

The Customs Journal

No. 661

February 22nd, 1930

Fortnightly

CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
True Progress	29	Changes in the Staff	33
Current Comments	30	The V.E.C. and the Examination	35
C. & E. Departmental Council	31	Correspondence	35
P.S.A.	33	Sport and Social	36

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.

TRUE PROGRESS.

IN another page of this issue will be found the terms of the recent agreement reached upon the D.W.C. in the matter of promotion from the P.O. to the C.P.O. grade.

This agreement settles, for a time at least, a question that has been extremely controversial amongst all ranks of the Preventive Service, and one that has been in the very foreground of Association discussions for a period of years.

It is our considered view that every thoughtful member of the grades will rejoice in this further decisive step taken by the Association in its task of placing the Preventive Service in a position that provides the only means of improving the conditions of service of the rank and file.

It may be that there are differences of opinion amongst us as to the details of the new proposal, but there can be no **controversy** upon the necessity for radical change of the previous system.

The conditions of promotion to a supervisory grade such as the C.P.O. have material reactions upon every man in the grades below, irrespective of whether he has aspirations towards the position or not. The capacity of a grade for better work—and it is only in this direction that opportunity for better remuneration lies—is judged, to a large extent, by the supervisory capacity of the grades above.

The problem before the Council of the Association when it considered this question had no element of uncertainty. There was, firstly, the justifiable criticism of the existing system. We who have studied our colleagues in all respects have too frequently had occasion to marvel both at those who were chosen and those who were not. Secondly, there was the plain issue of whether entry to the grade should be on conditions that would not adversely affect the aspirations of every individual in the grades below in so far as remuneration is concerned.

In taking the stand that promotion comes to the few and that nothing in regard to it should remain that would reflect upon the greater majority who have to be content without it, the Council was acting in the best interests of all.

If the new conditions improve the standard of the C.P.O. Grade, as we feel sure they will, then automatically adjustments that are a necessary sequel will make promotion worth while. Whereas under existing conditions, were it not for the prospect of further advance, there would be hardly sufficient aspirants.

Apart from this, however, the structure of the Preventive Service has been strengthened in a vital part, and the result must be to enhance the legitimate claims of the whole of the grades.

CURRENT COMMENTS.

OF late there has been a marked increase in the matter appearing in the correspondence columns, and this is most encouraging. The "Customs Journal" exists for the purpose of ventilating views and introducing ideas, for the benefit of everyone in the Preventive Service. One frequently hears amongst colleagues, expressions of opinion which would form interesting matter for debate in the Journal. Unfortunately, such debates are few. In a department such as ours, where even the largest group of members in one place is comparatively small, the only effective way to exchange ideas is through the Journal.

It is a truth that we have learned from one very unpleasant experience, that the "C.J." is a vital factor in the organising of our very scattered membership. Our little periodical has been proved definitely to be an indispensable publication so far as the Association is concerned. Its value and importance is so clearly obvious that no member should think it not worth while to air his opinions by contributing to its columns. It certainly is worth while, because every letter on any subject, large or small, helps to improve the value of the Journal as the official organ of the Association. The satisfaction that a contributor can gain from this knowledge ought to overcome the inclination to shirk the exertion necessary in scribbling a line for publication.

Amongst the new entrants there are many young men whose views one would like to hear. The Editor would be only too glad to receive letters from them. At a recent meeting at Dover, a young officer raised interesting questions regarding promotion prospects of 1928 entrants; and the possibility of facilities being provided for learning every branch of Waterguard work thoroughly. It was suggested that young officers in the first few years be given experience at various ports at Crown expense. Now, here is a subject of vital interest to all junior Assistant Preventive Officers. The Journal columns are at their disposal. What about it? A discussion amongst the juniors on this question should be lively, particularly as it would very probably draw into it some of the seasoned officers. Most likely contentions that the youngsters would have to take calmly would be that the A.P.O.'s duty is to do what he is told, and that as he is required to do nothing but rummage, he can learn that without travelling about. No doubt there would be some spirited replies to such contentions.

