

Extraordinary General Meeting.

AT the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 2nd September, in the Lecture Room of the Junior Institution of Engineers, the President, Lieut -Colonel J T C Moore-Brabazon, M C, M P, was in the Chair, and the following members attended Messrs M L Bramson, F J Cleveland, C V Coates, G H Dowty, S H Evans, C B George, W Villa Gilbert, R C B Hendy, C D Holland, Norman J Hulbert, M Langley, J S L Oswald, A P Thurston, and Lawrence A Wingfield The Resolution before the meeting was as follows " That this Institution being of opinion that it is desirable in the best interests of the British aeronautical profession that this Institution should amalgamate with the Royal Aeronautical Society, *hereby resolves* to amalgamate with the Royal Aeronautical Society upon the revised terms agreed between the Council and the Council of the Royal Aeronautical Society and as set out in the August Journal of this Institution And this Institution authorises the Council of this Institution to do all things necessary for the purpose of carrying the agreed terms into effect "

Following is a resumé of the proceedings

THE CHAIRMAN This meeting has been called at the request of twenty members who objected to the revised terms for amalgamation on the question of gradings in the combined body

I would ask you to bear in mind that in the combined Society there will be four main gradings—Fellowship, Associate Fellowship, Membership and Associate Membership, and that Fellows or Associate Fellows who wish to become Members or Associate Members, and Members or Associate Members who wish to become Fellows or Associate Fellows, will be subject to scrutiny for that purpose I do not think we should take serious objection to that, for if we did it would be a confession that the grading of the Royal Aeronautical Society was a better one than our own We have always maintained that whereas their Fellowship is an honourable grade, yet it does not really convey that practical knowledge of the science which it is the pride of this Institution to insist upon Just as we should be unable to describe ourselves as Fellows or Associate Fellows of the Royal Aeronautical Society, so also their members could never describe themselves as Members or Associate Members of the Institution of Aeronautical Engineers There are many men of outstanding scientific knowledge who are very suitable as Fellows of the Royal Aeronautical Society, but who are in no way qualified to become Members of the Institution of Aeronautical Engineers

These questions have been discussed at length by your Council, who unanimously concluded that they could not depart from the strict terms of the Beharrell Report without obtaining the views of members. It was therefore decided to circulate the revised terms and to call a General Meeting if twenty or more members objected. Twenty objections were received, and therefore we are here now to again discuss that particular question. I would like to impress upon you that the concern of our present meeting is not to discuss the question of amalgamation generally, but to consider the particular question I have outlined. It is within your province to throw the amalgamation over on that special point, but not on any other.

I must say that I personally am in favour of the amalgamation. As President of the Council it is for me to agree their decisions, and I do heartily agree, because I look upon this Institution as a very vigorous body, and I feel that it can be an immense power for the good of aeronautics in the amalgamated Society.

I now ask those who so desire, to express their views.

Dr THURSTON. I feel that if the amalgamation is to go through, the proposal that we should retain our Membership as a practical grading is in the nature of a gain rather than otherwise. The only thing I am dubious about is that it should be quite clear to the Royal Aeronautical Society that not only should they insist upon grading our members, but that we also should see how many of their members should be made actual Members of the Institution. In that case the practical side would have a very strong backing and following, and everything we hope for in regard to the future of the practical side will be certain to come about.

If, however, it is to be simply that our few members are to remain members in a more or less decaying grade of the Royal Aeronautical Society, without any additional recruits, then I fear that we might gradually be stifled.

The CHAIRMAN. The Grading Committee is not a body which has a differing number of votes, so that we could be unvoted on that particular grading. What I feel is that the Grading Committee must be very strict as to whom they admit as Members and Associate Members, because I have always felt that if there is a difficulty in being able to become a certain thing, that is just what one wants to become.

Mr BRAMSON. I think Dr Thurston's remarks raise an important issue. All the points that he considers doubtful are provided for. By the previous arrangement to which our General Meeting gave its consent there was a danger that the Membership would peter out, because it was not then proposed that the Institution designations should be perpetuated, whereas now that is the case. That is why I personally think that the amended terms are very much better from our point of view than were the original terms. I feel that if this meeting were to turn down those amended terms on the issue which is now before us, then there could be only one reason and that is, that members hoped to gain advantages from the amalgamation to which they were not entitled. That is not an accusation that any of us would wish, and for that reason I feel sure that if the proposal now before us is judged on its merits, then it must be accepted.

