

The Customs Journal

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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

Delay is Dangerous.

John Ruskin has said, "I do not wonder at what men suffer, I marvel at what they lose."

Was the great Philosopher thinking prophetically of modern Civil Servants, thousands of whom have either lost, or are in a fair way of losing, one of the best business offers ever placed in the way of man?

Very large numbers of men and women up and down the country would gladly avail themselves of the provisions of the National Health Insurance and Pensions' Acts, but find that they are ineligible; and at the same time, thousands of Established Civil Servants who are eligible to insure under these Acts lose the opportunity through sheer inaction.

In many cases this inaction is due entirely to procrastination; for, unfortunately, the period during which the offer is open is so long as to be dangerous. In other cases, inaction is due to misconception, or misinformation, as to the terms of insurance, coupled with failure to apply to the right source for information.

Those Established Civil Servants who are still paying for Widows' and Orphans' Pensions by weekly deductions from pay can become Voluntary Contributors if application is made to an Approved Society on, or before, 31st December, 1930, or at any time within twelve months from the date of appointment. There is no doubt that very many of these are delaying application to the eleventh hour, and it seems likely that many will delay too long.

Another large class of Established Civil Servants—those who have passed out of excepted employment, thereby ceasing to suffer deductions from their pay for Widows' and Orphans' Pensions—are allowed a period of twenty-one months within which to become Voluntary Contributors; and, again, a large proportion of these leave their ap-

plication for membership of an Approved Society as long as possible, and in many cases too long.

Surely there can be no two opinions as to the value of the insurance offered. The Widows' Pension alone is well worth the whole of the payment required, for a survivorship annuity of £26 a year to a man's wife during widowhood cannot be purchased anywhere for so small a payment of 1/6 a week. The pension at sixty-five should in itself prove sufficiently attractive to induce even a bachelor, to whom the Widows' Pension is of no value, to enrol himself as a Voluntary Contributor. In addition to these Pension Benefits, there are the most valuable Health Benefits, namely, a payment of Sickness or Disablement Benefit during incapacity; a payment to the wife on the birth of each child; the free services of a doctor (except for those whose income exceeds the prescribed limit); and the very valuable Treatment Benefits given by most Approved Societies in various forms, such as payment toward the cost of Dental Treatment and Dentures, Ophthalmic Examination and Spectacles; the cost of maintenance in Hospital, Nursing Home, or Convalescent Home, and of Medical and Surgical Appliances. These benefits can be secured for a maximum payment of 1/6 a week, or in the case of a man who is not entitled to Medical Benefit, of 1/3 a week.

Any Established Civil Servant who has the option of becoming insured under these Acts, or, who is in doubt as to his eligibility, should seek information on any doubtful point before the last date to which the offer remains open to him. Information will willingly be given by the Association, or by the Secretary of the Civil Service Health Insurance Society, 34, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

CURRENT COMMENTS.

ONE of the chief criticisms of Association action in altering the method of promotion to Chief Preventive Officer was that the new higher standard of examination would mean wholesale annihilation of candidates. But, the result of the recent examination has effectively silenced the critics who held that view. It will now be the turn of those others who no doubt will argue that it is a bad thing for too many candidates to pass.

There were some also who asserted that the old method of examination was a fair test of a candidate's abilities. Yet we have on this occasion candidates who, having failed the simple form of examination, have now made good under the new system.

These facts, taken together, seem to indicate that there was something defective with the old system, and that the new one promises to give a much greater measure of justice.

The wisdom of Association policy in this connection is conclusively proved, and it would be interesting to hear what arguments the permanent critics can now put forward. There is plenty of space in the columns of the Journal.

It is true that those who opposed the new type of examination were a minority of our members, but it is gratifying to have evidence so convincingly strong that even they must join in pronouncing the examination result as being more satisfactory than any we have had before.

One cannot, of course, expect the unsuccessful candidates to be satisfied with the result, but at the time of the examination the opinion was freely expressed that everything had been conducted with reasonable consideration and fairness, and we can now expect from those who have been unfortunate, a determination to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded on the next occasion.

Although full information as to the method of applying the merit principle has been circulated to the Districts at the time of the Whitley Agreement, it may be necessary to explain further, since it is possible that the form in which the recent list of successful candidates appears might puzzle those who have not had opportunity to keep close touch with the subject. The candidates in group (1) on the list have tied for first place, and have therefore been placed in that group according to their relative seniority. The same thing applies to the second and third groups. There can be no suggestion that this method of grouping has any other significance. It does not mean that there are to be three classes of Chief Preventive Officer.

