMPERIAL SERVICE MEDAL.

At the Custom House, Plymouth, on March 8th, 1927, Mr. A. J. Titheridge, late Preventive Officer, H.M. Customs and Excise, was, in the presence of a goodly gathering of former colleagues, presented with the Imperial Service Medal, in recognition of thirty-five years' meritorious service under the Crown. The presentation was made by the Collector, who warmly congratulated Mr. Titheridge on the distinction he had won by his devotion to duty during his long Service career. Many were the expressions of regard paid to our late colleague, and there are none who could say otherwise than that he was "one of the best." He leaves the Service for his well-earned retirement in the sure knowledge that all who have been fortunate enough to be acquainted with him, wish him good health, long life, and happiness.

PENALTY FOR OBSTRUCTION IN LONDON.

An interesting case, in which the second engineer of an American steamer laid hands on Mr. Moore, A.P.O., who had discovered undeclared tobacco in his possession, was tried at the Tower Bridge Police Court on April 4th. After expressing his willingness to being searched in his room, the engineer suddenly left the cabin and went on deck, followed by Mr. Moore, and attempted to drop some of his tobacco overboard. Mr. Moore was pinned against the rail of the vessel, and narrowly escaped a drop of some forty feet or so. Mr. Dowden came to his colleague's assistance.

The engineer was charged with harbouring and concealing, destroying, and with obstruction. A serious view was taken by the magistrate, who inflicted a fine of treble value and duty on the first count, and £25 on each of the other two counts. The fines were paid.

The prosecution on behalf of the Crown was conducted by Mr. C. E. Egan, C.P.O.

Messrs. Moore and Dowden are attached to Mr. W. J. Ferguson's rummage crew at the Surrey Docks.

PLEASURE and PROFIT in KNOWLEDGE.

An interview at 13, Beer Lane, London, E.C.3.

V. E. C.: Good evening, gentlemen! May we have your criticism of the Association Education Scheme?

CALLERS (who turn out to be Students): We shall be delighted to do so!

V. E. C.: Do you have any difficulty in understanding the questions?

STUDENTS: Not the slightest. They are so clear that there can be no confusion whatever as to their meaning.

V. E. C.: We hope you appreciate the necessity of keeping your Revised Instructions, etc., up to date.

STUDENTS: Well, to be candid, the Instructions and the mass of amendments issued to us in bulk appeared appalling. Our greatest difficulty was to know exactly where to start on the formidable task of revision. We found the key to the situation in the Preliminary Course lesson papers.

V. E. C.: We hope you are satisfied with your tutors!

STUDENTS: They are A.1.—painstaking and thorough, too.

V. E. C.: Do you quite understand you have choice of tutor? All you need do is to note his name on the application form, and if possible your request will be acceded to.

STUDENTS: Quite so, and may we say that we are so satisfied that we earnestly appeal to the Association to carry on with the Scheme? When will the next term commence?

V. E. C.: It will commence the second week in May, and so as to allow sufficient margin for tutors and students alike to take their Summer Leave, the term will be extended until the second week in September.

STUDENTS: How many enrolled last term?

V. E. C.: One hundred and fifty, but we had to put off a good many owing to their applications coming in too late.

STUDENTS: Thank you, gentlemen, ours will not be late, we will

FILL THE APPLICATION FORM UP NOW

Having done so, all depart, humming—

For your work is our work,
And our work is your work;
So the more we work together
More capable we'll be.

REMEMBER—£3,000 IS AT STAKE.

The Secretary (V.E.C.),
Preventive Staff Association,
13, Beer Lane, London, E.C.3.

Please enrol me for Preliminary Course
Intermediate Course (delete Courses not required) in Waterguard
Advanced Course

Departmental Regulations. Postal Order, payable to C. R. Purser, London, value..... (insert amount), enclosed.

Name

Address

(Note.—Where possible, preference of tutors will be given if desired.)
Fees: 5/-, 12/6 and 20/- per term respectively.



All contributions relative to this column should be addressed to "Scrutator," c/o The Editor, 91, Tressillian Road, Brockley, London, S.E.4.

