

The Customs Journal

No. 619

July, 14th 1928

Fortnightly

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Letters to the Editor, and articles and correspondence intended for publication, should be addressed to the Editor, "The Customs Journal," 91 Tressillian Road, Brockley, London, S.E.4.

All matter for insertion in the forthcoming issue should reach the Editor on or before the Monday preceding the day of publication.

THE annual Conference of the Council of the Preventive Staff Association will be held on July 24th and following days, in London (Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street), too late, as it happens, to be reported in our next issue. The first issue in August should contain an account of the proceedings.

There is every indication that this year's Conference will be a momentous one, and one is given seriously to wonder "has the membership pulled its weight?" The answer, by a large majority, is doubtless in the affirmative, yet much depends upon what is considered to be pulling your weight. When a man is engaged in a boat race, it is not enough that he pulls his full weight; he must pull for a definite result. And to achieve that result he must employ a definite and expert method. It is not always that the race goes to the strongest man. It is the man who knows how to use the strength that he possesses who stands the better chance of success.

Many a member of the P.S.A., although his interest and energy is beyond question, pays too little attention to method, and could, at the expense of less energy, attain a greater degree of usefulness. How much time and labour, for instance, is wasted upon destructive criticism! How much greater the benefit

if, instead of making it our business to tear in pieces all efforts at advancement, we earnestly set to, to build solidly upon the foundations laid by those who have gone before! Surely the edifice should be worthy of its foundation? After all, the Preventive Staff Association is one of the oldest in the Civil Service. We are working to-day on the store of experience gained during a period of over a quarter of a century. To indiscriminately criticise any present-day case upon which action is being taken in the light of this experience is to set aside and ignore one of the most valuable possessions passed on to all officers of the Association. That experience is at the service of all members who seek to intelligently discuss Association politics.

Matters of general import must eventually be discussed by the Council. If the discussions by the Districts have been conducted in such a manner as to give full play to all aspects and possibilities of the matter in hand; if resort has been made to the fund of experience that is at the disposal of all members through their elected officers; if there is an honest desire to build instead of to destroy; the result of any action must be of far greater benefit to the whole than if discussion had been carried out haphazard and devoid of preparation.

CURRENT COMMENTS

THE Conference Agenda, with the relative papers, now circulated throughout the Districts, is the largest and most comprehensive document of its kind that has ever been dealt with in the history of Waterguard Associations. It consists of some fifty pages of matter, and every effort has been made to provide all essential information necessary for Councillors to be well informed on matters likely to be discussed at the Conference.

Each year this Agenda is getting more voluminous, and it is probable that the next one will increase considerably in size. This, to an Association like ours with its difficulties in maintaining contact between members scattered all over the Kingdom, is an important development, because it enables the Conference delegates to gather up the threads of the year's activity, without any waste of time. This saving of time during actual discussions creates wider scope and favourable opportunity for constructive deliberation on the many problems which the Association has to tackle.

Realising how vitally necessary it is to Waterguard progress that these annual meetings should be successful in every way, the Headquarters Staff have concentrated on easing the path of the delegates as far as is humanly possible; and, if the Councillors, and their constituents, continue to do their part with equal vigour, there is nothing to stop the upward climb of the P.S.A. towards the goal for which we aim.

* * * *

This will be the sixth Annual Conference of the Preventive Staff Association, and on each successive occasion the officials have been fortunate in choosing a date on which the weather conditions have turned out to be real Summer. Let us hope that our luck will hold good again for this year, and that the 24th July will burst forth bright and smiling. It seems too much to expect from such a capricious weather clerk, and if we bring it off again it will be no mean achievement.

One reason for desiring good weather is that the usual "outing" on the first evening of the Conference is being arranged by the Assistant Secretary, Mr. Powell, and it will take the form of a trip up the Thames. Nearly all the Councillors will take part in this and will be joined by members of the London Branch.

It has been found that this little social affair invariably results in improved relations between the Councillors, and this is reflected in the work performed at the Conference on the succeeding days. The first day's work is always the hardest, and the delegates have well earned any relaxation they can get at the end of it. Mr. Powell can be relied upon to see that they get it, and even if it should rain, that resourceful young man is sure to have something up his sleeve to meet the emergency.