Whilst on the subject of the examination it might not be inappropriate to refer to the article by "Marcus" in the last issue of the Journal. It so happens that "Marcus" is a man who has a very good knowledge of the promotion problem, and therefore his views cannot be lightly overlooked. It is certain, however, that there will be a large body of opinion against him. Nevertheless, the young men of the Service have been given a hint that is worth while taking notice of. "Marcus" is certainly right as regards the stagnation that is to come, and though his methods of dealing with it might not be acceptable to some of us, it is up to those who will be affected to start now to take an interest in their future prospects. Too often the settlement of these problems is left until things have become so complicated that it takes years to straighten them out again.

* * * *

A meeting of the Executive Committee (P.S.A.) took place on the 28th and 29th October. Naturally at that meeting (the first since the Conference) a large bulk of the business was in connection with instructions from the Council, and consisted mainly of reference of the various matters to the appropriate committees.

The outstanding item was, however, in connection with the Salary Claim. The final draft of the Statement in support for submission to the Arbitration Court was considered in minute detail and, subject to alteration in certain respects, was approved. It was decided to have this document printed, thus a larger measure of circulation will be possible.

* * * *

On the 30th October a meeting of the Water-guard Sectional Committee was held. Agreements were registered on the following points (the agreements are subject to ratification by the Departmental Council):—

- (i) Issue of new design of cap and cap cover.
- (ii) Issue of rexine attache cases on a station basis.
- (iii) The candidates at the C.P.O. examinations to be designated by numbers.

The Official Side proposal, that in connection with the filling of vacancies at Allowanced Small Ports no appointment should be made until an attempt had been made to secure a volunteer prepared to transfer at the Crown's expense, was adjourned for further consideration of the new situation disclosed by the discussion.

The questions of "Abolition of Systematic Seizure Rewards" and "Supply of First-Aid Boxes" were adjourned.

The references from the Launch Service Association were also adjourned in order that informal discussions could be arranged by Mr. W. H. Powell, who was elected Liaison Officer between the L.S. Association and the P.S. Association.

* * * *

It is announced that Sir Francis Floud has been appointed to succeed Sir Horace Wilson as Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Labour. This news will be received with regret by the Preventive Staff and by all grades in the Customs and Excise Department. It is understood that Sir Francis is to be succeeded by Mr. P. J. Grigg from the Treasury.

* * * *

The Inland Revenue Departmental Council has reached an Agreement by which special facilities for the performance of Staff Side work during official time will be allowed. In the Customs and Excise Department we have enjoyed a fair amount of latitude as regards Staff Side work without having had recourse to obtaining a formal agreement. Probably an agreement in formal terms would be better if only to convince some of our local supervisors that it is quite respectable to hold a post as local Whitley official. Even to-day it must be admitted that there are places where Whitley activity is classed with Bolshevism.

* * * *

There is something sinister about the publicity that has been given to the decision that has been reached in the German steel trades to reduce wages. No doubt workers of this country will be asked to follow the good example of their German comrades.

In any case we in the Civil Service are bound to get the backwash of movements of this kind. Attacks on the cost of the Civil Service have already been resumed in the House of Commons. For the first time on record one of these attacks was dealt with on the spot and in the proper manner. The Civil Service champion was Mr. W. J. Brown, M.P., and it would now appear that nebulous speeches regarding over-paid Civil Servants will not be a popular pastime in future.

* * * *

The Dinner and Dance of the Preventive Service Sports Club, held on the 29th October was a great success. The arrangements ran smoothly, and it was evident that everyone enjoyed the evening. Mr. Woodford presided at the Dinner, and Mr. A. J. Dyke, Chairman of the C. & E. Sports Club, attended; and also Mr. A. S. Lupton, well known to Waterguard officers as Chairman of the Waterguard Sectional Committee. Mr. Fitzsimons was present, the Waterguard Superintendents of London,

and other members of the supervising grades. A full account of the function appears elsewhere in this issue.

* * * *

There is no news to impart regarding proceedings in connection with the salary claim, but close contact is being kept, and it is expected that there will be developments very shortly.

Prosecution at Edinburgh.