"Buzz," writing in the last issue, deals humorously with a practice which is far too common in connection with public reports of seizures. If it is necessary to mention the Preventive Officer's name, there really is no need to use that irritating phrase, "under the supervision of." We all know the part played by the Preventive Officer and the Assistant Preventive Officer when the latter makes

a seizure, and whilst it is an item of interest to know who are the individuals concerned, it ought to be sufficient to mention their names.

It is not the intention to discourage those who send seizure reports to the Journal. Accounts of seizures, for publication, are most welcome, but contributors are urged to get away from the old stereotyped style. "Buzz" is correct in saying that the "meat" of such reports is the mode of concealment.

* * * *

The letter by "Alpha" urging the Association to take action with a view to presenting before the Royal Commission a more detailed picture of Waterguard work than has already been given, expresses the views of all those of our people who have read the evidence. The Executive will deal with this question at an early date. Much discussion will be necessary, however, before the right course is decided upon. As was previously remarked, the overshadowing of the Preventive Staff by the Officer Grade was inevitable when presenting Customs and Excise evidence as a whole. Separate evidence on the Preventive Service is the only effective method for getting down to a true picture of the work.

But there is one thing that members should clearly understand; evidence submitted to the Royal Commission can have no effect on our salary claim. In any case, our claim should be settled long before the Commission can produce a report.

The fallacy of regarding the Commission as a means to obtaining improvements in salary has already been referred to in the Journal, and the following statement by the Chairman of the Commission makes the position quite clear:—

"The Commission is concerned with general issues such as the structure and organisation of the Civil Service, or the general standards of remuneration of Civil Servants, and we appreciate that representations made to us under the latter head, may at times be amplified or explained by reference to specific scales; but I hope it will be realised that the Commission is not an arbitration court, and it is not our function to deal with salary claims which affect particular classes without raising any of the general issues with which we are called upon to deal."

* * * *

At Dover on the 13th February, The Association Headquarter's officials attended a special meeting of the District. There was a very good attendance, and the proceedings were lively and interesting. After the officers had addressed the members on the various aspects of Association activity, they proceeded to deal with a list of questions that had been prepared in anticipation of their coming.

These were all thoroughly explored, and at the end of the meeting a resolution appreciating the information that had been given was carried unanimously.

It is unfortunate that more visits of this kind cannot be paid to District meetings. In one short meeting many things can be explained that would normally take months of writing to settle.

* * * *

Complaints continue to come in from members in small isolated ports that they are excluded from news regarding what is happening in their own Districts. District Secretaries are urged to keep in touch with their members in outlying places. These officers are really more in need of attention than their colleagues stationed in the large ports where information can be obtained easily.

It must also be mentioned that there are cases where District Secretaries find difficulty in obtaining replies to correspondence addressed to small port members, but there are not many instances of this.

* * * *

Arrangements are being made to hold a meeting of the Executive probably in the second week in March. The important items on the agenda will be the position of the salary claim; recruitment to the Immigration Service; co-ordination with other Waterguard Grades. There are numerous other items and the Committee will, as usual, have their hands full.

V.E.S.

C.P.O. EXAMINATION.

Members of the Association interested in the above are reminded of the course now being conducted under the auspices of the V.E.S.

This course is particularly valuable owing to the new examination. It takes some months to complete, and prospective candidates at the next examination are advised to enrol as early as possible.

The charge for the ten papers, including postage, is 30/-. Applications should be forwarded to the Secretary, V.E.S., Preventive Staff Association, 13, Beer Lane, London, E.C.3, from whom full details of the course may be obtained.

OUR BOYS.

EXAMINATION—GENERAL CLERICAL GRADE APRIL, 1929.

Mr. J. Smith, age 17 years, son of Mr. J. W. T. Smith, P.O., Goole, has been appointed a clerk in the County Court, and commenced duty at Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, on the 3rd inst.