* * * *

A list of delegates to the Conference will be found elsewhere in this issue. The P.O. Councillor for the Liverpool area has not yet been elected. Voting is now taking place, but the result will not be known until the 14th inst. It is gratifying to see Liverpool is beginning to take a new interest in Association

matters. The apathy that has existed at that port of late is rather difficult to understand, and especially so when it is remembered that the Liverpool staff have proved in the past that they are made of the right stuff, and can put some "kick" behind their activity when they really do start.

* * * *

The absence of our late President, Mr. E. P. Madden, from the Chair on this occasion will, no doubt, bring the fact forcibly home to the Council that we have lost yet another of our outstanding personalities in Association affairs. For very many years Mr. Madden has attended Conference after Conference of Waterguard Associations, and it must indeed feel strange to him to be away from this one. Numerous inquiries have been received as to what steps will be taken to give recognition of the valuable services he has rendered to the Waterguard, and it is certain that some action will be initiated at the Council meeting.

* * * *

To our younger members, who have had no opportunity of comparing modern methods of negotiation with the past (and also to some of our older members with short memories), the contribution by "Digger" to the previous Journal issue ought to be of some interest. The description of the interview with the Financial Secretary in 1928 conveys a great deal to the modern Association worker. It must have been a heartbreak to the members of that deputation to be told, after a short interview of an hour and a half—and for which they had worked months to obtain—that "You may not have done much good, but you certainly have done no harm."

From those days we have advanced greatly. We now have a system of regular negotiation, and though this is not at the moment producing much cash, it is quite certain the old method would be less effective still. Under the present system we have ample scope to discuss fully all our grievances, and if anyone would desire to say that only financial issues are worth discussing he would be well advised to examine Whitley records regarding other matters before committing himself.

* * * *

"Ceearpee" is rather hard on the senior officers when he infers that, in a competitive examination, they would stand no chance against the juniors. This seems rather a sweeping statement, but, if it were true, it would be a strong argument in favour of competition, unless it is proposed to set a standard for the C.P.O. Grade, not with relation to the value of the work to be supervised, but in accordance with the capabilities of the senior officers. If the seniors are as incompetent as "Ceearpee" would have us believe, then their promotion would be much more disastrous to the Waterguard than the stagnation he fears. It is, however, very probable that the senior officers are not so modest regarding their abilities.

The ambitious young men with "desires to get ahead" would indeed be foolish to advocate competition when the present method, which is much easier than competition, is producing such excellent results in their favour. At the present rate of progress we are rapidly qualifying to be a "department

Preventive Staff Association

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President: E. P. Madden

General Secretary: J. Merron

Organising Secretary: J. T. Sutton

Assistant Secretary: W. H. Powell

PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

REPORT OF THE 17th MEETING.

Mr. W. G. Thomson (Bangor), successor to Mr. E. P. Madden as President, opened the meeting on the 23rd June at the Association Offices by referring to the tremendous loss sustained by the Association in the compulsory retirement of Mr. Madden. He said he did not intend, at this stage, to deal with the sterling qualities and remarkable career of the late President. He hoped to have the opportunity at some future date to do this adequately, but he said he could hardly refrain from remarking that by his very efficiency and expert knowledge Mr. Madden had set up a standard that would be hard to maintain.

Members of the Committee endorsed these remarks and promised to render every possible assistance to the new President.

The members present were:—Messrs. W. G. Thomson (Chairman); J. Merron, J. T. Sutton, M. J. Griffiths (vice Mr. Madden), S. E. D. Ball, S. Dines, A. W. P. Densley, and W. H. Powell (Minute Secretary).

The main item, and one that occupied a large part of the time of the meeting, was the detailed consideration of the draft Annual Report coupled with the proposed Agenda for the Annual Conference.

As these documents are now in the hands of District Officers and Councillors, and have probably been discussed at District meetings, no useful purpose would be served by giving details of the Committee's findings.

