

The Customs Journal

No. 662

March 8th, 1930

Fortnightly

CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
An Appeal to Reason	37	Civil Service Confederation	45
Changes in the Staff	38	Cartoon	46
Current Comments	39	Answers to Examination Questions	47
P.S.A.	41	Sport and Social	48
Correspondence	42	Rowing	48

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.

AN APPEAL TO REASON.

IT is fairly safe to prophesy that whilst there remains any necessity for associations, the problem of promotion, and—a distinction with a difference—promotion problems, will engage their attention considerably. We had the hope that for a time at last we could leave promotion and its problems behind us, and concentrate on more urgent affairs, but circumstances necessitate that we endeavour to clear the air a little in order that not even a minimum reduction in association activity upon the main issue should occur.

We make no apology, therefore, to those of our readers who agree with the policy of "first things first" because it would appear to us that the solidarity of the rank and file and its confidence in our leaders are essential if the organisation is to be successful in what is the main issue to the overwhelming majority, i.e., the Re-organisation Claim. It is to be regretted that upon the promotion question there would appear to be a tiny but evidently determined effort to impair both the confidence and the solidarity. It is fitting, therefore, that the members should be reminded of the progress of events that have culminated in the recent agreement upon the C.P.O. examination.

At the 1927 Council of the Association a resolution to the effect that the "merit" principle should apply to all promotions in the Waterguard was exhaustively discussed and carried by a large majority. At the following Council meeting in 1928, and arising from, firstly, grave dissatisfaction at the existing examination, and secondly, the belief held by many that the prevailing system was injurious to the aspirations of the whole membership, the Executive Committee was instructed to prepare proposals in connection with the subject

for submission to the Districts. A scheme that, despite the 1927 decision, embodied both promotion by merit and by seniority was eventually drawn up and circulated to the Districts. This proposal of the Executive Committee was discussed at every District meeting in the country and the Councilors at the 1929 Conference had explicit instructions upon the proposals which after some amendment were finally adopted at that Conference.

Space prevents us from discussing the new scheme at length, and in any case such is not our intention. We can say, however, that the new system will neither prevent the worthy candidate from obtaining promotion nor allow the unworthy to secure it—a simple virtue that was absent from the old conditions. It will surely end the farcical and unfair segregation of the C.P.O. grade into two sections. It is true that successful candidates will be appointed in order of merit, and we cannot leave this point without observing that if seniority is to remain the deciding factor in promotions above the C.P.O. grade, it is more than likely that years will separate, say, two men both suitable for higher promotion who entered the Service within days of one another and were actually promoted to P.O. on the same day. In addition, it will not be long before men will be called for the examination who were appointed to the service and promoted to P.O. in order of merit. But the most important feature of the new system is that it definitely prevents conditions regarding promotion reacting unfavourably on the legitimate claims of the whole of the grades, but on the contrary, in so far as it will improve the supervisory grade, it inevitably enhances our claims for better work and higher remuneration.

It is at this point that we resume our call for "first things first." There are only 85 supervisory posts in the Preventive Grades. In the space of a few years they will almost exclusively be filled by comparatively young men. For even a large proportion of the P.O. grade there is only the meagre prospect of an opportunity at a very mature age when ordinarily the dislocation caused by removal, etc., renders promotion a very mixed blessing. For hundreds in the A.P.O. grade, many of whom are actually older than many already in the P.O. grade, there is no opportunity at all.

In taking steps to ensure that nothing as regards promotion shall be detrimental to the aspirations of the great majority, who are mainly concerned about maximum salaries, the Association acted constitutionally and wisely. Had it acted in any other way it would have been false to its ideals. Let there be no interference with a united organisation intent upon improving the conditions of all.

Presentation at Dover.

Mr. G. W. NORRIS.

An exceedingly pleasant function was enjoyed at the Shakespeare Hotel, Dover, on February 22nd, which took the form of a supper and social evening. During the evening a presentation, in the shape of a Camera Enlarger and Easel, was made to Mr. G. W. Norris (Officer), to mark his retirement at the end of his 40 years of service in the Department.

Mr. Norris joined the Service as a Boatman, and after four years' service as such, successfully passed for promotion to the rank of Outdoor Officer and joined the Landing Staff.

The chair was taken by Mr. Melville Smith (Surveyor), and he was supported by the Collector, Mr. Hall, Mr. Brown (Assistant Collector), Mr. Matthews (Waterguard Superintendent), and Mr. Murchie (C.P.O.). Brother officers from Folkestone attended and letters were read from the staff at Tilbury, Mr. E. P. Whettingstall (C.P.O., Newhaven), and others. Speeches were made by representatives of all grades.

During the evening songs were rendered by Messrs. Stafford, Ellsey, Norris, White, Lumsden, Smith, Nodder, Palmer and Croxford, accompanied by Messrs. Ellsley, Norris and Hore at the piano. The famous East Kent campanologists, Messrs. Saunders and Hoover, gave a right good turn, the evening finishing with "Auld Lang Syne."

The speech for the Waterguard included all the old "Dolphin" and Boarding boys, also others with whom Mr. Norris had come in contact, and they will be pleased to know that they were coupled with their colleagues here in all the good wishes given to little "Georgie."

CHANGES IN THE STAFF.

TO MARCH 3rd, 1930.

APPOINTMENTS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—
Browne, E. G.

TRANSFERS.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICERS, LOWER SECTION:—
Kieran, J., Hull to Liverpool.
Lympany, W. J., Office of I.G.W. to Hull.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—
Berry, R., Bo'ness, Edinburgh, to Glasgow.
Hyde, T. W., Sharpness, Newport, Mon., to Goole, Hull.
Jones, S. H., Newport, Mon., to Dover.
Shortland, A., West Hartlepool, Sunderland, to Southampton.
Stannard, F. T., Grimsby, to Harwich, Ipswich.
Walker, A. J., Southampton to Grimsby.