Customs and Excise Departmental Council.

The 113th meeting of the Council was held in the Custom House, London, on 29th January, 1930, the chair being taken by Sir F. L. C. Floud, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

PAY.

The question of the starting pay of Assistant Preventive Officers promoted to Departmental Clerical Officers was adjourned *sine die* while under treatment elsewhere as part of a general question.

Consideration of a committee disagreement on the subject of extra pay for Coast Preventive men examining passengers' baggage was also adjourned at the Staff Side's request.

ALLOWANCES.

Disagreement was registered on the application of the National Whitley Council's agreement on subsistence allowances to Unattached Officers.

In connection with the disturbance allowance payable to Unattached Officers, it was agreed to make certain alterations to the major agreement concerning the foreseeable duration of officiations.

It was agreed that travelling and subsistence expenses of officers who are called up for interviews by the Board in connection with vacancies abroad should be paid by the Department.

PROMOTION.

At the request of the Official Side, the Council adjourned consideration of the Staff Side's counter-proposals in regard to (a) Reporting Officers, and (b) Panel of Promotion Board, in connection with the Departmental Clerical Class.

LEAVE.

Agreement was recorded on the lines of a proposed General Order dealing with emergency leave, the final terms to be settled by informal discussion.

It was also agreed to remove the limitation expressed by the word "minuted" in an earlier agreement (General Order 47/1925), respecting return from leave to attend court proceedings, the explanation of the resulting position given by the Official Side at the previous meeting being fully accepted by the Staff Side.

ACCOMMODATION AND EQUIPMENT.

In view of the appointment at the last meeting of a special Committee to deal with certain standards, the Council adjourned for the time being the Staff Side's proposal to appoint a special Committee on the whole subject.

In response to Staff Side enquiries, the Official Side stated that no definite developments had occurred recently in connection with the idea of securing a new site for the Custom House, London, but if and when the occasion arose the Staff Side would be informed at an early stage.

"ACTING" DUTIES.

Following the series of discussions previously recorded, the Council adjourned *sine die* the Staff Side proposal that the duties of a Higher Clerical

Officer absent on leave or otherwise should normally be undertaken by the most senior Clerical Officer in his section.

UNITS OF WORK.

It was agreed that exceptional circumstances might be considered to permit a variation of the unit (No. 36), for correspondence and reports.

The Staff Side withdrew a proposal to revise the unit for probate work.

OTHER MATTERS.

The Council received a schedule of suggestions from the Suggestions Committee, with notes of decisions recorded and of the action taken by the Board in respect of each.

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

WATERGUARD SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

The following agreements were ratified:—

UNIFORM.

Agreement that for the purpose of calculating the date of the first renewal issue of uniforms to Assistant Preventive Officers, the initial issue be regarded as belonging to:—

- (a) In the case of Assistant Preventive Officers who enter the service in the first half of the period between general issues of uniform, to the general issue preceding the date of entry.
- (b) In other cases, to the general issue following the date of entry.

(This agreement supplements the agreement reached on 21st June, 1927.)

POCKET JOURNALS.

Agreement that the standing instructions relating to Waterguard Pocket Journals be cancelled and the following substituted:—

POCKET JOURNALS, WATERGUARD.

Pocket Journals in the approved form (Book No. 19), are to be kept by Chief Preventive Officers, Preventive Officers (including Preventive Officer-in-Charge), Assistant Preventive Officers-in-Charge and Assistant Preventive Officers acting as Preventive Officers. A cover for protecting the Journals is supplied. These Journals are to be examined by supervisory officers as opportunity offers, not more frequently, save in exceptional circumstances, than once a week. The examination should, save in exceptional circumstances, be made at the office, and any reasonable explanation of delay in making entries is to be accepted.