Mr EVANS With regard to Membership of the Royal Aeronautical Society, what would be the advantage of, say, an Associate Member of the Society and a Member of the Institution retaining both titles ?

Mr BRAMSON They are entitled to do so if they wish

The CHAIRMAN I think a similar state of affairs arose when the Institution of Electrical Engineers amalgamated with the Institution of Telegraphic Engineers

It seems to me that the whole idea of the amalgamation is to keep alive (if we pull our weight) the practical end of aeronautics, otherwise we fail. The point is, I think, to allow nobody to use the title "Member of the Institution of Aeronautical Engineers" unless he has real practical qualifications. That is what we want to get into the Royal Aeronautical Society

Mr OSWALD Assuming that a Member of this Institution is at present also an Assoc. Fellow of the R A e S, according to the terms he is entitled to use both appellations if he so desires. Is he liable to pay two subscriptions to the Royal Aeronautical Society ?

The CHAIRMAN No. Only one

Mr DOWTY I think that the whole of the amalgamation proposals are vague. I cannot see that there is anything to prevent the Royal Aeronautical Society making the subscription for Membership, five guineas, and so keeping people from entering that grade. Nothing appears to have been fixed with regard to fees, and as far as I can see, there are many difficulties in the way.

The CHAIRMAN Any change in subscriptions would be dealt with at a General Meeting by a two-thirds majority.

Mr DOWTY The Royal Aeronautical Society would bring that through with their larger membership.

Mr WINGFIELD The original provision was that a Rules Committee should be set up, consisting of two members from each body.

Mr EVANS That would have to go to the Council to be passed, and it would be swamped.

The CHAIRMAN I think the Rules Committee will have full powers.

Mr BRAMSON I feel sure that the Royal Aeronautical Society will perpetuate our Membership. If their existing members by the amalgamation have the possibility of becoming entitled without extra charge to that very professional distinction, they will make use of it. There is therefore no reason why, if we keep our Membership, many of them should not apply for it.

Mr VILLA GILBERT I have been very much opposed to the amalgamation for a long time I now feel, however, that in view of the modifications in our favour we ought to amalgamate

I am not quite clear regarding the Membership of the Royal Aeronautical Society I am a Founder Member of the Society, and I really do not know what a Member of the Royal Aeronautical Society is

It certainly does seem to me that the amalgamation is very necessary for the benefit of aviation as a whole

The CHAIRMAN I would like to repeat that there will be only four technical grades in the amalgamated Society, F R Ae S , A F R A e S , M I Ae E , and A M I Ae E Other grades will be non-technical

Mr EVANS I should like to draw attention to the fact that one of the main objects of the existence of our Institution is to furnish and disseminate papers on the practical side of aeronautics, and I should like to know what arrangements have been made for such papers being read before the amalgamated body

The CHAIRMAN That will be decided by the Council of the combined Society I want to emphasize that if we do go in for the amalgamation we must be absolutely whole-hearted with the combined Society Obviously, if the practical side of aviation is not looked after in the way we wish, that will be a reason for keeping our very strong individuality, but although I want to see that combined body a much more practical institution than it is at present, at the same time we must not go into it with the idea of being an opposition party

Mr HOLLAND I cannot quite see how our technical side is actually to be perpetuated If a man has theoretical qualifications, will he at any time apply for a practical one ? It seems to me that in the future the Royal Aeronautical Society will only retain their original title

The CHAIRMAN I think that point has been fully dealt with through previous speakers

I will now ask you to vote on the Resolution before the meeting

(Voting was as follows)

	<i>For.</i>	<i>Against</i>
Votes	12	2
Proxies	50	11
	—	—
	62	13
	—	—

Resolution carried.

Mr WINGFIELD I am sure we all wish to express our thanks to our Chairman, not only for presiding at this meeting, but for all the work he has done during the past two years to meet the other side in these lengthy negotiations. It is largely due to his tact that this result has been brought about, and I now ask you to accord him a hearty vote of thanks.

The CHAIRMAN As the amalgamation becomes a more and more real thing I part with the Presidency with a great feeling of regret. I have never had to do with a more vigorous body, and I shall work as your representative as far as I can in the combined body. We must see that that is a practical and representative Society, manifesting the real vigour of the young men of this country, as well as the senior technicians.