PROMOTIONS.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, LOWER SECTION (UNATTACHED):—
Moloney, C., London to Office of I.G.W.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS TO PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—
Booker, J. W., London to Burry Port, Swansea.
McDowall, W., Grangemouth, Edinburgh, to Leith.
Shannon, F. F., Glasgow to Londonderry Land Barrier, Belfast.

ENGINEER-MECHANIC TO ENGINEER:—
Harrison, G. H., Middlesbrough, Sunderland, to North Shields, Newcastle.

VACANCIES.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, UPPER SECTION:—
London, 14.4.1930.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—
Liverpool, 13.4.1930.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—
*Millon, Preston, 24.3.1930.

*An official residence is provided at a reduced rental, and there is an allowance of £20 per annum for performing Long Room work, etc.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNATED OFFICERS.

Boyle, M., Preventive Officer.
Campbell, A., Waterguard Superintendent, 2nd Class.
Hesketh, R., Preventive Officer.
Hodder, F. C., Mate-in-Charge.
Miller, H., Preventive Officer.
Newby, W., Chief Preventive Officer, Upper Section.

CURRENT COMMENTS.

NOW that full particulars of the agreement on the examination scheme for promotion to Chief Preventive Officer have been communicated to the membership, the demands from prospective candidates, for tuition appropriate to the new syllabus, have become more insistent. The Educational Committee have done excellent work in the past, supplying the demand in connection with both the departmental examinations of the Preventive Service, and there is every reason to believe that they will not be found wanting on this occasion. It must be realised, however, that to devise a course of tuition covering the possibilities of the forthcoming examination for C.P.O. is by no means an easy task. But, the officials who run the Educational Scheme are facing up to it, and arrangements are now in progress for a series of question papers dealing with the new features in the examination. It is expected that these papers will be ready in sufficient time to allow any candidate to take full advantage of the course. It should be noted that this will be supplementary to the course that has hitherto been available for C.P.O. candidates, and which still remains in operation.

* * * *

The article by "W.M.S." in the last issue, regarding the old "N.Q.A." column, voices the views of many members. The Educational Committee have on several occasions discussed the possibility of reviving the column in some new form but no final decision has yet been reached. For obvious reasons the N.Q.A. column ceased to exist when the V.E.S. came into being, but perhaps the time has now arrived when something might be done on the lines suggested by "W.M.S." It would be interesting to hear other views on this.

* * * *

The new regulations relating to the Pocket Journal will be greatly welcomed by all Preventive Officers. It is hoped that at last the sting has been entirely removed. This daily record of work has definite uses, but it was certainly never intended to be used as a means for inflicting petty irritations upon the Staff. It is not very long ago that a miscalculation of even five minutes in making up the journal was regarded as something akin to the faking of a balance sheet. All that, however, is of the past, and more reasonable views now prevail.

* * * *

Negotiations are now proceeding for the supply of a more up-to-date style of uniform cap. The Association has submitted proposals, and it is expected that very shortly samples of an improved pattern will be ready for inspection by the Staff representatives.

Another Staff Side request which is likely to be conceded is that in connection with the gold braid on the shoulders of the Preventive Officers' overcoats. This braid should conform in width with that on the jacket sleeve. It seems a small matter but at certain ports it matters a great deal. It is hoped to be possible to register an agreement on this question.

* * * *

It will be remembered that an agreement was reached on the Departmental Council that travelling and subsistence expenses would in future be paid to officers called up for interview by the Board in connection with vacancies abroad. As a result of further representations it has now been decided that some retrospective effect be given to this agreement, and, therefore, those officers who came to London for interview regarding the Tanganyika vacancy may now claim expenses.

* * * *

The series of "adjusted" rhymes now being contributed to the Journal by "Gen" are causing much amusement. As snappy fragments of topical wit, they are excellent and entertaining. His contribution to the last issue deserves permanency. "Sing a song of sixpence" should be framed and hung in a conspicuous place in every office.

* * * *

Before the Royal Commission on February 26th, Mr. C. A. W. Sanders, Secretary of the Departmental Council (Staff Side), gave evidence on behalf of the Joint Committee of Customs and Excise Associations, regarding the Whitley system as carried out in the C. and E. Department. Mr. Sanders provided a fine example of how to give evidence with clarity, conciseness, and relevance, and he well deserved the tribute paid him on this score by Lord Tomlin. His picture of the vast Departmental machine working smoothly, economically, and efficiently, with true co-operation between the Staff and the authorities and collecting huge revenues at a negligible cost, was drawn with such skilful accuracy that a visible impression was made. This evidence must be regarded as of the utmost value on a most important aspect of the Commission's inquiries.

* * * *

In connection with the merging of the two existing social and sports clubs run by the London Preventive Staff, there is to be a meeting on March 13th at the St. Katharine Dock Hotel.

There seems every prospect of the new club becoming a great success. The officials of the old clubs have proved their capabilities in the past, and under the new scheme there will be more scope for their combined efforts. The interest taken by the Inspector-General in the sporting and social activities of the Staff will be another factor towards success.

It is understood that the formation of this club will be celebrated by some kind of social function before the end of the season. The intention is to make it a first-class affair. The great thing about Waterguard socials is that "shop" never obtrudes itself. Members of other grades who have attended our functions, and we have many such guests, will agree that this is so. At a Waterguard social event everyone can feel comfortable.

* * * *

The information contained in the pamphlet issued by the Civil Service Assurance Society, and distributed to members in the last Journal, should be carefully studied by all officers affected by the new Pensions Acts. Certain time limits have been laid down within which it is possible to take advantage of the benefits offered under the Act. Those members who are eligible are strongly advised not to miss their opportunity.