Entries are to show the time that an officer is employed in the office and on the station, with brief records of the work performed in each case. These entries are to be made as soon as the work in hand permits. The following is a specimen of the entries to be made in the Journals of officers below the rank of Chief Preventive Officer. (The abbreviations used are:—

"R" for "Rummage," "C" for "Clearing Inwards," "B" for "Baggage," "V" for "Visits,"
Hours. Statement of Employment.

8 to 8.30. Office duties.

8.30 to 1.0 V. station, R. s.s. "Jones," B.

s.s. "Smith," S. Stores, s.s.
"Nellie."

Returned to office.

1.0 to 1.45

Refreshments.

1.45 to 2.15

Preparing primes and paying in duty.

2.15 to 3.30

V. station, R. s.s. "James," s.s.
"Blanche," checked Stores, s.s.
"William," Rec. duty, s.s.
"Mary."

Returned to office.

3.30 to 4.

Office duties.

Where permission is granted to an officer to absent himself from his station during working hours, an entry is to be made in the journal and is to be initiated by the superior officer sanctioning such absence.

No entry need be made in the Journal of (a) the record of Stores placed under Seal, (b) the record of Deck Cargo Measurements, or (c) the number of duty slips. On both (a) and (b) the particulars which are required to be noted in the Blue Book, and Inward Clearing Bill, respectively, are sufficient.

When Stores are issued from under seal for Duty or Consumption, the full particulars which are required to be entered in the Blue Book or recorded upon the Inward Clearing Bill respectively, should be supplemented by a brief note of the fact of such issue, without details, in the Journal.

Entries are not to be made in Journals that ships have been "rummaged," unless they have actually been "rummaged," *i.e.*, properly searched. The mere *boarding* of a vessel does not, of course, constitute a *rummage*.

Upon completion, each month's Journals of Preventive Officers, etc., are to be forwarded to the Chief Preventive Officer. Collectors (in London Waterguard, the Superintendent), will see that a fair proportion of Journals are properly examined. The Journals will then be filed for reference (Reference No. 74).

TIME ATTENDANCE—OVERTIME.

Agreement that overtime be paid on the basis of actual time attendance in the case of the officers engaged in watching and guarding the M/V. "Scheldesop," in London in April and May, 1928. (Reference No. 77).

PROMOTION—PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER—

Agreement that—

- (1) Promotion to the Chief Preventive Officer Grade be on the result of a qualifying examination in two parts—written and oral.
- (2) Seniority to be the sole deciding factor as to order of calling up, subject to there being no objection to a candidate on disciplinary grounds.
- (3) A definite qualifying standard be laid down for the written test.
- (4) Two chances to be allowed to eligible Preventive Officers.
- (5) Six months' notice of an examination be given if practicable.
- (6) The written test comprises two papers of 2½ to 3 hours each, covering respectively (a) Administration and (b) Regulations and Practice, in

either case as affecting the work of the Waterguard; each paper to consist of five questions carrying equal marks of which three are to be answered. (Reference No. 73).

- (7) Candidates who qualify for promotion to be promoted in order of merit on the written papers, subject to candidates whose written papers are of equal merit being promoted in their existing order of seniority as between themselves.

Preventive Staff Association

Head Office :

Thames Chambers,

13 Beer Lane,

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

NOTICE TO MEMBERS.

ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS.

Gentlemen.—In accordance with the Constitution of the Association, the Councillors enumerated below automatically resign from the Council, and nominations for the vacancies are hereby requested.

Area.	Name.	Rank.
London.	P. Spear	A.P.O.
Liverpool.	A. E. Farmer	do.
South Wales.	A. W. P. Densley	do.
Hull.	J. Shooter	do.
Gravesend.	G. W. Grace	P.O.
Tyne.	W. A. Colwill	do.
South Coast.	B. J. Herrington	do.
Scotland.	W. A. G. Manson	do.