An interested officer has asked me to ventilate his criticism of my answer to question No. 5 published in "Journal" No. 584.

Here it is, followed by my reply.
I.

Adverting to Question 5 on page 44 in the last issue of the "Journal," your correspondent raises a very interesting point, the correct answer to which is of vital importance to candidates for examination for promotion, and incidentally to the Service and Revenue generally. The question has been raised before, there is a serious divergence of opinion regarding it, and as I do not concur with your answer, will you please allow me to state my reason?

The questioner asks: "Are we to assume that these two conditions are read in conjunction?" You answer "No," and proceed with an explanation in which you do conjoin the two points.

Now, in the second line on page 4 of G.O. 32/25 the word "if" precedes "(a)," and as "if" is a conjunction the two conditions must be read in conjunction. Also because of the words in brackets in para. 8 (c) of the Order, I read it, and especially (c) in conjunction with the first sentence of para. 9 and deduce therefrom that a watch (or camera or binocular) should have been in use one year before it can be passed free of duty. Further, by para. 5 of the Order, certain duty-free concessions are allowed in "Private Effects," but that "term does not cover articles acquired abroad *not for substantial use abroad* . . . or are obviously new." Thus, may we not conclude that a watch being an article of wear, obviously new and not in use abroad for one year, is liable to duty, but an oral, instead of a written, declaration may be accepted?

If my explanation is complicated, it is at least a specimen of how we have to read our orders.—Yours, etc.,

REASONABLE.

Answer.

The point is, as you say, "interesting." I fail to see, however, how I have conjoined the two conditions mentioned in the original question, i.e., "evidence of use" and "that the

article must have been in use at least one year."

My answer is confined to paragraph 9 only. The conjunction "if" applies to the three conditions, (a), (b) and (c), following that word, and the three conditions (not two) do not mention "one year's use."

Furthermore, the fact that the phrase in paragraph 8 (c) to which you refer is "in brackets" suggests to me that although a declaration is required for "ordinary wear, etc., etc., of a passenger," such declaration does not include the necessity of "one year's use" to be allowed duty free, otherwise paragraph 8 or 9 would have definitely said so. Rather do I say that the phrase in brackets in paragraph 8 (c) shows that ordinary wear has to be dealt with as shown in paragraph 9 as distinct from the requirements of paragraph 8 (c) and not in conjunction with the latter.

You also refer to paragraph 5. My contention is that "substantial use" does not necessitate "one year's use."

It should also be interesting to note that as regards ordinary wear of passengers, the original paragraph 9 (c) of G.O. 84/21, requiring insistence of one year's use, was amended, deleting that requirement and substituting paragraph 9A of that Order, which is similar to paragraph 9 of G.O. 32/25.

I therefore maintain that the circumstances of each importation claimed as ordinary wear must be considered on its own merits; the P.O. concerned applying paragraph 9 of G.O. 32/25 referred to in my original answer, and use his own discretion as to the conditions of that paragraph being fulfilled.

* * * *

Here are two further questions and my answers thereto.

(1) Reference to your answer to Question No. 2 in last "Journal," does not the number of days since the vessel's arrival from foreign have some bearing on whether an issue would be allowed? For instance, a vessel arrives from Hamburg on Sunday, discharges part cargo and loads for foreign, and arrives at the second British port on Wednesday to complete discharge and loading. On arrival at the second port the master requests an issue of tobacco. Having been allowed an eight days' supply on arrival at the first port, does he become entitled to a further supply after only four days?

(2) A vessel after discharging at London is proceeding to Hull to load for foreign. The duty on stores under seal does not exceed 10s. Would you term this as "entering the Coasting Trade," and demand duty or remove the goods to the King's Warehouse?

Answers.

(1) The particular point you raise was not asked in the question referred to. Paragraph 17 (d) must be adhered to in every case.

(2) I do not maintain that the term "entering the Coasting Trade" is applicable to the case you quote. You should, however, be satisfied as far as possible that the vessel is going to load for foreign. The master may be able to

produce direct orders in writing from his owners or agents showing that the vessel is chartered to load for foreign.