On previous occasions, advice was repeatedly given in these columns regarding the advantages offered under State Insurance schemes, but many members failed to treat the matter seriously, and realised their mistake only too late.

* * * *

In his last letter to the Journal, "Kew" states that "No really talented person has ever trusted the examination system," and thus he quarrels with the authorities, who have accepted the examination method throughout the Civil Service. He quarrels with the Association members for their "apathy." He quarrels with the Council members for their arrogance. He quarrels with the writer of these Comments. But he allies himself to that original correspondent who wanted to "sack the lot," and who signed himself "NON SIBI, SED OMNIBUS" (not for self, but for all). The only reply to his letter can be "VERB. SAP."

* * * *

The cost-of-living figures for the six months up to March 1st, are 65, 67, 67, 67, 66, 64. The average rounded up gives a figure of 70 for the following six months period. There will, therefore, be no alteration in the bonus now being paid. Had events not turned out in this way, it is likely that the Service would now be discussing proposals for consolidation. As it is, there is a six months' respite.

Newport (Mon.) Collection Dinner.

The first annual dinner of the Newport Collection took place on Saturday, February 1st, at the Spread Eagle Hotel, Gloucester. Gloucester was considered more suitable than the head port owing to its central position.

The Collector, Mr. J. W. Dawson, presided, and was supported by Mr. E. Rogers (Assistant Collector). A party of thirty came from Newport, and representatives from other districts increased the numbers.

Following the loyal toast, "Our Service" was given by Mr. Higginbotham, City Councillor of Hereford, and was responded to by the Chairman. "Our Port and Collection" was proposed by Mr. Dell (Stroud). Speeches in reply being made by members of the various grades. The toast of "The Visitors," proposed by Mr. Crick (Gloucester), was followed by replies by the Postmaster and Inspector of Taxes, Gloucester.

A very delightful and varied programme of music was rendered by Messrs. Inman, Ball, Woodeson, Frith, Harding, Owens and Campion, and was greatly appreciated. Community singing, led by the Worcester Warblers, was a great success, everybody joining in heartily. The "Customs and Excise Anthem," an appropriate parody on "There's a Tavern in the Town," proved very popular.

Presentation to Mr. S. R. Giles, Truro.

At the Custom House, Truro, on February, 6th, Mr. S. R. Giles, P.O./c., was presented with an oak reclining chair on the occasion of his retirement.

In making the presentation, Mr. Thomson (C.P.O., Falmouth), spoke of his long association with Mr. Giles, and of the esteem in which he held him. He wished him good health and the best of luck, Mr. Rickard (P.O., Falmouth), and Mr. Parish (P.O., Plymouth), also spoke of the happy relations which had always existed between Mr. Giles and themselves. Mr. Hall (P.O./c., Charlestown), associated himself with the remarks of his colleagues. He had also to convey to Mr. Giles the very best wishes of Mr. C. H. Slade (C.P.O., Harwich), of his old colleagues at Grangemouth, and those of the Fowey, Padstow, Penzance, and Plymouth's staffs.

Acknowledging the gift, Mr. Giles thanked all of his colleagues for their good wishes, and said that he would always remember the good fellowship his brother officers had shewn that day.

A.P.O., Bristol Channel Port, wishes to exchange with A.P.O. in North-East coast port, subject to Board's approval. Replies "C.W.," c/o Editor.

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

Important Notice to Members.

The attention of members is drawn to the closing date for the receipt of nominations in the election of Councillors, which is the 10th of March. Nomination forms have been circulated, but nominations in manuscript will be accepted providing they conform to the rules.

In order that there shall be no confusion as to the limitation of the electoral areas, they are shown below:—

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| <p>Area.
London, includes London only.
Liverpool, includes Liverpool and Manchester.
South Wales, includes Cardiff, Swansea, and Bristol.
South Coast, includes Plymouth, Southampton, and Dover.
Gravesend, includes Gravesend and Harwich.
Hull, includes Hull and Grimsby.
Tyne, includes Tyne and Hartlepool.
Scotland, includes Leith, Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Belfast.</p> | <p>Districts.</p> |
|---|-------------------|

The election of the four additional Councillors will take place after the main election. That for the two P.O. additional Councillors will take place first, followed by that for the two A.P.O.s. Only members stationed in Districts that have not direct representation as a result of the previous elections will be eligible for nomination in the two elections for the additional Councillors.

J. T. SUTTON,
Organising Secretary.

BRISTOL.

A meeting was held on Thursday, February 20th. Among items of purely local interest which were keenly discussed, were the necessity for a continuous Waterguard attendance on Sundays at Bristol, a Local Whitley proposal regarding the Waterguard dealing with casks of spirits broken in transit, and the hardship imposed upon members having to travel to a relief port in their own time.

The members present anxiously enquired for information as to the result of the salary claim, but fully realised that our interests are closely watched and that no news is good news.

ABERDEEN.

The annual meeting of the Aberdeen District place at Aberdeen on Thursday, February 20th, with Mr. G. H. Wales in the Chair. This meeting was so arranged in order to allow all local members the opportunity of being present, and succeeded in its purpose, every available member attending.

The District Secretary and District Organiser each submitted his annual report. The D.O., who dealt with the organisation of Aberdeen in an exhaustive manner, traced how the total amount subscribed by members of this District had gradually increased. The year ending 31st March, 1925, had produced £32 10s. 6d., whereas the financial year about to close would show a total exceeding £52. During these years there had been no increase in staff. This state of affairs was exceedingly satisfactory when it was considered that the total possible amount that could be subscribed annually by the forty-one members equals £53 6s. 0d. One or two members were still in arrears, but the D.O. had great hopes that these members would soon clear off their liabilities.