Nominations on the forms circulated should be forwarded in sufficient time to reach the above address on or before the 10th prox. They should be signed by two members, and, if possible, by the nominee. Only members of the **grade concerned** in the appropriate area are eligible to participate in this election, and the retiring Councillors are eligible for re-election.

For the Executive Committee,

J. T. SUTTON,
Organising Secretary.

DOVER.

At a District meeting recently, it was stated that the Waterguard staff at Dover had, between June and December, 1929, inclusive, dealt with 155 French seaplanes, carrying a total of 140 passengers. Following discussion, the local Secretary was instructed to inform Association headquarters that aircraft from foreign

were being dealt with at Dover by the Waterguard staff, and also to urge the Council to make further endeavour to obtain the control of all official landing places for aircraft from foreign for this department.

A resolution to alter the departmental title to "The Preventive Service of H.M. Customs and Excise" was adjourned until the next meeting.

Arising from a discussion of the report of the recent Waterguard Sectional Committee, the meeting was unanimous that the evidence put forward in the Salary Claim was the unanimous opinion of the Staff and that it was correct in detail, and it was hoped that, in the future negotiations with the official side, the Board would indicate its willingness to adequately adjust the injustices under which the Waterguard staff had suffered in the past. The meeting expressed its absolute confidence in the manner in which the staff side of the Waterguard Sectional Committee had represented the claims of the staff.

Several local matters were discussed.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF.

to FEBRUARY 17th, 1930.

APPOINTMENTS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER :—

Sloane, R.

ENGINEER MECHANIC :—

Kent, F. C.

MATE-IN-CHARGE :—

O'Brien, J.

TRANSFERS.

PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Heywood, E. W., Bristol to Avonmouth, Bristol

Hutley, B. N., Leith to Cardiff.

Smith, F. G. H., Londonderry (Land Barrier), Belfast to Bristol.

Snow, H. W., Burry Port, Swansea to Gravesend, London.

PROMOTIONS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS TO PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Dex, A. C., Hull to Sharpness, Newport, Mon.

Rankin, A. T., London to Cowes, Portsmouth.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

RETIREMENTS—PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Elliott, A. G., Gravesend, London.

Giles, S. R., Fruro, Plymouth.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS

PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Burrell, W. H. C.

Cumming, A.

Waterworth, J. A.

VACANCY.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER :—

*Burry Port, Swansea.

*An allowance of £30 per annum for performing Long Room work, etc., is assigned.

The V.E.C. and the Examination.

From time to time enquiries are received, urging the re-opening of an old feature of the "Customs Journal," i.e., the N.Q.A. column. Indeed, an article appears in this issue which would suggest that there is a demand for something of this sort. The N.Q.A. column was always intended as an aid to students seeking promotion, but with the inception of the Vocational Education Scheme, the need for it ceased to exist. It may be possible to set aside a column or so of the "C.J." for the discussion of various points (and this has already been done) in the future. In the meantime, we have come to an arrangement with the Vocational Educational Committee, whereby we can publish in each issue one or two answers to the questions set at the last examination of A.P.O.s for promotion, and here is the first.

ANSWERS TO EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

(Published by arrangement with the V.E.C.).

First Paper. Question 1(a).

Write a report to your Superior Officer on the following incident, stating *fully* your proceedings, and what you, as a Preventive Officer, considered it necessary to do:—

(a) At 9 p.m., while visiting your station with your A.P.O., you observe the Chief Steward of the S.S. "Arabia," which arrived with 120 passengers from the Far East on the previous day, going ashore. You intercept him and question him regarding the contents of a parcel he is carrying, and find that it contains two boxes of cigars O.S. wrapped in a silk kimono, none of which, he admits, were declared on List 142. Being dissatisfied with his general demeanour, you pursue your enquiries and ultimately find in his possession a quantity of opium.

Answer:—

The C.P.O. Station.
Port Date

Sir,
Smuggling Offence by John Other,
Chief Steward of the Passenger Steamer
"Arabia," at Hong Kong (date).