The final document (comprising some fifty pages) speaks volumes.

The Organising Secretary reported that the membership figure was beginning to mount again consequent on the enrolment of new entrants. Practically every new entrant had joined up already, but he hoped to be able to report "all in" to the Conference. Dealing with Finance he gave detailed explanation of the Districts—the accounts, etc. The full benefit of the new contract for the printing of the "Customs Journal" will not be apparent until

the next financial year, but there is sufficient in the Annual Accounts to indicate the possibilities. In his forecast of the Finance of the next year, the Organising Secretary indicated that, with the continuation of the economies effected, the future would see the Association in a sound financial position.

The Report and Annual Accounts were adopted with a note of congratulation.

In the Report on Waterguard Sectional Committee activities, the agreements on the supply of **Mackintoshes** and **Electric Torches**, and on **Recruitment**, together with the disagreement on **Leave**, were noted and discussed. On **Mackintoshes** it was stated that the last difficulties were now disappearing; the G.O. on the issue was drafted, and there was every possibility of the supply commencing at the end of July. There will be 48 different sizes—sufficient in scope to meet the individual fit and requirements of all.

The ratification of the disagreement on **Leave** was adjourned on the Departmental Council at the request of the Official Side. (Since this date, however, the disagreement has been sustained and authority was given to seek a new reference to the W.S. Committee on a modified claim.)

The Official Side (W.S.C.) indicated willingness to agree to **A.P.O.s being paid on a monthly basis**, but pointed out that such agreement would be subject to the application of the usual Treasury practice of rounding off increments to multiples of £2 10s. This would entail a slight loss to the grade. The matter stands adjourned to see if some scheme could be devised to avoid this contingency.

The scheme of **Training of A.P.O.s** stands adjourned on the W.S. Comm., but the E.C. will recommend to the Conference that the reference be withdrawn.

The Official Side proposed arrangements in connection with **applications for transfer** stands adjourned. Consideration will be given to these at the Conference (Appendix A., vii).

As a result of the Districts' discussion on the **publication of the "Customs Journal"**, there will be no change, at the moment, in the period of publication. Full report will be given to the Conference.

In response to a request from the Trustees of the **Mackney Fund**, the E.C. will recommend to the Council that the Association take over the control of this Fund and that Trustees be appointed.

The Committee decided that the Annual Conference shall take place at Anderson's Hotel, Fleet Street, London, on July 24th, and the two following days.

W. H. POWELL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

HULL.

Members are asked to note the new address of the District Secretary of Hull District, Mr. R. A. Crooks. Communications should now be addressed to:—46, Bachelor Street,

Hull.

LONDON.

The meeting on July 6th, at the St. Katherine Dock Hotel, presided over by Mr. Dudley, considered various local matters and the Conference Agenda. The depleted staff in the port was causing grave concern, and the Executive was to be asked to bring the matter before the appropriate quarter.

The reports of the District Officers were received. Figures were submitted in reference to the financial status of the port, and also of the membership, and it transpired that the London branch is in a very healthy condition.

A considerable amount of time was devoted to the discussion of the proposed Rotation of Duties Scheme, the Port Committee's proposals being before the meeting.

On the subject of Promotion by Merit (Leith and South Schemes), a resolution was carried in favour of the existing system, coupled with the second and third paragraphs of the Leith Scheme.

Promotion to C.P.O. was also debated, the present position being explained to the meeting.

On the Conference agenda, the London Councillors received instructions on the line they were expected to take.

The officers elected were:—

District Secretary—Mr. P. Spicer.

District Organiser—Mr. J. O'Driscoll.

HULL.

Mr. A. Cameron presided over a special meeting at the "Metropole" on June 29th.

The meeting unanimously decided in favour of the fortnightly issue of the "Customs Journal."

The method of examination of Preventive Officers for promotion to the position of Chief Preventive Officer was tackled in discussion.

In considering the title of the department, a resolution was passed to the effect that this should be altered to Preventive Department.

Opinion was freely expressed that Landing and Shipping duties should be handed over to the Water-guard.