The District officials felt that they were now in closer touch with the members of their scattered District, and they would spare no trouble to attend to the desires of their most isolated member. All circulars received for the information of the District were despatched to the outposts immediately on receipt. This method of conveying information must necessarily be a slow operation when one considers that these circulars have to travel round no less than 17 ports.

Various subjects of local interest were discussed, including the staffing of Wick.

The following officers were elected for the following year:—

Chairman, Mr. G. H. Wales (A.P.O.); Vice-Chairman, Mr. A. J. Eddie (P.O.); District Secretary, Mr. W. Bain (P.O.); District Organiser, Mr. K. Sutherland (A.P.O.); Local Whitley Representatives, Messrs. J. D. Doherty (P.O.) and C. Campbell (A.P.O.); Local Auditors, Messrs. A. E. Manning (P.O.) and T. Thomson (A.P.O.).

At the close, Mr G. H. Wales was accorded a hearty vote of thanks for the able and amiable manner in which he had conducted this very successful meeting.

OBITUARY.

Mr. RICHARD HESKETH,
(late Preventive Officer).

We learn with the deepest regret of the death of Mr. Richard Hesketh, who, prior to his retirement four years ago, was Preventive Officer at Ilfracombe. Death occurred at his residence, Furze Hill Road, Ilfracombe, on Friday, January 31st, after a long and painful illness.

A solemn requiem was sung at the Roman Catholic Church prior to the interment. Mr. Percy Ould (A.P.O./c.) represented the Preventive Staff at the funeral.

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, I trust you will pardon the Scott-Sharkey complex with which I commence this letter, but I have been rather interested in the contest lately between "Knock-out Kurrent Komments" and "Kid Kew," and, like the spirited Irishman, would fain ask, "Is this a private fight or can anyone join in?" My humble judgment tells me that up to the present the rounds have favoured "K.O.," for though the "Kid" undoubtedly possesses a "jab" in the ability to pen a lengthy epistle, "K.O." is slightly ahead on points with his logical straight lefts.

Dropping sporting terms for the moment, "Kew" will certainly find it difficult to entice members, either by scap-box or Town Hall oratory, to accept the theory that the method of selection or examination on the basis of that questionable term "zeal" is infinitely more desirable than a real competitive test on paper of an officer's administrative abilities. Incidentally, does he thank his present position (assuming that he is a P.O.), for the "flash in the pan" method of study which he writes about? I feel certain that there are numerous aspirants to the P.O. Grade who would be glad of a "tip" from him in this direction in preference to the acknowledged necessity of two or three years' grind to ensure success. Without wishing to cause offence, "Kew's" last effort is certainly reminiscent of the kitten with a piece of paper tied to its tail, for he starts off by first being apparently indifferent, then, working himself into a frenzy, chases round and round in circles to obtain a few smiles from onlookers who really must be credited with sufficient intelligence to comprehend the trend of events. After all, can anyone, after reading the promotion to C.P.O. scheme, as recorded in the Journal, deny that it is a finer and more equitable method, and one that must inevitably produce capable men who will, by their own qualifications alone, merit the respect of the staff, and have a beneficial effect on the Waterguard generally? Surely "Kew" is a little awry when he states that is a "new idea." He must realise that the matter was the subject of a good deal of discussion throughout the Districts, and that authority to proceed with this question was only obtained at the Conference by duly elected representatives.

Come now, "Kew," be a sport and admit that while you are apparently concerned with the welfare of the members, there is a little item of greater importance, viz., the possibility that the new method may not suit your particular style, and that "Vox Populi" in this case strikes a harsh note. Having analysed the combat, "Kew," without accepting the role of an adviser, I should say that the advice tendered to you to "get down to it" was sound, and if it is proffered to me

when my time comes, it will be accepted, not with a feeling of resentment attributable to a small boy, but with the remembrance of Charles Dickens's "Sydney Carton," when he said, "'Tis a far, far better thing . . . 'Tis the only way."

Yours, etc.,

"PUTNEY."

* * * *

THE PROMOTION QUESTION.

Sir,—I should imagine that your correspondent "KEW" expects promotion soon. He is afraid that the new system will fail him. The probable has become a possible, and he is afraid. He is now with "NON SIBI . . .," "howling in a wilderness of his own fear."

Comments on this question were in season twelve months ago, but now that the majority of the staff has made its decision, and the Board has agreed with them, this belated "howling" is disgustingly selfish.

Yours, etc., "K."

* * * *

UNIFORM.

Sir.—Referring to the letter of "Navy" which appeared in the last issue of the "C.J.," he does not appear to know that this matter has been discussed before and evidently dropped.

In answer to his first question, I, for one, am not satisfied with the quality of the uniform now issued, but "Navy" can rest assured that the P.S.A. officials have this matter well in hand.

With regard to his other questions, is it not beneficial at times, from a revenue point of view, to be mistaken for one of the uniformed officials he mentions? As for commanding respect, I think one's tact and personality (if any), should be sufficient to gain all that is required without making oneself into a little tin god.

I sincerely trust that no level-headed member of the P.S.A. will, at this time, when our salary claim is under review, push forward or even discuss the suggestion of "Navy." Shelve it indefinitely.

Yours, etc.,

"G.O.H."

* * * *

UNIFORM.

Sir.—The subject of uniform has received official and staff attention many times during the past few years, and I fail to see why "Navy" should want to put forward suggested alterations (involving increased expenditure), at a time when our salary claim is under review by the Authorities. Does he pause to think what it would cost to further decorate the Waterguard officers with gold braid? I do not know if he would care to see us dressed similar to an attendant outside a theatre or cinema.

If he has any difficulty in keeping the required status of a Waterguard Officer, I would suggest a little cultivation of the habit of "education of mind, tact, and discretion," which would then, no doubt, make him more fitted for organised society, and I feel sure he would then have no difficulty in holding his own with any admiral, master or first-class passenger, just the same as if he were having

dealings with the person in the fore-castle or a rating of a man-of-war. Can it be said that the Officer grade lost their status when they dispense with uniform?

