

# 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*

## UNITY.

ONE of the main causes of the failure of the Staff claims when the Waterguard Inquiry took place in 1911 was the complete absence of unity. There was no central policy, and each of the delegates stated his case at the Inquiry from his own point of view and without reference to the possibility that his evidence might be directly contradictory to that given by other representatives. Under these circumstances, conflict of statements was bound to occur, and therefore this Inquiry instead of helping the Preventive Staff, did much harm. The rank and file of the Staff blamed their representatives, and the representatives accused the rank and file of failing to give the necessary support. The fact was really that no one had fully realised until then that rough-and-tumble methods are useless in fighting a wage claim. In the circumstances it is not surprising that this Inquiry gave us practically nothing but a reconstitution of supervising posts.

Those who were wide awake enough to see the cause of the trouble saw that no real success could come to the Preventive Service until unity amongst the grades was established, and there were several who worked heroically towards this end. It was a bitter struggle, however, because there were so many who took a very serious view of their own personal dignity, and the possible loss of it if there was too much of this unity business. Eventually prejudice was to some extent broken down, and the stiff-necks agreed to the formation of a federation of the two Waterguard Associations. This was known as the Waterguard Federation, and though it was far from the ideal, great things were expected of it when the next crisis arrived in 1922-23.

But everyone knows what happened in 1923. Certainly there was a much better result than in 1911, and there is no doubt that the Staff case was presented with skill and knowledge of proper methods. Nevertheless it was generally felt that there was something wrong somewhere; that with the opportunities available there

should have been a much better result to the claims put forward. The truth of the matter was that though a Federation had been achieved, this method of obtaining unity was unwieldy, slow, and cumbersome. It was indeed a great handicap on those who had to fight our battles. It was a high price to pay for unity, but at the time it had to be paid. The alternative would have been chaos as in 1911. The Staff did not succeed as they should have done, and their leaders fully realised that a higher degree of unity would have caused a much more satisfactory state of affairs. But many officers were at the time solaced by another reconstitution of the supervising grades.

To-day we have in the P.S.A. a highly organised Association knitting together the two most important elements of the Preventive Service. This organisation came into existence as the result of determined efforts of those pioneers who had attempted in 1923 to win their battle with a make-shift machine. During the past few years the achievements of the P.S.A. have been numerous enough and important enough to convince its most bitter critics that its formation was really worth while; that those far-seeing pioneers knew what they were after, and that they were aiming in the right direction.

But the process of unifying the Preventive Staff is not yet complete. There are yet outside its sphere the grades who leaned upon the P.S.A. during the whole course of Whitley proceedings in regard to the recent Salary Claim. At this present moment there is a danger that in spite of the trojan fight by the P.S.A., which has in face of heavy odds brought about a most favourable position for the Staff, these grades will be the cause of our being foiled at the last moment. We can only hope that they will be stirred by a sense of sportsmanship, and will scorn to take advantage of a position created by the energies of an Association whom they have declined even to assist in the efforts made to improve all grades.

## CURRENT COMMENTS.

THIS is the last issue of the Journal for the year 1930, and it is therefore the appropriate moment to wish every one of our members a happy and prosperous New Year. Behind these good wishes there is a determination to bring them to realisation, for it can certainly be claimed by the Association that if its present endeavours are successful it will have contributed greatly towards achieving happiness and prosperity for the Preventive Staff during the coming year.

At the moment it is not possible to estimate what the result of the present crisis will be, but there can be no doubt that whichever way things turn out there will be important changes taking place in the organisation of our department, and that being the case we can expect better things, because change in the Preventive Staff can hardly mean worse conditions.

\* \* \* \*

The Staff Side of the Departmental Council, at the December meeting, raised with the Official Side the question of delay in agreeing terms of remit for the Arbitration Court in regard to the Preventive Staff Association claim for increased salaries for Preventive Officers and Assistants. The Staff Side, not being satisfied with the result of the discussion, subsequently held a special meeting of themselves in order to decide upon action. A line of action was decided upon, but the outcome of this was not known at the time of going to print. It will be realised that owing to the Christmas holidays all matter for the Journal must be prepared earlier than usual for the current issue. Any change in the position will be notified to the Districts by Circular.

\* \* \* \*

Members will be interested to hear that the post of Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise is now occupied by E. R. Forber, Esq., C.B., C.B.E., from the Ministry of Health. Mr. P. J. Grigg, after holding this post for but a few weeks, has departed for Somerset House. These sudden and unexpected changes have caused much surprise.