I am indebted to a "small port" colleague for a definition of a "builder's certificate" recently solicited.

A copy of the letter is published below.

Dear Scrutator,—Re "Journal" issued on Saturday, March 26th last, I notice you have asked your "small port" colleagues to oblige you with a definition of a "builder's certificate." As one of those officers stationed at a "small port," I am glad to have an opportunity to respond, trusting the following description will satisfy your client:

"It is a certificate signed by the builder of the ship, and containing a true account of the proper denomination and of the tonnage of the ship, as estimated by him, and of the time (e.g., the year), and the place where she was built, and of the name of the person (if any) on whose account the ship was built."

In other words, it is the "Birth Certificate" of a ship.

In the case of a foreign-built ship, the builder's certificate may be dispensed with, but a B.O. is required authorising registration, and its number must be quoted in the Register Book and also on the Certificate of Registry.—Yours, etc..

"WELL-WISHER."

SOUTH SIDE CRICKET CLUB (LONDON).

This Club wound up its first winter season of social events with a dance held at the Palais de Danse, New Cross, on Wednesday, March 30th.

As is usual with the Club's affairs (so far), this event proved no less a success than its predecessors, some 150 people enjoying a rhythmic evening to the ever-alluring strains of jazz. Once again the occasion was favoured by the presence of the President, Mr. Chas. E. Egan, C.P.O.

The dance was of the usual kind, with the added interest of fancy dress, the prizes for which were won by the following representations:—Ladies' 1st, "Before and After Marriage"; Ladies' 2nd, "A Harom Lady"; Gents' 1st, "Toy Drum Major"; Gents' 2nd, "Court Dress." Spot prizes were also won, and a brief interval was arranged for the distribution of the prizes by the President, after which the gathering continued to occupy the floor, until the playing of "The King" brought another jolly evening to a close.

A good deal of credit is due to the Committee responsible in organising and successfully carrying through the three dances and two whist drives, and it will now be interesting to learn to what extent the Club has benefited. I hear that all five events were profitable.

OBITUARY.

Mr. GEORGE DUKE.

The older members of the Service will learn with regret of the death of Mr. George Duke, late Chief Preventive Officer, who passed away at Cottingham, E. Yorks, on March 27th.

The funeral took place at Cottingham on March 30th, and was attended by a representative gathering of officers from Hull, a number of whom acted as bearers.

Mr. Duke, who during his career was stationed at various ports in the U.K., will be remembered for his energetic Association activities, and especially for the efforts he made in connection with the initiation and production of the "Customs Journal."

Possessed of a fearless temperament, his example could be followed with advantage by all who have the interests of the Department at heart.

The deepest sympathy is extended to his widow and family in their bereavement.



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.

Sir,—I read in your issue of March 12th a reply, or rather an attack on the writer using the nom-de-plume "Hopeful." "Hopeful's" rather venomous critic wrote under the heading, "Facts or Flapdoodle." I wonder why! Why not stick to the original title? Is it that the writer is afraid that the use of such a daring heading might be construed into lese majeste—a deplorable position for an opportunist. Perhaps, however, "Oliver" has, in his fear of offending the powers that be, unwittingly chosen a title having the effect of a boomerang—it has rebounded on the head of the thrower. Even a cursory reading of the letter would convince anyone that the title is extremely apposite to the nature of the effusion. Indeed, the only objection that could be urged is that it is somewhat indeterminate. Why not cut out "Facts or," leaving the unequivocal "Flapdoodle"? We could then say that, however unscrupulous the epistle, the writer was to be congratulated

on his title inasmuch as anything in the nature of facts was conspicuously absent.

"Oliver's" attack was so very acrimonious that one needs little—very, very little—perspicacity to see that the amour propre of one of the fair-haired boys of the Waterguard has suffered a deadly wound; that the suggestion of unfairness made against the Promotion Board must necessarily embody an implication that not all of the elect are deserving of the honours thrust upon them.