I, for one, have had twenty years' experience with the Royal Navy and public in general, and have yet to find the prescribed uniform a bar to the satisfactory performance of one's official duties.

Yours, etc.,
"J.E.T."

* * * * *

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

Sir,—I wish to express my gratitude for a very excellent feature of the last issue of our Journal, namely, the answers to questions set at the recent examination. This is an excellent advertisement, if such be needed, of the superlative merit of the V.E.C. course.

To A.P.O.s on the lower rungs of the ladder of seniority, as well as to those who find examination imminent, this article is of engrossing interest, demonstrating also the extensive knowledge of the regulations and high standard of proficiency which it is necessary to attain to compete successfully in this examination.

Apart from the fact that interest is stimulated in the minds of potential pupils, this type of article forms a splendid and enlightening subject for discussion among all members of the Service.

It is to be hoped that the remainder of these questions will be treated in the same admirable fashion, and that a welcome and interesting series of articles will be the result.

Yours gratefully,
"J.S."

* * * * *

GONE ASTRAY.

Sir,—I have had a query from the Statistical Office, two of them, to be exact.

It appears that a certain file of specifications had gone astray, and, accordingly, the 6th division sent out the S.O.S.

Now, if there is one more thing than another which fills me with distress (short of a fellow-being going astray), it is a specification. I looked up my Overseas Clearance Book and noted that the documents had been sent to 8th division, Statistical Office, in September last. This was according to Revised Instructions, List of Returns and Documents, page 4, and I therefore notified the 6th division.

A few days ago I received the missing documents, stamped with the stamp of the 3rd division, and there was much joy in my heart over the return of the prodigal "specs."

Imagine with what trepidation I opened another letter from the Statistical Office, this time from the 1st division. The file of "specs." is still missing. There is absolutely no trace. Oh, dear! I shall —.

But don't you think this is a job for the Special Inquiry Staff?

I remember a story of an old lady who lost her specs, but I won't repeat it.

Yours, etc.,
"O.K."

COMPLEX.

Sir,—Our friend, the writer of Current Comments, has provided us on many occasions with "food for thought," and I think his remarks touching on "complex" must have caused many a little self-examination among his readers.

Personally, I could not help visualising the word "Association," and the interpretation that readily came to me was not subs, but "our union working for the common good of us all." A little cogitation on this answer tempted me to go further in the experiment, and I then visualised "merit," and bang came the answer "examinations." Tut, tut! This was obviously a very inferior complex, and necessitated immediate investigation.

I asked myself the reason for such a response, and found that it was because I had so often wondered who first propounded such an idea in connection with our examinations, whether he was an associate, and, if so, how he reconciled such an idea with the generally accepted principles of the Association.

Following on this, I asked myself, of what advantage is it to the general body, and, frankly, I could not find any at all.

Let us see how it actually operates. We will assume that A and B are two officers, the former the senior of a batch of fifty candidates called up for promotion, whilst B is the junior. As the result of a merit examination this position is reversed. B is the first on the list of successful candidates whilst A is the last. The interval between their subsequent promotion we will assume to be one year. B is therefore one increment in salary ahead of A until such time as the latter reaches his maximum. Assuming these increments to be £10 and the period involving ten years, B therefore gains £100 at the expense of his colleague A. Where is the justification for it, and what benefit accrues to the body at large? What have we done with our old slogan "Each for all, and all for each?" Have we arrived at the stage "Every man for himself and self alone?" If so, why have an Association and thus burden ourselves with a "strange" complex?

Yours, etc.,
"CEEARPEE."

* * * * *

CUSTOMS PREVENTIVE SERVICE.

Sir,—Referring to the previous letters on this subject, I would like to add a yet more glaring case. Last year Miss Megan Lloyd George was present at a Rose Day festival held at Holyhead, and of course a bright idea was to put a full detailed list of helpers in the local paper. This list, was made, I believe, by a Higher Clerical Officer of the Customs and Excise and read, "helpers were drawn from H.M. Customs and Excise, Trinity House, L.M.S. Railway Co., H.M. Water-guard, etc., etc."

'Nuff said!

Yours, etc.,
"DETAIL."

AN ARGUMENT FOR MERIT.

Sir,—With regard to the discussion upon the extension of the promotion by merit to the C.P.O. examination, the following may interest your readers. If one analyses the batch of officers recently promoted and awaiting promotion to C.P.O., it will be seen that all of them were promoted to P.O. in the early months of 1920. Seven of them were actually promoted on the same day, and they all joined the Service within a few months of one another. Three of them within days of each other.

It will be interesting to watch the progress of this group when promotion to higher positions occur. Bearing in mind the young men already senior to them in the C.P.O. and Superintendent grades, I venture to say that considerable periods will separate these men in securing the Upper Section. Vacancies in the Superintendent grade will, for this group, be rare fruit indeed. The middle men (if the term may be excused) may secure a chance years after the senior group. The juniors will be fortunate if they even have a chance before retirement. In any case it is certain that there will be great disparity as between them based on slight differences in seniority. It surely would have been more sporting had they all an equal opportunity by promotion to the C.P.O. grade upon their merit.

Yours, etc.,
"STUDENT."

* * * *

IMMIGRATION v. PREVENTIVE STAFF.

Sir,—Having read with interest the article in a recent issue giving a comparison of the above, I hasten to write a few lines in this connection. Comparison are odious, certainly, but only when it is convenient to the authorities concerned.

No mention has been made at the recent enquiry of other staffs with a higher remuneration, and having less responsibility, but comparisons are readily given when it comes to comparing the remuneration of this staff with lower-paid staffs.