The discovery by Mr. W. P. Robertson (A.P.O.) of a quantity of tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, spirits and liqueurs concealed under a number of charts in the chart room of the steamer "Corsica," from Hamburg, led to the appearance of the master of the vessel at the Edinburgh Police Court on October 13th, charged with the offence. The treble duty-paid value of the goods amounted to £37 4s. 9d. A fine of £20 (including 12/6 costs), was inflicted.

Hull Prosecutions.

At the Hull City Police Court, two sailors of the "Vesta," a Finnish vessel, and a seaman residing in Hull, were charged with harbouring 12½ lb. Tobacco O.S. They were fined £7 18s. 10d., or 30 days' in default in one case, and £15 17s. 8d., or 42 days' in the other two.

The goods were seized by Messrs. Drury and Hearne (A.P.O.s), who were proceeding off duty at the time of seizure.

At the same court, a sailor of the "Margot," a German vessel from Harlingen, was charged with unshipping 5-5/16 lb. Tobacco O.S., and 5/16 lb. Cigars, and harbouring 7/16 lb. Tobacco O.S., and 4/16 lb. Cigars. He was fined £4 11s. 5d. or 37 days in default. The goods were seized by Messrs. Bugler (P.O.), Brewster, Pudsey and W. Thompson (A.P.O.s).

OBITUARY.

HENRY ATWILL.

We regret to announce the death, at the age of 64, of Mr. Henry Atwill, late Preventive Officer at Liverpool. Mr. Atwill served 37 years in the Department, 22 years of which were spent in Liverpool. Earlier service included the ports of London, Gravesend, and North Shields. He retired on October 10th, 1928, when he received the Imperial Service Medal. The interment took place on Wednesday, November 5th, at Bebington Cemetery.

Civil Service Confederation.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Monday, 27th October, 1930, at Livingstone Hall, Broadway, Westminster, when Mr. George Chase presided over an attendance of twenty-seven.

On the subject of Cost-of-Living Bonus, consideration was given to the correspondence which had passed between the National Staff Side and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and directions were given to the Confederation Representatives on the National Staff Side with a view to further action.

It was reported that Miss E. E. Barwick, of the Civil Service Clerical Association, had been appointed to fill the vacancy existing in the representation of the Clerical Group upon the Executive Committee, and the Committee learned with regret of the resignation of Mr. G. H. Barson, of the Society of Civil Servants, owing to ill health. It was resolved to send a message of sympathy to Mr. Barson.

It was decided to accept an invitation from the National Federation of Professional Workers to appoint representatives to attend a Conference on the subject of Social Insurance, to be held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on the 13th December, and three representatives were appointed.

On the subject of deductions from pay on establishment, it was reported that the Official Side is now proposing a measure of retrospection, to apply to all officers established since 1st January, 1930, which would mean, in effect, that all reductions made after the 1st January, 1930, would be revoked. The Staff Side is prepared to accept this proposal, provided that a measure of retrospection is applied to those officers promoted prior to the 1st January, 1930.

On the question of long leave for tuberculosis cases, it was reported that, on the suggestion of the Confederation, the National Staff Side had endeavoured to obtain from the Treasury official information concerning the incidence of tuberculosis in the Civil Service over a period of years. A reply had been received to the effect that the Treasury did not possess the data necessary to enable it to give the information desired. The matter is being further pursued by the Staff Side with the Treasury.

It was reported that negotiations were still proceeding with the War Office concerning the claim put forward on behalf of Viewers employed in the Royal Army Clothing Department at Pimlico, in membership of the Store and Clothing Inspection Department Viewers' Association, and that correspondence was taking place with the War Office

Administrative Whitley Council, Outstations Committee (Staff Side) on the claim of the Principal Viewers' Association, Ditcham, for representation on the Outstations Committee (Staff Side).

Correspondence is also taking place with regard to various matters on which the assistance of the Confederation has been requested by the Royal Parks Employees' Union.

On the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee, it was agreed to signify the approval of the Confederation to certain proposals made by the Official Side with regard to amendment of the Sick Leave Regulations for unestablished staff, in relation to the calculation of retiring gratuity.