While visiting my station 9 o'clock this evening, I intercepted John Other, Chief Steward, descending the gangway of the above vessel carrying a parcel. In reply to my questions he denied possession of any dutiable or prohibited goods. On examination of the parcel it was found to contain two boxes of cigars, O.S. (50 in each, weight 1½ lbs.), wrapped in a silk kimono, which goods he admitted were not produced at the first opportunity or declared on List 142.

Being dissatisfied with his demeanour, I requested him to accompany me aboard the vessel. I then asked Other whether he had any objection to being searched. He hesitated, and eventually said "No." A search of his person revealed ½ lb. of prepared opium. I further questioned him as to the source of supply. He, however, would only state that he was taking

the cigars ashore for his own use, and that the kimono and opium, which were purchased in Hong Kong, were intended for a friend.

A careful rummage of the places to which the Chief Steward had access was made, but with no further result.

In the absence of the Master, the Chief Officer was informed of the discovery and shown the seized goods. I then handed him the completed form 482.

The offender was arrested and charged at the Police Station with the following:—

Knowingly carrying certain uncustomed goods, to wit, 1½ lbs. cigars and one silk kimono, with intent to defraud His Majesty of the duties due thereon, contrary to Section 186 of the C.C. Act, 1876.

And

Illegally importing certain prohibited goods, to wit, 8 ozs. prepared opium, with intent to evade the prohibition relating to such goods, contrary to the above Section of the Act.

In view of the latter, I have informed the local police of the case, for such action as they deem necessary to make under Section 13 of the Dangerous Drugs Act, 1920, for the concurrent hearing of the charge.

The information to be exhibited in Court in respect to the penalty involved is prepared and attached hereto.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Duty on cigars seized	1	1	0			
Value do	1	0	0			
Single value and duty	-----			2	1	0
Value on silk kimono	1	10	0			
Duty do.	0	10	0			
Single value and duty	-----			2	0	0
Treble Value and Duty Involved	£12	3	0			

The case is due to be heard at Police Court to-morrow, the inst. I will be in attendance with my A.P.O., Mr. , to give evidence if called upon.

Form 483 has been forwarded to the W.S. (or Collector).

NUMBER.....

Nursery Rhymes.

ADJUSTED BY "GEN."

No. 4.

Sing a song of sixpence,
Join the P.S.A.
Just sixpence a week, sir,
Is all you have to pay.
Face it like a sportsman,
And pay without demur,
Don't batten upon others
And prove yourself a "dirty dog."

NOTE.—The rhyme seems to have become unstuck in the last line but, possibly, readers will be able to find a suitable word instead of the last two which will rhyme with "demur," and still not destroy the meaning. "GEN."

Several letters have unavoidably to be held over owing to pressure of space.

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.

THE PROMOTION QUESTION.

Sir, In his letter in a recent issue, "Kew" criticises the agreement which the P.S.A. has arrived at with the Board on the question of promotion of P.O. to C.P.O. Surely, Mr. Editor, he is behind the times, because my recollection is that this question was discussed at every District meeting about nine months ago, and the District representatives, who form the P.S.A. Conference, instructed its representatives on the Waterguard Sectional Committee to conclude this agreement.

The main body of opinion has moved on and left our friend struggling with the qualities of being "able to commit crammed theoretical knowledge to paper in a highly efficient manner."

There is no doubt that "Kew" is actuated by a real desire to be helpful, even if it is a belated effort, and if he would take the trouble to get into touch with his District Secretary, and attend District meetings, I feel sure that he will be kept posted in Association activity, and could then assist with suggestions, or constructive criticism.

Yours, etc.,

A.M.

THE PROMOTION QUESTION.

Dear Sir,—As the writer of "Current Comments," has, in the last issue of the "Journal," commented upon my letter in the previous issue, I crave your indulgence to reply to him.