\* \* \* \*

"Cee Bee" in his letter to the Journal on the Promotion question, advises Association officials to get to work and find out what the staff wants in this matter. Evidently he has forgotten that at three successive Conferences the item of prime importance on the Agenda was in regard to methods of promotion; and that in the intervals between these Conferences the Association officials were doing everything possible to obtain from the members a really solid and definite opinion. They even went to the extent of providing alternative draft

schemes for discussion, so that every member would have an opportunity of expressing his views either for or against the various suggested methods of promotion. Unfortunately, there were too many people who failed to take the problem seriously, and were inclined to regard it as a stunt for the benefit of a few. To-day, however, uneasiness is beginning to grow, but the discussion will not be revived unless on the initiative of some member or group of members. "Cee Bee" is wrong in assuming that it is the job of the Association officials to **find out** what the staff wants. It is true that frequently this has to be done, but it is far preferable for the members to indicate spontaneously what they want, and to instruct their representatives to get it for them.

\* \* \* \*

The Royal Commission on the Civil Service is still hearing evidence from various bodies, and it seems likely that this will continue for the next two or three months. A good deal of written evidence has been submitted regarding which oral elaboration will be made. It is understood that no oral evidence is needed by the Commission in regard to the C. & E. Federation's case against the Employment of Women in the Customs and Excise Department. Evidently the written statement has been clearly presented and handled with completeness. It is, however, a pity that no elaboration is required, because it would have been a most interesting subject.

\* \* \* \*

Renewal forms for Boots Booklovers' Library are now being requisitioned by the Association, and all members are reminded that these can be had from Headquarters. The number taking advantage of the facilities afforded by this Library is growing each year. This is a case where membership of the Association qualifies an individual to obtain a privilege which in many cases is equal in cash value to the amount he would pay in subs. to the P.S.A.

\* \* \* \*

These notes are unavoidably brief on this occasion, owing to pressure of work due to the holiday period coming just before important meetings of the Executive Committee, Water-gard Sectional Committee, etc., which are to be held at the end of this month and the beginning of January.

\* \* \* \*

Will members please make a note that when replying to advertisers the "Customs Journal" should be mentioned. Unless this is done the credit for attracting business may be given to some other periodical.

Support those who support us—but do not forget to tell them.

**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 COMING PROMOTION CRISIS.

Sir,—Recent matter in your journal on this subject has revealed that there is going to be a promotion block; that the present qualifying system of examination is tending in that direction; that a number of contributors acknowledge these facts; that there is a good deal of apathy amongst those likely to be affected; that "Ploughman" will be constructive; that "W.M.S." is an idealist, but has vision; that "Gen." is a retrograde "Die-Hard;" that "competitive examination" is a "bogey" and frightens many; that the "bogey" is simple and fair; that some are like ostriches and do not want to see the obvious; that there are some high-brows, and, like troublesome flies, should be squashed; that flies sometimes wake people, and should be squashed with a sledge-hammer; that some people do take a lot of waking; that there are some who hope they will not wake; that the multitude can be led on two loaves and five small fishes; that C.P.O.s are the loaves and P.O.s the fishes; that all can be P.O.s and C.P.O.s by this "miraculous method;" that the lost book of Euclid will be found with a Waterguard stamp on it; that one of its theorems will be that any number can be divided by 2 or 8, and still be the same; that all privates shall be corporals, and all corporals shall be sergeants in the Waterguard, if they wait long enough; that there are some who believe they will all be promoted (and the Argentinians, and the Greeks); that the man who says you cannot do this without competition is a fool; that there is a hunt on; that the average member will be sacrificed by his "high-brows;" that the test should be by length of beard; that several people have a remedy without "slaughter," but they don't know it; that some preach of a way out for all, but they cannot find it; that those who follow these disciples will be "left in the wilderness;" and that some people are trying to jamb a clear and fair S.O.S. to the younger P.O.s and A.P.O.s

Now, Mr Editor, I believe I have done my duty in drawing attention to the promotion trouble in store for the majority of the members of the Association, and I only hope they will stir themselves before it is too late. Whatever the relationship of one grade to another is, and whether the new scheme of the Board's materialises or not, the qualifying system of examination never can be a sane solution to promotion tests. It only stores up trouble for the future. In my humble opinion the fairest system is competition, and this is the recognised system in practically every department but our own. Competitive examinations are disliked by everyone, but if we must have elimination of some of the candidates—then it is the only fair system. The proportionate formula set out

below is one which should be applied to all Waterguard examinations to avoid promotion troubles.