Consideration was given to the question of office accommodation in the Civil Service, and a resolution was adopted in the following terms:—

"That the Staff Side of the National Whitley Council be requested to endeavour to institute a general inquiry into office accommodation throughout the Civil Service, with a view to the observance of reasonable conditions of quietude, cleanliness, sufficient air-space, suitable furniture, and other hygienic requirements in Government offices, and that regard should be paid to the type of building acquired for Government use, in order to dispose of those unhygienic dilapidated buildings at present in use as Government Departments."

At the request of the Customs and Excise Federation the Executive Committee resolved to make a further approach to the Government to endeavour to secure the redress of the grievances of certain Civil Servants who served with the armed forces in the war, in connection with the cases of (a) Enlistment before appointment, (b) Enlistment without permission, and (c) Duration of War Contracts, and this matter was referred to the General Purposes Committee for more detailed consideration.

Customs and Excise Departmental Council.

The 121st Meeting of the Council was held in the Custom House, London, on 22nd October, 1930, the chair being taken by A. J. Dyke, Esq., C.B., C.B.E., Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

PAY AND INCREMENTS.

Agreement was recorded on the extension, *mutatis mutandis*, as from 1st April, 1930, to the Departmental Clerical Class, of the Industrial Court Awards, Nos. 1418 and 1456, granting extra pay to Clerical Officers of the General Clerical Class who undertake the duties of an Officer of a higher grade or of the same grade but in receipt of an allowance, during the latter's absence.

Six individual cases of the starting pay of Departmental Clerical Officers were re-adjourned to permit further examination by the Official Side.

The Staff Side submitted that in all cases of suspension of increment, the official concerned should be notified of the decision at the time the order is given. The Official Side stated that such was the general rule, and undertook to investigate confidentially any reported departures therefrom.

SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES.

The Staff Side recorded their protest, which was noted by the Official Side, at the proposals made in Committee for *per noctem* rates lower for certain Departmental classes than the minimum rates laid down for the general Civil Service classes.

OFFICIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY.

Following previous discussions, the Staff Side withdrew by consent this item from the agenda, intimating that action in any individual cases would be left to the associations concerned, who had noted the principles enunciated by the Official Side.

HOUSING CONDITIONS.

It was agreed to appoint a Special Committee to consider the housing accommodation of Customs and Excise Officials in Northern Scotland.

DISTRICT SCHEMES.

The Staff Side sought a modification of the existing arrangement which precludes the discussion of District Schemes in the appropriate Local Committees, and after the development of their case the subject was adjourned.

OTHER MATTERS.

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

The next meeting of the Council was arranged to be held on 19th November, 1930.

In concluding, the Chairman referred to the considerable volume of business transacted during the year. Over 230 specific agreements had been recorded, many of them relating to re-scheming and fixed officiatorships, in regard to both of which good progress had been made. The 19 disagreements compared not unfavourably with the Council's record since its inception. The spirit of mutual understanding and the business-like conduct of proceedings had been fully maintained during the year, and the Royal Commission had had evidence lucidly presented to it in connection with the working of Whitley machinery in the Department.

The Vice-Chairman associated the Staff Side with the Chairman's remarks, and paid a special tribute to the efficiency with which the Committees of the Council had performed their work. The Staff Side felt that whatever the Royal Commission might recommend or the Government adopt the progress of Whitleyism was assured, and their confidence was due in no small measure to the favourable opinions on the system expressed by Sir Francis Floud to the Royal Commission.

Preventive Staff Association

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London, E.C.4.

Telephone : ROYAL 4279

President : W. G. Thomson

General Secretary : J. Merron

Organising Secretary : J. T. Sutton

Assistant Secretary : W. H. Powell

HARTLEPOOL DISTRICT.

Members are asked to note the change of address of the District Organiser, Mr. J. C. Bonnar, which now is—

H.M. Customs and Excise,

West Dock,

West Hartlepool.

SOUTHAMPTON.

A meeting of the Southampton branch was held at the Alexandra Hotel, on Thursday, 30th October, 1930.

The following Officers were elected to serve on the Local Whitley for the ensuing year:—

Messrs. F. J. Mathers and R. H. Maynard, P.O.s.

Messrs. S. A. W. Beer and H. L. Boalch, A.P.O.s.

Many items of local interest were fully discussed by a well attended meeting. It was decided to place the following item on the Local Whitley Council:—

"that the present lighting system of the launches be abolished, and that electric lighting or a better system be installed."