How the powers-that-be can agree to the remuneration of Immigration staffs being higher for that one particular branch of work which has, and is, in some cases, being done in conjunction with other duties by Preventive Officers at lower salaries, is entirely beyond my comprehension. I am given to understand that the lowest maximum salary of an Immigration Officer is £350 who deals with this work alone, whereas a Preventive Officer who deals with this work as well as other duties receives a maximum of £250.

This, surely, does not bear comparison.

If one official receives £350 for one branch of work, it must be obvious to any sane thinking person that another doing the same duty in addition should at least receive the same remuneration.

When one considers the fact that the whole of the Immigration instructions are contained in a

small General Order, while a P.O. has to be conversant with many General Orders, in addition to four volumes of Customs regulations, it requires but little to see which officer is deserving of the highest salary.

A fitting remark was made recently at the C. and E. dinner to the effect that this Service was considered the finest of its kind. This *absit dicto invidia* is unquestionably true, but what of the salaries of this very fine Service? Does anyone dare to state publicly that the officers of this Department, who can, and are doing, the work of higher paid officials, are doing so for a much less remuneration?

What is the cause of such a condition? Have our previous conditions been truthfully represented when salary claims have been considered? I should suggest that when our claim for increased remuneration is discussed this should be a glaring example.

A motto I learned at school might inspire our Association officials to give our claim the necessary push, "*Audaces fortuna juvat.*"

Yours, etc.,
"SEA."

London Sports and Social Club.

Members of the London Preventive Staff interested in sports and social events are cordially invited to an OPEN GENERAL MEETING to be held at the St. Katherine's Dock Hotel on Thursday, March 13th, commencing at 6.30 p.m.

At this meeting it is hoped to inaugurate a united club to conduct sport and social events in the Preventive Branch of the Department. The meeting is open to all interested in sport and socials, irrespective of grade or membership of existing clubs. Note the date.

Mr. Percy A. Scholes, in an article headed "My Country's Icy Welcome" appearing in "The Star" of February 21st, writes as follows:

"The Committee of Inquiry I have suggested would . . . at once decree the abolition of Folkestone as a port of entry of anything but dead merchandise, on the ground that its Customs House is no house at all, but a shed open to the Channel storms and with a counter too short by fifty yards to accommodate the baggage of a shipload of travellers. The officials there, however, are particularly courteous, and they should not be pensioned off, but transferred elsewhere."

NURSERY RHYMES.

Adjusted by "GEN."

There was an A.P.O.,
And he went on board a ship,
And his overalls were dungaree;
He went into the hold,
There he met a smuggler bold,
And that smuggler paid up T.V.D.

Civil Service Confederation

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Monday, 24th February, 1930, at Livingstone Hall, Broadway, Westminster, when Mr. George Chase presided over an attendance of twenty-eight.

A resolution was moved to the effect that all established officers who have completed 40 years' pensionable service on attaining the age of 60 years should be compulsorily retired. After discussion it was agreed that the matter be referred to the General Purposes Committee for consideration, with a view to the Committee bringing forward to the Executive Committee a policy on the question of compulsory retirement.

A report was made by the Honorary General Secretary on a question that had arisen in connection with the recruitment of Immigration Officers. Following upon the reorganisation of the Immigration Service, an agreement had been reached on the Home Office Departmental Whitley Council providing for the restriction of recruitment to the grade of Immigration Officers to Clerical Officers in the Home Office. Two organisations in membership of the Confederation, the Immigration Officers' Association and the Customs and Excise Preventive Staff Association, desired to widen the field of recruitment, and had asked that deputations on the matter should be received by the Home Office. The Home Office had declined to receive those deputations. It was decided that the Honorary General Secretary be authorised to write to the Home Office in support of the claim to be heard on the subject of recruitment to the Immigration Service.

Reports were presented by the Finance and Organisation Committee on correspondence taking place with a number of organisations concerning possible affiliation to the Confederation. It was also reported that a General Meeting of the District Probate Registries Clerks' Association, which had been for some time in a state of suspense, was held on the 1st February, at which it was decided that the Association should be re-established and that affiliation to the Confederation should be continued. Contact has also been re-established with the War Department Fleet Officers' Association, which has not been functioning for some time past.

On the subject of the claim for increased annual leave put forward on behalf of certain members of the Warehouse Supervisors' Association, it was reported that the offer made by the Stationery Office, conceding the greater portion of the claim, had been accepted, with the concurrence of the Association concerned, and the Controller of the Stationery Office notified accordingly. The Association has expressed its thanks to the Confederation for the services rendered.

With reference to the claim for increased remuneration put forward on behalf of the Stores and Clothing Inspection Department Viewers' Association, it was reported that a deputation from the Confederation had been received by the War Office on the 20th February, at which the claim had been the subject of discussion. Further investigation was being made, and it had been agreed that the deputation should, if necessary, attend at the War Office again at a later date.

A report was presented by the Special Committee of the Confederation on Sick Pay for Unestablished Classes to the effect that a reply had been received from Sir Russell Scott to the request made to receive a deputation from the Confederation for the purpose of making representations on the subject of sick pay for certain Departmental Classes, stating that it was not considered that any useful purpose would be served by receiving a deputation, and referring the Confederation to Departments. The Committee recommended that, in view of the unsatisfactory nature of this communication, and the fact that approaches to Departments had already been made without success, a direct approach should be made to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. F. W. Pethick Lawrence. The Executive Committee endorsed this recommendation.

A report was received from the Confederation representatives on the Civil Service Equal Pay Committee, of the Committee meeting held on the 12th February, at which three Associations had given notice to withdraw from the Committee. In view of these withdrawals the Committee had decided to ask the National Staff Side, being the most representative body, to present the case for Equal Pay to the Royal Commission on the Civil Service, the Committee undertaking to place at the disposal of the Staff Side all the information in its possession, and to give all the assistance possible.