On the subject of "oil duty" at Salt End, instructions were given to the local officers on the matter.

BRISTOL.

A well attended meeting was held at the Central Restaurant, Broad Quay, on June 22nd, Mr. Stonestreet occupying the Chair. In opening the meeting the Chairman extended a hearty welcome to Mr. Griffiths (Councillor) of Newport.

The offer of Mr. Atkins to continue as District Secretary was accepted unanimously.

The subject of Promotion to C.P.O. was discussed and a number of suggestions were drafted and forwarded to the Executive.

DOVER.

At the Annual Meeting, held on July 6th, at the Queen's Head Hotel (Mr. Wood in the Chair), the following officers were elected:—

Chairman—Mr. T. Wood.

Vice-Chairman—Mr. E. Whettingstall.

District Secretary—Mr. B. C. Reilly.

District Organiser—Mr. A. H. Rolls.

District Auditors—Messrs. Bearden and Gray.

The subject of promotion was debated at some length, and recommendations were framed and forwarded for the consideration of the Executive.

The District Organiser was instructed to report upon the membership of the District to the next meeting.

A meeting to discuss the Conference agenda was arranged for July 17th.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman and the retiring officials was carried unanimously.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF

TO JULY 2nd, 1928.

TRANSFERS.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, UPPER SECTION:—

Morony, P. Harwich, Ipswich to Southampton.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, LOWER SECTION:—

Fell, A. Office of I.G.W. to Lerwick, Aberdeen.

PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Martin, A. L. Ardrossan, Dumfries to Newport, Mon.

Partington, A. H. Dundee to Ardrossan, Dumfries.

PROMOTIONS.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, LOWER SECTION TO UPPER SECTION:—

Gord, C. Lerwick, Aberdeen to Harwich, Ipswich.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, LOWER SECTION:—

Madden, E. P. Immingham, Grimsby to Office of I.G.W.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO PREVENTIVE OFFICER—

Hannah, H. S. Newcastle to Dundee.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

RETIREMENTS:—

Chief Preventive Officer, Upper Section.

White, F. R. Southampton.

Preventive Officer.

Jenkins, B. T. Newport, Mon.

DEATHS:—

Chief Preventive Officer, Lower Section.

Robins, W. A. J. Newhaven, Brighton.

Preventive Officer.

Phillips, A. E. London.

TO YOUNG OFFICERS.

By "W."

IT was the privilege, a short time ago, of several young officers at our out-port to attend a District Meeting of the P.S.A. for the first time since joining the Waterguard Service; their previous experience of Association meetings being confined to local meetings held at our own small port.