Mr. Maynard, P.O., and Mr. Boalch, A.P.O., rendered to those present a report of the last Conference, and on conclusion of their remarks, Vote of Confidence was passed in the Councilors and the Executive.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF

TO NOVEMBER 10th, 1930.

APPOINTMENTS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Matthews, C. H.

Welsh, T.

Woodend, J. E.

TRANSFERS.

PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Fagan, W., Glasgow to Gravesend, London.

Harris, R., Liverpool to Appledore,

Plymouth.

Lovell, G., London to Southend, London.

Shannon, F. F., Londonderry Land Barrier,

Belfast, to Glasgow.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Ash, F. L., Newport, Mon., to Briton Ferry, Swansea.
 Booth, F. L., Leith to Hull.
 Lucas, B. C., Gravesend, London, to London.
 McNaught, E. A., Briton Ferry, Swansea, to Gravesend, London.

PROMOTIONS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS TO PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Holderness, R. A., London to Port Talbot, Swansea.
 Moss, A., Hull to Liverpool.
 Northfield, E., Southampton to Londonderry Land Barrier, Belfast.
 Platten, A. N., London.
 Simms, W. F., Grimsby to Heysham, Preston.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

RETIREMENT :—

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICERS, LOWER SECTION :

McLellan, P., Grangemouth, Edinburgh.
 Pezzack, L., Weymouth, Southampton.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER :—

Heath, W. H., Gravesend, London.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER :—

Longbottom, F., Bristol.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, UPPER SECTION :—

Egan, C. E.

PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Parren, S. J. H.
 Whitworth, H.

Promotion to the Rank of C.P.O.

The undermentioned Preventive Officers have been declared successful in the examination for promotion to the rank of Chief Preventive Officer, held last month.

Group.	Name.	Port.
1.	Herrington, Benjamin J. Kerr, John.	Folkestone. Granton.
2.	Titherley, Charles P. Morgan, Charles W. J. Lewin, Robert P. Winder, Charles F. Stewart, John H. Kay, William E. Allen, Edwin S. Ross, Alexander. Mackenzie, Duncan.	Liverpool Newport, Mon. Plymouth. Plymouth. London. London. Southampton. Liverpool. Aberdeen.
3.	Crabb, George H. Sharrock, Edward L. Green, George H. Hodge, William F. Lockwood, Arthur H. Lake, Alfred N. Standing, William E. Rickard, William P. Lee, John F. John, George E.	Harwich. Gravesend. Whitstable. Runcorn. Hull. London. London. Falmouth. Holyhead. Cardiff.

Preventive Service Sports Club Dinner and Dance.

If space permitted, much could be written concerning the doings at the dinner and dance, held at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, on October 29th. The occasion was the first annual dinner of the newly-formed Preventive Staff Sports Club, and the Chair was taken by the first President, Mr. C. M. Woodford, O.B.E., with whom was Mrs. Woodford.

Among the guests were Mr. A. J. Dyke, C.B., C.B.E., Mr. and Mrs. Lupton, Mr. and Mrs. Holland, Mr. H. A. Parker, and Capt. Garriock (P.L.A.).

A much appreciated toast during the evening was that of the C. and E. Sports Club, and in proposing it, Mr. J. T. Sutton drew attention to the fact that the fine sporting organisations within the Department were due very largely to the pioneer spirit of the premier club, which had kept the Department in the very forefront of Civil Service Sport. He hoped that the Preventive Service Sports Club would have as proud a record at the end of twenty-seven years as the C. and E. Club. Mr. Dyke, who replied to the toast, and who said that some of his most cherished memories were connected with sport, acknowledged Mr. Sutton's references to the C. and E. Sports Club, and was obviously glad to hear the expression of such sentiments at a gathering of members of the newest of the Customs' group of clubs.

Mr. Woodford, replying to Capt. Garriock's toast of the Preventive Service Sports Club, explained how the present Club came into being, and referred in affectionate terms to the late Mr. C. E. Egan, who, had he lived, would have been in the height of his glory on this occasion, and to Mr. H. J. Fleet, both of which gentlemen had taken a no inconsiderable part in encouraging the formation of the two London clubs from which the new club had been formed. There were several departments, such as cricket, football, swimming, and he took the opportunity of congratulating Dover on being the first port to secure the Chess trophy as champions. He brought his speeches to an end by calling upon Mr. F. R. Fisk to accept, from Mrs. Woodford and himself, an imposing silver cup, to be presented each year to the best all-round athlete in the club. This fresh evidence of Mr. Woodford's keen interest was received with great enthusiasm by the assembled guests.