It was reported that contact had been established, through the medium of a Member of Parliament, with the Secretary of State for India, with regard to the decision of the authorities in India not to retain the services of Mr. J. Garland, the President of the Foremen's Association of India. It was understood that the Secretary of State had asked the Indian Government for a report on this case, which had now been received.

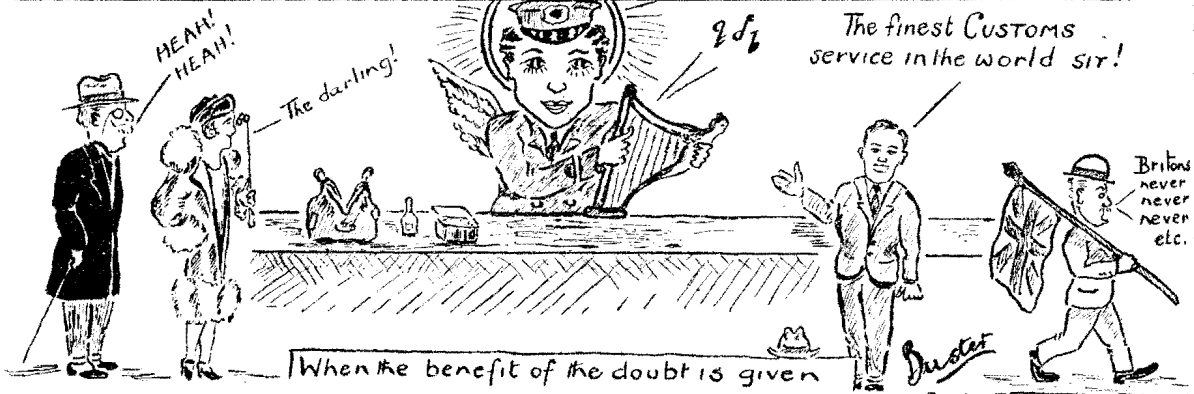
Reference was made to the debate which had taken place at the National Whitley Council meeting on the 7th February in connection with the proposal of the Staff Side (which had emanated from the Confederation) for the appointment of a Joint Committee to consider the establishment of certain unestablished classes. The proposal had been met with a refusal from the Official Side, on the ground that the whole question of establishment would be under consideration by the Royal Commission on the Civil Service.

On the subject of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service, reference was made to the fact that, despite the assurances given that the appointment of the Commission would not interfere with Association claims, there had been a number of recent instances where wage claims had been met with the reply that consideration could not be given to them, inasmuch as the National Staff Side was putting forward to the Royal Commission a claim for a minimum wage of £3 10s. 0d. per week. It was urged that steps should be taken to get this barrier to effective discussion of wage claims removed, and it was decided that, as a preliminary step, a circular should be issued to constituent organisations asking for relevant information.

The representatives of the Civil Service Clerical Association raised the question of the effect of sick leave on the increment date of unestablished staff. It was urged that unestablished staff should be placed on the same basis as established staff, and the Executive Committee decided to refer the matter to the General Purposes Committee for consideration and report.

On behalf of the Customs and Excise Federation the question was raised of the possibility of obtaining special conditions, in respect of full pay and part pay, for Civil Servants obliged to undergo treatment for tuberculosis extending over a considerable period. It is understood that in France, Civil Servants obliged to undergo treatment for tuberculosis are, where necessary, given sick leave with full pay for three years, and sick leave with half-pay for another two years, and if unable to resume their duties after this period are retired on pension. It was decided that this matter be referred to the General Purposes Committee for report.

In connection with outstanding War Bonus cases, Mr. E. F. J. Payne, on behalf of the Inland Revenue Stamping Department Association, expressed appreciation of the successful effort of Mr. A. J. T. Day, of the Executive Officers' Association, in connection with the cases put forward by the Inland Revenue Stamping Department Association, which had been the subject of discussion with the Treasury.



THE CUSTOMS OFFICER—According to Perspective
(Inspired by recent letters to the Press)

Answers to Examination Questions.

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

First Paper. Question 1 (b).

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:—

(b) While patrolling your station afloat at 8 p.m., you observe a local waterman's boat leaving a steamer which arrived from foreign during the day and is lying off awaiting a berth. You instruct the Mate-in-Charge to intercept the boat, and find in her the owner and the Assistant Harbour Master, who, on being questioned, admits possession of 400 Cigars O.S. and 3 bottles of Cognac which, he states, he purchased from the Master of the steamer. The latter admits the truth of this statement, and confesses that the goods were concealed on board. Both exonerate the waterman from any knowledge of, or connection with, the transaction.

Answer:— Blank Station,
Thisport.
The C.P.O., 14th January, 1930.
Thisport,
Sir,
S.S. "Lithune" of Marseilles.

I have to report that while patrolling this station afloat at 8 o'clock this evening, I intercepted a boat leaving the above-named vessel. The occupants were William Smith (owner and Licensed Waterman) and John Lancaster (Assistant Harbour Master).

In reply to my questions, Lancaster admitted possession of 400 cigars and 3 bottles of cognac which, he asserted, had been purchased from the Master of the s.s. "Lithune."

The goods were detained, and the boat, with its occupants, ordered back to the ship for investigation.

On proceeding on board, the Master (Alfred Buck) was shown the goods and he admitted having sold them to Lancaster. He also stated that he had not produced the goods on arrival as he had intended to dispose of them to Lancaster.

The Master's cabin was rummaged with no result.

I interrogated Smith, and from statements made by Lancaster and Buck, and from the replies to my questions, I am satisfied Smith had no knowledge of the nature of the transaction.

I informed Lancaster and Buck that they would be formally arrested, taken ashore, and charged with "being jointly concerned in knowingly harbouring and carrying certain uncustomed goods."