There is a line of defence called "confusing the issue," which, no doubt, is very successful in silencing the rabble at street-corner meetings; but it does not succeed with clear-thinking patriots. It is quite evident that my criticism has caused him some uneasiness; but I cannot understand why he resorts to such tactics, if he is wholly right, and I am wholly wrong. Then again, why discuss people's complexes by way of introduction to his subject? Is this veiled satire or not? Some people would call it bad taste, and would be prompted to ask whether his knowledge of psycho-analysis has been obtained from personal treatment; also, whether his particular complex is "clerical." Rudeness, however, is not one of my strong points, so I shall not place a question mark at the end of the sentence.

My letters have dealt quite clearly with one subject, viz., the over-rated importance of clerical ability, in general Association policy. In the first, my remarks merely covered general ground. The second gave a concrete illustration of my meaning. At no time did I suggest that a higher standard of clerical ability was not desirable. I did, however, and still do, maintain that to advance men to the supervising posts solely on the merit of written examination papers is most unjust. If it is a qualifying test, why introduce merit at all? If

we must have merit, it should be based upon a policy of "all things being equal." I think there are very few in the Department mean enough to want to climb over another's back, just because they happen to be a little smarter on paper; and I am quite sure that no decent-minded man wishes to score at the expense of his colleagues, even if he has the ability to do so, provided they are fully qualified in every other way to fill a supervising position.

I have been looking up some old issues of the "Journal" when promotion methods from P.O. to C.P.O. were first discussed as a means of securing a better type of men. It is quite evident that the merit system has been strongly opposed in many areas. It is also evident that apathy on the part of Association members has eventually resulted in the Council being imbued with a sense of its own authority (this was urged by the writer of "Current Comments," in Journal No. 611), to carry through the new style of examination. Therefore, although it is claimed to be the staff's wish, virtually it is very doubtful. In Journal No. 624, a correspondent who signs himself "NON SIBI, SED OMNIBUS," discusses the subject at length, and concludes by saying, "sack the lot; for it is evident that the Council as a body has acquired an intoxicated idea of the qualifications necessary for the position of C.P.O." It is a pity that his letter was paid no heed to by the Association members.

There is another aspect, which some of the highest authorities on education are agreed upon, viz., the fetish of examinations. No really talented person has ever trusted the examination system. The subsequent work of many who pass falls far below the required standard. Their examination work has been a "flash in the pan"; and we shall undoubtedly find the same result in these new examinations of ours. Does an employer in the world of commerce make use of such a system? No! his business would fall to pieces if he did.

Does the writer of "Current Comments" realise what a dangerous gospel he is preaching, when he suggests that rummage duty has become incidental to the preventive service rendered by the staff? Is he in a position to suggest a more effective measure of protection to the Revenue than the despised rummage duty? This duty, with its inevitable "plugs of hard" complex (a very noble form of ridicule), is the fundamental basis of the Department's functioning; and to belittle it is knocking the bottom out of all our claims to proper recognition. Do the Official Side agree that rummage duty is only incidental, etc.? I think not.

To conclude, I should like to say that I strongly resent being advised by the writer of "Current Comments" to get down to it, as if I were a small boy. To say the very least, it is a very high-handed attitude for him to adopt. I might inform him that I always "get down" to whatever duty I'm called upon to perform, and I'm not foolish enough to "jib" or sulk just because I do not agree with a new idea.

Thank you, Mr. Editor,

Yours faithfully,

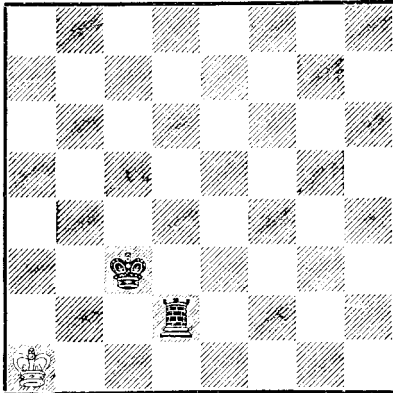
"KEW."