The toast of the visitors was given by Mr. F. C. Warne, who can always be relied upon to increase the good humour of a dinner party. It is many years since we had the pleasure of Mr. Holland's company at a Waterguard function of this kind, and his references to the last occasion were extremely entertaining. We well remember his speech at that dinner, when he replied to a toast of the visitors. The renewing of his friendship by replying to a similar toast at the first dinner of the new club proved his interest in Departmental sport, not only in our section, but also in the broader sphere of the Department.

The speeches were brought to a close by Mr. Fisk's toast of the Chairman.

The dance that followed was a most enjoyable affair, and the organisers need have no regrets, save the fact that a whole twelve months must elapse ere we can take part in the second annual dinner of the Preventive Service Sports Club.

The Coming Promotion Crisis.

A REPLY TO "MARCUS."

By "GEN."

In his excellently written article in the last Journal, "Marcus" reintroduces a very interesting if somewhat battered, subject.

We must, perforce, agree with him that, sooner or later, there will be a great block in promotion. When, however, he begins to attribute causes and suggest remedies, our ways lie apart. In the first place, his information is wrong. It is inaccurate to say that Preventive men who were promoted just over ten years ago remained as Preventive Officers for six or seven years, and then obtained further promotion. There is no record of a P.O. of six or seven years' standing having been promoted. The average is nearer eleven years. This actuality, beyond calling attention to "Marcus's" disregard for facts, has no great bearing on the major consideration. The consideration which is of tremendous importance to a large proportion of the staff is the method of promotion. Before going into that, I should like to explain that two reasons, among others, contributed to the "head-long career" along the path of promotion of some of the lucky ones. They are the considerable increase in the number of superior appointments in the Department of late years, and the almost total cessation of appointments to the grade of Boatman round about the year 1898. For three years practically no appointments were made. These facts explain themselves.

To return to the major consideration that I mentioned, may I say, first of all, that our attitude should be one of thought for the benefit of the many, not for the glorification of the few. I may be wrong in my surmise, but "Marcus" savours to me strongly of a 1923/5 entrant. He has reviewed his position and finds that something must be done or he will surely have to pay for his laxity in not joining the Department earlier after the war. That something, to his mind, is a wholesale system of slaughter, whereby he can jump over the heads of his seniors and obtain his place in the sun.

He asks, conscious of his ability to rank among the favoured few, for strict competition, and that the number called up should have a definite relation to the number required. In this way he would have eight P.O.s called up for every C.P.O. vacancy.

Given the present condition of a second chance we should see 87 per cent. of the candidates at each of these exams, sitting for the second time, a really encouraging state of affairs for men in the forties, to whom even one such ordeal is rather appalling. Frankly, while a competitive entrance examination is desirable, qualification alone should

be sufficient for promotion. If a man qualifies at an examination for a superior post, he should get it and not be subject to the luck, good or ill, which enters with the capabilities of his contemporaries. The present system of merit seniority is obviously an injustice. With the luck of the call-up a man stands to lose or gain considerably according to whether he just missed the previous exam., or just scraped into the current one. A reversion to the former method of promotion by seniority following a qualifying test is undoubtedly called for. Such method, while admittedly not being likely to remove the coming block in promotion, will certainly make for a more satisfied feeling among the staff and will leave matters in no worse condition than would cut-throat competition. I venture to assert that if a plebiscite were taken now on this question, an overwhelming majority would declare for the abolition of the system of merit promotion. *Experientia docet.*

Further, "Marcus" seems to have disregarded entirely the position of the failures. Even now we have A.P.O.s of thirty-five and P.O.s of less than forty-five years for whom the service holds nothing higher than their present respective ranks. With such an element in our midst, a contented service is impossible. And this is the element "Marcus" seeks to swell. I can assure him that the great bulk of P.O.s and A.P.O.s do not wish to pave the way for the pitchforking into superior appointments of an ambitious few who feel resentful at having to wait their turn.

And, I ask, which is likely to be the more useful and zealous officer, he who has the prospect of promotion, however remote or faint, still ahead, or he who realises that he is condemned, early in his career, to stick in the same rut, seeing others pass him by, for the remainder of his service, having exhausted his chances of promotion?