A.P.O.s: P.O.s.  
: Candidates: Successes.  
P.O.s; C.P.O.s.

I wish you and "Gen." and the others a Happy New Year.

Yours, etc.,  
"MARCUS."

THE PROMOTION QUESTION.

Sir,—I should like to say I am in complete agreement with "Cec Bee's" idea of calling up any A.P.O. for promotion who has been in the Service ten years and is over thirty years of age—but, only give him two chances as at present.

In a sense an A.P.O. is serving an apprenticeship, and in all the high-grade professions such as banking, accountancy, etc., five years is the time in which it is considered a man should become proficient in his work and able to pass an examination qualifying him for a position of trust.

Ten years is ample time for an A.P.O. to become proficient in the administration of the Customs regulations, and after that period any A.P.O. should be able to sit for his examination for promotion. As we are public servants, and the public is entitled to the best brains their money will command, the examination should be strictly competitive.

This scheme will not appeal to those members who have early prospects of promotion, but if they will examine the seniority list they will see that not many extra men will be included at the next examination than would be under the present method.—Yours, etc.,

"FAIRPLAY."

**Changes in the Staff.**

TO DECEMBER 15th, 1930.

PROMOTION.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, LOWER SECTION:—  
Morgan, C. W. J., Newport, Mon., to Unattached, Office of I.G.W.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

RETIREMENTS:—  
PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—  
Stonham, H. T., London.  
ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—  
Evans, D., Lydney, Newport, Mon.

OTHER CAUSES:—  
Hughes, W. R., Assistant Preventive Officer, Holyhead, Chester (to Assistant Inspector, Welsh Board of Health).

## C. & E. Departmental Council

The 122nd meeting of the Council was held in the Custom House, London, on the 19th November, 1930, the chair being taken by P. J. Grigg, Esq., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

Before proceeding to the business of the meeting the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Morton, said that he wished on behalf of the Staff Side to welcome the new chairman, and to wish him every success in his new work. He referred to the high traditions of the Department, and to the loyalty of its staff, and expressed confident hope that the Chairman would never have reason to feel other than proud of the Department which had been placed in his charge.

The Chairman thanked the Staff Side for their good wishes, and said that he was not unaware of the excellent traditions of the Department in the past. He recognised the loyalty of all sections of the staff in working for the public good, and it was his desire to co-operate with them and assist them to the full to that end. Referring in particular to the Whitley machinery in the Department, he promised every effort on his part to make this as successful in the future as it had been in the past.

Mr. Morton then said that the Staff Side felt that they could not let this occasion pass without expressing their gratitude to the late Chairman for the courtesy and sympathy which he had always displayed towards them. They wished him success and happiness in his new work, and suggested that a joint message of farewell should be sent him from both sides of the Council.

The Chairman cordially accepted this suggestion on behalf of the Official Side, who, he said, would all desire to be associated in expressing their heartiest good wishes to Sir Francis Floud in the very important and difficult post to which he had been appointed.

### OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES.

It was agreed that the senior member of the Board present should take the chair at meetings of the Council during the coming twelve months. Mr. T. Morton was re-elected Vice-Chairman, and Messrs. F. N. Roberts and C. A. W. Sanders, Official Side Secretary and Staff Side Secretary respectively.

All the Standing Committees of the Council were re-appointed. A Staff Side proposal for the appointment of a Sectional Committee to cover all the Treasury Classes employed in the Department was adjourned for Official Side consideration.

### PAY AND INCREMENTS.

In three of the six Departmental Clerical Officers' individual starting pay cases, which have been the subject of Committee disagreement, and subsequent re-examination, it was now agreed that reassessment on a Grade II. basis should be granted as from the original date of appointment. The Official Side indicated their inability to agree to the other three cases being similarly treated, and these were re-adjourned for informal discussion.

Having examined two instances quoted since the last meeting, the Official Side repeated the assurance that steps would be taken to ensure that in

all cases of suspension of increment the officer concerned would be notified as soon as the Board's decision was taken.

### DISTRICT SCHEMES.

The question of the desirability of discussing District Schemes in Local Committees was again adjourned at the Official Side's request.

### OFFICE ACCOMMODATION.

Numerous items concerning accommodation and equipment were considered.

The Staff Side noted the occurrence of increasing inconvenience from the noise of office machines, and referred to the possibility of general treatment of this question.

