

it was learned that numbers of evilly disposed people were flouting the Royal Regulations.

The peasant population of this kingdom, it may be explained, was divided into two classes: the Varlets and the Varmints. The Varlets, most of them, were honest, God-fearing people; the Varmints were, more often than not, the reverse. And it was the Varmints who refused to be daunted by the King's orders, trusting to their wits to escape discovery and punishment.

They found it ridiculously easy. All they had to do was to avoid the places on the borders of the Kingdom where the King's soldiers were stationed, and bring their wine into the country at other points. With the increased taxes the profits were so great that they considered the negligible risks well warranted.

The effrontery of the Varmints put the King on his mettle. He appointed officers whose special duty it was to ferret out the offenders. These appointees were the first Preventive Officers.

At first their work was difficult. Most of the people sympathized with a traffic which enabled them to satisfy their thirst economically. But, as industry developed throughout the Kingdom, the people changed. They saw that they were endangering their own interests and increasing their taxes to maintain the Varmints in luxury.

As the wealthy Varmints went down in public respect the stock of the Preventive Officers went up, until they attained positions of great esteem in the Kingdom.

And so it is today.



AN UNUSUAL SENTENCE

A Maritime magistrate, while recently discussing the benefits of Mounted Police assistance in discharging his duties, told the story of a Justice of the Peace holding Court a few years ago, just before the R.C.M. Police took over the enforcement of laws in the Province.

A farmer had been summonsed to appear in Court to answer to a charge that his dog had killed several sheep belonging to a neighbour. The evidence had been heard, and judgment was passed to the effect that the accused was to pay for the loss of the sheep, every dog in the district was to be shot, and the guilty dog was "TO BE HANGED BY THE NECK UNTIL HE WAS DEAD".

Mr. Ripley, in a cartoon some time ago, showed a cat that received Capital Punishment in France a few centuries ago, so, no doubt, our Justice of the Peace must have come from the same line.