May I congratulate "Hopeful" on his reply to "Oliver"? The reply had the manly ring so noticeably absent in the letter which provoked it.

Now, I should like to offer a few words of advice to "Oliver"—

(1) Don't butt in without having read the whole correspondence on any given subject.

(2) Go back to "Hawkeye's" letter and just try to answer the straight questions contained therein. You may thus give us facts instead of flabdoodle and abuse.

(3) Please don't be so utterly illogical as to say of your opponent's letter that "no one with sense would treat it seriously," and then proceed to write a column and a half of blatant and fiery abuse. Isn't the inference rather obvious?—Yours, etc.,

"FAIR PLAY."

CHESS.

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF RULES OF THE WATERGUARD CHESS CLUB.

1.—The Club shall be entitled "The Customs Waterguard Chess Club," and its objects shall be to foster and encourage the playing of chess generally, to promote friendship by bringing its members on more intimate terms.

2.—The officers of the Club shall be a Chairman, a Match Captain, an Hon. Secretary, an Hon. Treasurer and a Match Conductor. These officers shall be elected by the members of the Club.

3.—The entrance fee for the Vice-Presidents shall be 10s., and for other members 2s. 6d., with an annual subscription of 2s. 6d., payable in advance, these fees shall be forwarded to the Hon. Treasurer as soon as possible, to bring the Club on a working basis.*

4.—(a) The management of the Club shall be vested in a Council consisting of the officers of the Club.

(b) The Match Conductor of the Club shall be responsible for the entire control of, and act as referee, with the right to appeal to the Committee of the Club for a final decision upon any point in dispute. A time limit of four months shall govern all play, unless otherwise stated. Games when completed shall be sent to the Match Conductor, those not completed at the expiration of the time limit shall be sent to him for adjudication. All queries, notifications as to infractions of the rules, etc., shall be addressed by the competitors to the referee.

(c) The Club shall abide by the laws of chess

as compiled and published by the British Chess Federation in all play.

PROCEDURE.

1.—Until the Club obtains a list of fixtures, Club handicaps and tournaments, the present contest in lieu of a knock-out contest will be played. This will ascertain the strongest players in the Club, for forming a first team. The winner of the contest will be the Club Champion and holder of the Cup for a period of twelve months. With a view to speeding up play, members are asked in the case of tournaments to play two or more games at once if conveniently possible.

2.—Members who cannot play chess, or who are weak at the game, will be put into immediate touch with the better players of the Club through the Hon. Secretary for tuition.

NOTES.—(a) A full team consists of eight players; a Lewis Cup team of six; and a Correspondence team of five.

(b) The above rules and procedure are taken from the Kent County Chess Association Year Book, and adapted to the use of the Club in accordance with the rules of the British Chess Federation by: Match Conductor and Referee, F. G. Boodle, "The Glen," Pant Road, Newport, Mon.

* Until the Hon. Treasurer is elected, fees can be forwarded to me, and crossed "Lloyd's Bank."

N.B.—Open only to P.S.A. members.

W. W. BISHOP, Hon. Sec.,
Sharpness.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF.

For the two weeks ended March 31st, 1927.

TRANSFERS.

Preventive Officers: MacRae, D., Glasgow, to Greenock; Morrisey, E., Londonderry Land Barrier, Belfast, to Liverpool; Tilley, W. C., Greenock, to Hull.

PROMOTIONS.

Assistant Preventive Officers to Preventive Officers: Coady, G. T., Runcorn, Manchester, to Manchester; Kitchener, F. J., London, to Londonderry Land Barrier, Belfast.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

Retirement: J. Phelan, Preventive Officer, Cardiff.

VACANCY.

Assistant Preventive Officer: St. Davids, Edinburgh. (An allowance of £20 per annum for performing Long Room work, etc., is assigned.)

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

Curling, T. K., Preventive Officer; Murphy, S., Preventive Man; Passman, D. T., Preventive Officer.

APPOINTMENTS TO UNESTABLISHED SITUATIONS.

Deckhand: Vining, H., Middlesbrough, Sunderland. Deckhand Steersman: Young, W. D., London.