It was elicited that the Official Side concurred in the views that the local discussion of any case on its merits should not be hindered by the fact that a Special Committee on certain aspects of accommodation had been appointed.

It was further agreed, in connection with a recent local discussion, that it was not the duty of the staff to search for accommodation.

### OTHER MATTERS.

Agreements were recorded covering the staffing of Collectors' Offices at Derby, Greenwich, London South, and Portsmouth, and the sub-office at Londonderry. Disagreement was registered in the case of Newcastle, the case of Plymouth was referred back for a comprehensive decision, and those of Glasgow, Ellesmere Port and Avonmouth adjourned.

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

The next meeting of the Council will be held on the 17th December, 1930.

## Petty Jealousy

In every walk of life, in every trade, profession, or calling, we find that a spirit of jealousy exists, more pronounced in some individuals, yet very much alive in most of us to an alarming degree, and apt to raise its ugly head on the slightest provocation.

We find this deplorable human weakness very prevalent in our own department, perhaps not unnaturally, since we are by second nature suspicious and suspecting. On many occasions one has listened to gossip which almost amounted to scandal-mongering directed against a brother officer; yet beneath the whole fabric of tittle-tattle a casual observer could detect our enemy "petty jealousy" at the root of things.

If we would become "students of human nature" and "men of the world," it is essential to cultivate an open mind, and this will enable us to view things in true perspective. Our thoughts play a great part in our happiness and physical well-being, and good thoughts make for good health.

If, therefore, we would try to see the good in a man and appreciate him for it, we should be more likely to develop the same quality than if we were to note his failings and so depreciate and perhaps ignore the good points. G. B.

## Sir Francis Floud.

*Copy of letter addressed to Sir Francis Floud, K.C.B., from the Council:—*

Custom House,  
London, E.C.3.  
22nd November, 1930.

Dear Sir Francis Floud,

At the meeting of the Departmental Council on Wednesday last, the Staff Side expressed on behalf of the Staff of the Department their gratitude to you for the help which you had always given them, and their appreciation of the courteous and sympathetic spirit in which you had always met them. We are now writing on behalf of the Council to say how greatly we regret your leaving the Department, and to convey to you the good wishes of every member of the Council in your new work.

Yours very truly,

F. N. ROBERTS,  
G. A. W. SANDERS,  
Secretaries to the Departmental  
Whitley Council.

*The annexed reply has been received from Sir Francis Floud:—*

Ministry of Labour,  
Montagu House,  
Whitehall, S.W.1.  
24th November, 1930.

My Dear Roberts,

I am very much obliged for the kind letter which you and Sanders have sent me on behalf of the Departmental Whitley Council.

I shall always look back with very much pleasure on my connection with the Council and all its members, and I am very grateful to you all for the spirit of cordial co-operation and friendship which I have always received. My experience of the Whitley work in the Customs and Excise Department has greatly strengthened my belief in its value and I am sure it will be of the greatest assistance to me here in the arduous post to which I have been appointed.

I appreciate very much the good wishes you have sent me and I will ask you to assure the Council that I will ever remember the happy three years I spent at the Custom House, and that I wish you all the best of luck in the future.

Yours very sincerely,

(Sg.l.) F. L. C. FLOUD.

F. N. Roberts, Esq.,  
H.M. Customs & Excise,  
Custom House, E.C.3.

## Civil Service Nursing Aid Association.

The Civil Service Nursing Aid Association has recently concluded an arrangement with King's College Hospital, London, by which members of the Association who require surgical treatment can be treated as paying patients in private wards of the hospital at certain specified rates. The charges would, of course, qualify for benefit in accordance with the Rules of the

Association, and altogether the arrangement should prove a very satisfactory one both to the individual member and to the Association as a whole. Any member of the Nursing Aid Association who finds it necessary to undergo a surgical operation should apply to the Secretary for particulars of this scheme before concluding other arrangements.

The Association is making steady progress in the recruitment of members, its funds are in a thoroughly healthy state, and, more important still, it has proved its usefulness to a number of members during the past twelve months. Providing that the procedure undertaken as treatment in any particular case can rightly be regarded as a surgical operation, no sum is too small to qualify for benefit, as evidenced by the fact that benefit of one and a half guineas was paid to a member who found it necessary to secure the services of a specialist to remove a foreign body which had entered his eye. At the other end of the scale is to be found the member who received the maximum grant of £75 in respect of an operation which cost him £167, and the possibility of which could not be foreseen a few months previously. The desirability of insurance through this unique scheme is amply demonstrated by these two cases.