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.

Dear, Sir,—I have read with interest the reports of the various District Meetings appearing in the columns of the Journal.

In practically every instance reference has been made to a report made to the members by the Area Councillors as to what took place at the Annual Conference.

I am a member of the largest port in the United Kingdom, and up to the moment there has been no District Meeting since the Conference, nor has there been any report of the proceedings of the Conference from our Councillors.

Such a state of affairs requires some explanation, as I think you will agree.

Have the "big pots" something to hide?
"COCKNEY,"

THE PROMOTION QUESTION.

Sir,—The article by "Marcus" is a most interesting commentary on the new style of examination.

He concludes by suggesting that his scheme can be accomplished through the Association. Doubtless it could, but one wonders why the idea was never put forward in any of the long discussions at local, executive, and council meetings, discussions which resulted in presenting to and securing agreement of the Board to the present system.

Does he not know that the most go-ahead members of the Association, from our worthy President downwards, have contributed serious and careful thought to the preparation of the proposals which resulted in the examination of last month? And now, forsooth, if there be **two** vacancies for Chief Preventive Officers, let **sixteen** smart men be called for examination, with the prime object of **sinking fourteen of them**. A pretty proposal to be sure!

His notion will not cure the evil.

It is freely admitted that a test paper, such as was recently set, calls forth all that is best in a man's ability. It demonstrates his efficiency, and the amount of interest he takes in his work.

If sixty per cent., seventy per cent., or even a higher proportion attain the pass mark, are **all** but one in eight to be struck down, to be relegated to the good for nothing, perhaps without even the delightfully consoling letter which some of us have received to the effect that we are still considered efficient and worthy in our present grade?

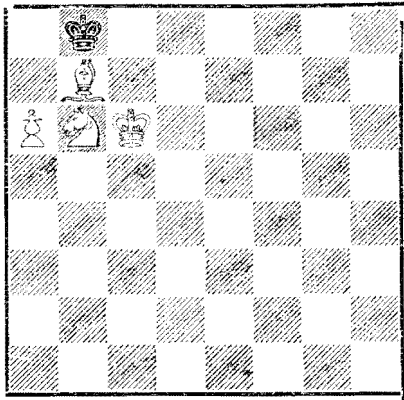
Yours, etc.,
O.K.

Customs Preventive Staff Chess Club.

PROBLEM No. 64a.

ANOTHER POSER BY D. JULIEN.

Black.



White.

White mates with Pawn in five.

Solution to No. 64.

- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| White. | Black. |
| 1. Q—B4. | K—K8. |
| 2. Q—KBL. | |

Change of Address:—

Hon. Sec.: 196, Algernon Road,
Lewisham, S.E.13.

B.C.F. CHESS LAWS CONCLUDED.

Disputes. 44.—Should any dispute arise on a question of fact, it may be referred by agreement to an independent spectator, whose decision in such case shall be final.

45.—Should any dispute arise as to the interpretation of these Laws, or as to any matter affecting the conduct of a game not provided for in them, it shall be referred to the Executive Committee of the British Chess Federation, whose decision in such case shall be final.

Chess Terms Explained.—Castling, Check, Checkmate, and Discovered Check have been previously explained in full.

Divergent Check.—A move that puts the opposing King into check, at the same time attacking one of his pieces, compelling the King to get out of check, and leaving the piece attacked to be captured.

Doubled Pawns.—When a pawn, by a capture, places itself on the same file with another pawn of the same colour, these two pawns are called "Doubled Pawns." (It might here be added that both pawns are then named after the piece on whose file they stand, e.g., 1P—K4, P—Q4; 2 P×P, both white pawns then become Queen's Pawns, and when moved have to be designated).
W.B.

RESULT OF MATCHES.

Versus Ministry of A. & F. H.—Lost 2—1, 3 by default. Messrs. Dudley and Pesco! drew.

Versus Stationery Office H.—Lost 7½—2½. Messrs. Steel and Hale won. Mr. Murray drew.

London Dance Next Week.

A dance organised by the Preventive Service Sports Club has been fixed for FRIDAY next, NOVEMBER 21st, at the PALAIS DE DANSE, NEW CROSS. This is the first dance to be held at New Cross this season, and it is expected that a good number of members and their friends will gather on this occasion, which will be a particularly jolly one.