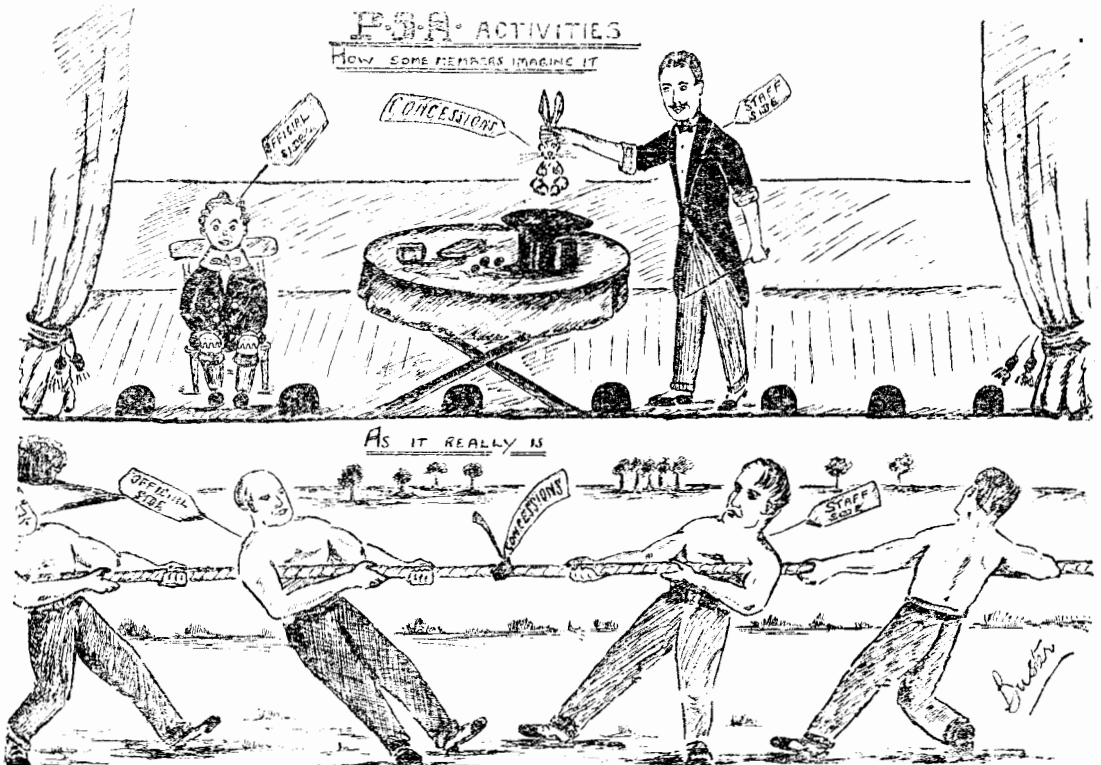
For some time prior to the date of the meeting the agenda had been hanging up in the office and was the subject of many interesting and heated debates, the outcome of it all being that on the appointed day the young officers in question, all full of youthful enthusiasm, went to the District Meeting fully determined to advocate certain courses of action, and equally determined to find out why certain other courses had not been adopted.

Alas! for the poor novice who joins the Service gets a superficial knowledge of Association affairs and thinks he has nothing else to do but put the world right, so to speak. It may have taken a little courage to admit it, but (they confessed) several young men left the meeting wondering if their views were really sound after all. Had they been aware of all the facts before forming their opinions? Were they in possession of all the evidence, both for and against, before pronouncing judgment on the various questions on the agenda? Had they fully taken into consideration the difficulties to be faced? These, amongst others, were the questions which they put to each other. And why this shattered faith? In the narrow circle of our out-port they had acquired

merely an imperfect knowledge of the matters to be discussed, but at the District Meeting they had the pleasure of hearing men, and especially one man, with a long and useful connection with the Association and a wide knowledge of Association work. It is surprising how a man with complete knowledge of his subject can completely dominate a meeting. He presented facts in a new light and discussed questions from a different point of view.

The arguments they had previously thought sound he tore to pieces and proved to be fallacious; quoted instances from the past history of the Waterguard as guides for future action, and in general summed up the present position so well that they left the meeting with full confidence that those in control of Association affairs (men of wider experience and knowledge), although perhaps not moving so swiftly as some young men in a hurry would like, are doing all they can, in the face of adverse circumstances, to hasten the realization of Waterguard aspirations.

It is reasonable to suppose that the young officers at this port are typical of those elsewhere, and my object in writing this is to suggest that if other fledglings in Association affairs are not satisfied that the best is being done in their interests by those in charge of Association affairs, it may be that they are not fully acquainted with all the facts, and to them I would say, investigate fully the history of the Association and the Waterguard generally, study the conditions that led to the various changes, and keep abreast of contemporary affairs, for it is only a membership with proper knowledge that will have any chance of ever realizing Waterguard aspirations.



CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL.

The ninety-sixth meeting of the Council was held in the Custom House, London, on June 27th, 1928, the Chair being taken by A. J. Dyke, Esq., C.B., C.B.E., Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

PROMOTION.

The Official Side stated that all the preliminary interviews of the "P" Class Clerks for promotion to the Clerical Class had taken place, and that the Promotion Board proposed to call a small number for further interview at an early date, when the final selection would be made. The names of the selected candidates would be published as soon as possible.