Lancaster appealed against this action, and pointed out that with the tide "on" his presence was essential on the pier-head.

In view of this, and as Buck had a permanent address in this country and would not be sailing before the 22nd instant, I informed the offender that the Honourable Board would proceed by information and summons. **The place and time of the hearing would be communicated to him later.**

Form 482 was served on the Master.

I permitted Lancaster and Smith to proceed, having first handed Form 480 to the latter and explained that I was releasing the boat as it was the only licensed boat in the harbour. He was instructed to appear before the Collector at 10.30 a.m. on the 15th instant in respect of the liability of the boat to forfeiture.

Forms 481 and 483 have been despatched to the Collector.

The names and addresses of the offenders, together with all the relative data, are contained in the attached report for transmission to Section XIV, Custom House, London.

The vessel is owned by the British Navigation Shipping Company, of 106, Eastside, London, E.C.

Details of seized goods:—

Cigars, O.S., 4 lbs.	Duty	£	s.	d.
	Value	3	7	4
Brandy, 41/100 gall. proof	Duty	1	11	11
45/100 gall. liquid	Value	0	4	6
	S.V.D.	8	7	9
	D.V.D.	16	15	6
	T.V.D.	25	3	3

Number P.O.

Answer to Correspondent.

A.P.O. asks how best to describe himself when witnessing a signature, applying for a passport, completing a legal document, etc. He says that "Civil Servant" seems rather vague, while "Assistant Preventive Officer, Waterguard, H.M. Customs and Excise" seems to err on the side of detail. He thinks that "Officer of Customs" correctly conveys the position, but he might be accused of claiming an exalted status to which he is not entitled.

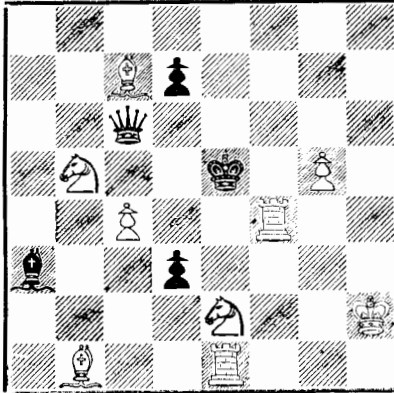
As things are at present, "Officer of Customs" is the particular title of a separate grade within the Department. What is wrong with your own particular title, "Assistant Preventive Officer of Customs"? It would be sufficient, however, to state your profession, qualified by the Department to which you are attached, viz., "Civil Servant, H.M. Customs and Excise."

SPORT AND SOCIAL.

Customs Preventive Staff Chess Club

PROBLEM No. 49.

by H. M. PRIDEAUX.
(Black).



(White).

White mate in two.

Solution to No. 48.

- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| White. | Black. |
| 1. ——— | K—Kt6. |
| 2. K—Kt1. | R—B8. |

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL'S TROPHY.

Rules for Contest.

1. To be competed for by teams of not less than four players, each team representing one port, and arranged in order of playing strength.*
2. The players must be members of the Preventive Staff Chess Club.
3. Each team will elect a Captain who will arrange the order of play for his own team and be consulted in cases of dispute. Should any player transfer to another port or district during the contest, he shall continue to play for his old port until the competition terminates.
4. No player can be substituted during the course of the contest, any player defaulting or ceasing to play before a decision is reached will be deemed to have "resigned" and the game will be awarded to his opponent.
5. The result of each game must be forwarded to the M.C. by the player having white pieces, and unfinished games requiring adjudication, must be forwarded to the Hon. Sec. at the expiration of the time limit.
6. A win counts 1 point and a draw $\frac{1}{2}$ point. The team with the highest aggregate of points will be the winners, and holders for a prescribed period.
7. In the event of equal scores by competing teams which may affect the destination of the trophy, the teams shall play a deciding match.

8. The Club M.C. will conduct the competition, to whom any disputes should be submitted through the port team captain.

9. British Chess Federation and ordinary club rules for correspondence play shall govern the contest.

*10. The term "port" in Rule 1, embraces a "district under the jurisdiction of one Superintendent when an insufficient number of players are available or obtainable to represent a single port.

W. W. BISHOP,
Hon. Sec.

ROWING.

The following letter, reproduced in the current issue of the Customs and Excise Sports Magazine, is of particular interest to the Preventive Staff:—

Fountain Court,
Temple, E.C.4.
November 13th, 1929.

Noel Curtis-Bennett, Esq.
Dear Sir,

On the 27th May last you wrote to Mr. C. M. Pitman enclosing a letter from the Secretary of the Customs Rowing Club asking for a ruling as to whether the members of the **Preventive Staff** were eligible as members of the Club.

Mr. Pitman handed your letter to me and the question was raised at the last meeting of the A.R.A. Committee, which was held on the 1st July.

The Committee decided that, as the Preventive Staff no longer carried out their duties in rowing boats, but invariably in launches, there was **no reason** why they should not be accepted as members of the Club. I am not sure whether I notified you of this decision at the time; I intended to do so but was very busy at the time and may have omitted to, as, on looking through my A.R.A. papers I find I have no note thereon that I ever did notify you.

If this is the first notification you have received, please accept my apologies in the circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) H. BENSLEY WELLS,

Hon. Sec., A.R.A.

Many individual enquiries have been made but no increase in membership of the Customs and Excise Rowing Section can, as yet, be attributed to the efforts put forth by the Association in moving such an august body as the A.R.A. to admit Preventive Grades to amateur status.

That we have the right material for an ideal "eight," goes without question. It now remains to be seen whether the requisite number will come forward.

The Secretary of the Section is:—

H. A. MATHER,

20, Queen Street,

Hammersmith, W.6.

Should prospective scullers have any difficulty in securing information, a note to the undersigned will receive immediate attention.

W. H. POWELL,