## The Late Mr. J. Johnstone.

The many friends in the Service will be shocked to learn of the death of our much-respected friend and colleague, Mr. Joseph Johnstone, Assistant Preventive Officer, Grangemouth. He passed away at midnight on the 5th inst., from syncope after undergoing an operation for a pelvic ulcer, in the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow.

Mr. Johnstone was a live wire in the Association, being Executive Councillor for Scotland, Local Secretary and Local Whitley Representative for the Grangemouth District.

He joined the Service in 1923 at Glasgow, and was afterwards transferred to Grangemouth.

Prior to joining the Waterguard Service, he was a temporary clerk in the Collector's Office at Dumfries, and during the Great War he served with the Forces.

His splendid character and his five years' association with the port of Grangemouth made him very popular and he endeared himself to all with whom he came in contact. Not only personally will his presence be missed, but the service generally has lost a bright and brilliant officer, and much sympathy is extended to his relatives in their very sad bereavement.

His remains were conveyed from Glasgow to his home at Greta.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, the 9th inst., and a large number of his brother officers proceeded by cars from Grangemouth to attend, and acted as pallbearers, and carried his remains on a bier from his home to their last resting place in the old village Churchyard of Greta.

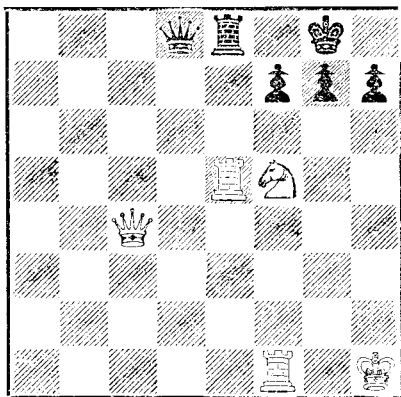
Many floral tributes, both officially and privately, were sent from Grangemouth and Bo'ness.

# SPORT AND SOCIAL

## Customs Preventive Staff Chess Club.

### PROBLEM NO. 67\*.

Black.



White.

White mate in two.

### Solution to No. 66.

Key move:— 1. Q—R1.

### CIVIL SERVICE MATCH.

On December 4th eight of our members played for Civil Service against London Commercial Chess League. Messrs. Steel, Pescod, and Murray won, Mr. Welsford's game went for adjudication on time limit.

### CIVIL SERVICE LEAGUE RESULT.

Versus Crown Agents II., lost 6—4 (one by default).

Messrs. Welsford, Murray and Pescod won.

Messrs. Dudley and Bishop drew.

Messrs. Percival, Hale and Farmer lost.

Mr. Prior defaulted.

Versus G.P.O. North III., lost 6—4.

At 9 p.m. on cease play we were four games each, we lost on the adjudication. Messrs. Dudley (board 1), Welsford (board 3), Murray (board 4), and North (board 10) won.

### CHESS TERMS EXPLAINED.

**Gambit.**—An opening, or way of starting a game, in which you give up a man to develop your pieces the quicker, hoping to get an attack upon your opponent that will compensate for the man sacrificed.

**Gambit Pawn** or piece is that sacrificed in the Gambit opening.

**Interpose.**—Any piece placed between the King and an attacking piece, or a piece of minor value similarly placed between the attacking piece and a piece of major value.

**Jadoubé.**—An expression used by a player before touching a piece or pawn that is not to be played, but only to be adjusted to the position on the square to which it belongs.

**Middle Game.**—The part of the game between the opening moves and the end game, and which is usually the natural game of the player, without the assistance of books on the openings or end games.

**Minor Pieces** are Knights and Bishops, being of less value than Queens or Rooks, known as major pieces.

**Odds.**—A method of equalising the strength of players is for strong players to give the weaker odds, which may be the move every game, or a Pawn, a Pawn and move, Pawn and two moves, the Exchange, a Knight, Knight and move, Bishop, Bishop and move, Rook, Rook and move, Knight and Bishop, two Knights or Bishops, Queen against Rook, and finally the Queen.

## New Secretary for the C.P.O.s Association.

We hear that Mr. David Wilson, the new General Secretary of the C.P.O.s Association, is getting in touch with his members at an early date. Mr. Wilson, who is at No. 5 Office (Customs and Excise), Surrey Commercial Docks, London, S.E.16, was elected early this month in succession to Mr. F. J. Lundberg, who has resigned the office.