In reply to questions concerning selections from the grades of Shorthand Typist, Typist and Writing Assistant for trial on Clerical duties, it was stated that no further promotion from these grades was in contemplation at the moment, and that while the ratio of the different grades as represented by the candidates recently selected for promotion was fortuitous and had no special significance, it indicated that, in selecting the candidates, the Official Side had considered the wishes of the Staff Side respecting the distribution of the promotions over the different grades. They would continue to bear in mind the representations of the Staff Side on this point, but were not able to accept any rigid ratio. Further, they could not accept the proposal to reserve 50% of certain Clerical vacancies for promotion from the grades in question, or suggest any alternative proposal.

ADDITIONS TO STAFF.

It was agreed that the establishment of the Accountant and Comptroller-General's Office be increased by two Assistant Accountants, five Executive Officers and eight Clerical Officers, promotions to the first two grades being on an acting basis for six months and all the additions being reconsidered at the end of that period.

LEAVE.

Disagreement was registered on adjourned proposals for increased leave for members of the Waterguard Service and Watchers. It was stated that modified proposals would be forthcoming in respect of the former.

TITLES.

The question of uniform titles for members of all ranks of the Departmental Clerical Class was again adjourned after discussion.

DUTIES OF CLERKS.

Supplementarily to the previous agreement on this subject, the Council, after further discussion, registered its disagreement on:—

- (1) Official Side proposals to include the following items in part I among the duties on which the basic grade of the Departmental Clerical Class might be employed, under supervision:—

- (i) Performing Check Officer's duties as defined in General Order 69, 1925.

- (ii) Making up ships' files and parcel post files:—

- (a) Comparing and writing off entries against items on ships' reports;

- (b) Ascertaining:—

- (1) that all goods reported have been entered or otherwise accounted for;

- (2) that all entries for free goods bear the Officer's certificate of clearance;

- (3) that, in the case of all other goods, the Officer has been satisfied that the goods have been properly delivered.

- (iii) Preparing and signing List of Discrepancies (if any).

- (iv) Certifying that all goods reported have been duly entered or otherwise accounted for.

(NOTE.—The certificate and list of discrepancies, as signed by the Clerk, are to be accepted as correct by the Officer and initialled by him. Any amendments of report arising from the facts disclosed by the discrepancy list will be dealt with by the Officer, as directed in Customs Code, Vol. 2, Part I (paragraphs 17 and 18.))

- (2) Staff Side proposals that members of the basic grade of the Departmental Clerical Class should not be employed on the following duties:—

- (i) Weighing tea and low duty goods.

- (ii) Weighing and bringing to account tea, etc., samples.

- (iii) Employment in tea repacking warehouses.

In regard to the Staff Side proposals, the Official stated that the question was, for the present, largely academic, and that they would be carefully considered if and when the matter became a live issue.

ADVERTISEMENTS ON OFFICIAL STATIONERY.

The Staff Side stated the objections felt concerning certain advertisements now printed on official books, and expressed a desire for their discontinuance. It was also held that the Staff Side should be consulted in future before proposed advertisements were agreed to.

The Official Side stated that while a Department could state objections, it had no veto, and in view of the national policy on the subject, objections would be of no avail without strong ground. They did not regard the present advertisements as objectionable, and it would not be practicable to consult the Staff Side in regard to future advertisements.

The matter was adjourned.

UNIFORM.

On the report of a Committee disagreement respecting a Staff Side proposal that Porters be supplied with uniform, the Official Side suggested the adjournment of the question until information on current national negotiations was forthcoming. The merits of the question were discussed, and its consideration adjourned.

OTHER MATTERS.

Among matters adjourned were Compensation for injuries on duty and Pay of Established Housekeeper-Messengers in London Dock and West India Dock.

A schedule of suggestions, which had been forwarded to the Board by the Suggestions Committee, with notes of action taken, was presented to the Council.

The Council resolved to send a message of congratulation to the Athletic Section of the Customs and Excise Sports Club on their conspicuous success at the Civil Service Annual Sports Meeting.