SPORT AND SOCIAL.

Customs Preventive Staff Chess Club

We must control our feelings, not destroy them. They are like fire, a good player but a bad loser.

PROBLEM No. 48.*



Black mate in two.

Solution to No. 47—

White.	Black.
1 Q—Kt7	Q—Kt4
Q—K7.	
	if B—B5
Kt—K4.	
	if Kt—Q5
B—Q6.	

Correction.—Problem No. 46.—The King above the rook should be the white King.

B.C.F. CHESS LAWS.

12.—If the player has no legal move other than taking a pawn in passing, he must make that move. PAWN PROMOTION.

13.—If a pawn be moved to the eighth rank, it must forthwith be nominated as, and exchanged for a Queen, Rook, Bishop or Knight of the same colour irrespective of whatever pieces may still remain on the board. CHECK.

14.—The King may not be captured. It is said to be "in check" if it be in such a position that, but for this law, it would be liable to capture if it were the opponent's turn to play. The player may neither place nor leave his King in check, whether the attaching piece be pinned or not.

1930 TOURNAMENTS—FURTHER RESULTS.

Mr. Boodle, Dover, beat Mr. Dudley, London.
Mr. Sandford, Newport, beat Mr. Matthews, Irvine.
Mr. Matthews beat Mr. Hargrove, Liverpool.
Mr. Hargrove and Mr. Vigeon, Riddham Dock, draw.

Mr. Kidman, Liverpool, beat Mr. Wood, Dover.
Mr. Tuck, Dover, beat Mr. Prior, London.
Mr. Tuck beat Mr. Wood.

Messrs. Clayson, Liverpool, and Lee, Swansea, forfeit point in Round 1.

CUP CONTEST.

The following members have won their games in the first round:—Mr. Boodle and Mr. Morrison,

Dover; Mr. Matthews, Irvine; Mr. Hughes, Holyhead; Mr. Robbins, London. Two games are still in progress.

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL'S TROPHY.

This contest is for teams of four players drawn from Districts under the jurisdiction of one Superintendent. So far, London and Dover have entered teams, and it is hoped that Liverpool and Holyhead will enter. Entries with names of teams in playing order must be sent to the M.C. and Referee, Mr. F. G. Boodle, 31, Pilgrim's Way, Dover, by February 25th. The contest will commence on March 1st.

THE QUERY COLUMN

By W.M.S.

It has been well demonstrated during the past few years that the junior officers in the Preventive Service are taking a very lively interest in Regulations and General Orders. The opportunities presented for study have been grasped by the majority, and one notices in the papers submitted by students a growing tendency to delve deeply. The average aspirant to promotion, and the officer who realises that knowledge is power in getting over the many intricacies of his daily task, are not satisfied with a superficial and parrot-like knowledge of the regulations.

It would be safe to say that there is no other Department where the officers prepare themselves as they do in our own, or where the departmental education of its members takes such a prominent position. But in no other department is such an extensive miscellaneous knowledge required, where it is necessary for an officer to know, not only the law and regulations governing the branch to which he belongs, but the regulations of at least five other branches besides, and where he is so often required to make immediate personal decisions on matters frequently of great importance. Departmental education, then, becomes a necessity with us, for, distinct from other branches, the words "mechanical" or "routine" can take no place in Preventive nomenclature. And it has been proved that, given the chance of tuition, the officers require no inducement.

In communications the writer has received, the absence from the "Customs Journal" of a kind of N.Q.A. column has been rather deplored. Such a column existed for some years, and was the means of solving many problems and difficulties arising on obscure points. It is suggested that such a feature should be revived in some form for the purpose of opening out subjects for discussion, and it is proposed that some points should come up for discussion each issue. For instance, the examination questions might provide some scope on subjects or points arising from those questions.

Space does not permit in this article for the elaboration of any point, but it may serve as an introduction to what might profitably be carried on as a column for discussing interesting and obscure points in the regulations.