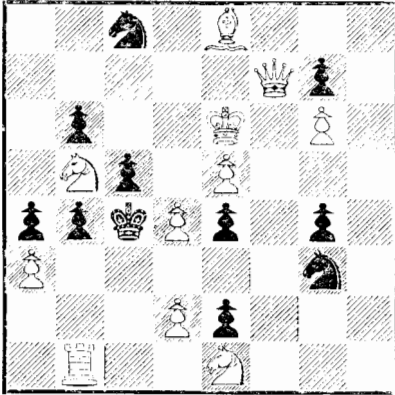
A number of other decisions, advised by Local and Office Committees, were dealt with, with results that have been advised to the Committees concerned.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on July 25th, 1928.

SOCIAL AND SPORT.

PROBLEM No. 19

by BRIAN HARLEY.



White to mate in two.

Solution to No. 18.

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. Kt-Kt5+ | 1. R×Kt |
| 2. R-B6+ | 2. K×R |
| 3. R-Q6 | 3 points. |

CUP CONTEST.

Round 1.

Winners:—Messrs. Croxford, Dover; Matthews, Newport; Boodle, Dover; Hargrove, Eastham; Clarke, Weymouth. Three games still being contested.

PROBLEMIIST versus PLAYER.

By PHILIP H. WILLIAMS.

I should like to say a few words in defence of the Chess Problem. This article is written for the benefit of average players, who profess to despise problems, and, alas, their numbers are many. There would be a great many more problem enthusiasts if these "average" players, as I term them, would regard problems in the right light. So many of them look upon these fanciful positions as exercises to further their powers of readily grasping situations in a game; they look upon them from a player's standpoint. Nothing is more erroneous. As long as they do so they will unjustly sneer at problems and, if ever tempted to try to solve one, will probably play the nineteen wrong moves first, and the right one last. One of the objects of this chapter is to help those who prefer not to remain ignorant of what a problem really is, what it does, and why it appears so constantly in our leading journals. I have been so often told that problems do not seem to improve one's playing strength. Quite true—they do not; and I boldly assert, are not meant to.

(To be continued.)

RECOMMENDATION TO ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY.

News comes to hand of a plucky action on the part of a Preventive Officer at Swansea, when a man was in danger of drowning. Efforts to reach the man with life-belts had failed, when Mr. R. E. Jones plunged in fully dressed and succeeded in bringing the man, who was drifting, safely to land.

On June 27th, Mr. Jones was presented with a certificate of bravery. The local authorities have decided to draw the attention of the Board and of the Royal Humane Society to the action.

HULL PROSECUTION.

At the Hull Police Court on June 16th, a fireman belonging to the steamer "Whitby Abbey," from Rotterdam, was charged with concealing 3lb. of Cavendish Tobacco and 3½lb. o.s. Tobacco. He was fined £4 8s. 11d. (treble value and duty).

The goods were discovered in a hand pump by Messrs. Thompson and Gamble, A.P.O.s, acting under the supervision of Mr. W. C. Hasnip, P.O.

Mr. Baker, C.P.O., prosecuted on behalf of the Department.

OUR SHORT STORY.

By "GEN."

"And," said the Chairman at the meeting of the Whitley Council, "the Official Side consider the Staff Side claims to be just and reasonable, and are of the opinion that their arguments are unanswerable. The claims, particularly those concerning increased remuneration and leave and a shorter working week, err in one respect only, and that is on the side of modesty.

"In registering agreement, etc., etc. . . ."

OBITUARY.

Mr. W. A. J. ROBINS.

It is with extreme regret that we have to announce the death of Mr. W. A. J. Robins, C.P.O. since 1924 at Newhaven. We understand that he has experienced heart trouble of recent years. His illness lately took a serious turn, with the result that he passed away on Wednesday, June 13th, at the age of 57, having spent 37 years in the Waterguard. During his service he has served at Peterhead, Bantry and Belfast, and during the war was at Aultbea, Ross-shire. The greater portion of his service was spent in London.

On the day of the funeral flags were flown at half-mast on vessels in the harbour. Among those present were Mr. F. A. Mansbridge (Collector, Brighton), and a large number of officers from the southern ports. The London staff was represented.