



A VIEW OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE INSTITUTION OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS, WESTMINSTER, LONDON

MEMBERSHIP OF TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS

It has been asked within the Engineering Branch, What are the advantages to a naval engineer officer of becoming a member of one or more of the principal technical institutions in this country, and is membership officially encouraged within the Branch ?

Scientific and technical men join learned societies for various reasons. Membership of an institution like that of the Mechanical Engineers, for example, is a recognised standard of education and experience. In the commercial world it is the accepted standard of a professional engineer and, in fact, many bodies insist on it as a qualification for employment. There is, however, a wider appeal than just to establish a claim to an educational and professional standard—there is the responsibility and desire on behalf of engineers to contribute from their own knowledge and experience for the good of their fellows, and thus to benefit society and help to maintain and safeguard the professional status of engineers whether civil, mechanical, electrical or naval architects.

It is true, however, of nearly all societies that the benefits we derive from our association are determined largely by the share we take in the particular institution's activities. It may be difficult for the majority of naval engineer officers to find time to attend meetings, but at the same time a good reason for joining a society of this kind is the desire to broaden their interests and to take their rightful share in the developments of engineering.

Four premier institutions of interest to engineers are :—

- (i) The Institution of Civil Engineers (1818),
Great George Street,
Westminster, London, S.W.1.
- (ii) The Institution of Mechanical Engineers (1847),
Storey's Gate, St. James's Park,
London, S.W.1.
- (iii) The Institution of Naval Architects (1860),
10, Belgrave Street,
London, S.W.1.
- (iv) The Institution of Electrical Engineers (1872),
Savoy Place,
London, W.C.2.

The standard of the naval engineer officer's position *vis-à-vis* the engineer in civil life is set by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and the passing-out examination at the R.N.E. College is an exempting qualification from the associate membership examination of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers—provided the full course has been completed and there has been a "pass" in the subject of economics. A Lieutenant (E) who has completed the full R.N.E.C. course and is more than twenty-five years of age can be elected an associate member of the Institution of Naval Architects.

In addition to these premier institutions there are many other bodies with specialised interest, and the following three are likely to make an appeal to the naval engineer officer :—

- (i) North-East Coast Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders (1884),
Bolbec Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

- (ii) Institute of Marine Engineers (1889),
85, Minories, London, E.C.5.
- (iii) The Royal Aeronautical Society (1866),
4, Hamilton Place, London, W.1.

Taking into account the R.N.R. and the R.N.V.R. officers, there are over 500 naval engineer officers who have joined the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and over 400 are associated with the Institute of Marine Engineers. It is not generally known that the Institution of Naval Architects is also very much concerned with marine engineering.

Officers who have had an R.N.E.C. training and who have specialised in air engineering can become members of the Royal Aeronautical Society.

Junior engineer officers can join any of these societies as either students or graduates. Full details can be obtained from the various Secretaries.

It must be most emphatically stated, however, that no naval engineer officer must feel any compulsion to join any technical institution, but it is considered that, generally speaking, benefit is to be derived by individual membership of one or more of these societies.

The illustration on page 34 was kindly supplied by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. It was specially drawn for the Institution by Sydney R. Jones in October, 1946.

EXTRACT FROM THE TECHNICAL PRESS

“ Plumbers ” at the Institute

With the resumption of the more normal activities of the technical institutions, it is pleasing to note the numbers of naval engineer officers, often styled “ plumbers ” by their less technical shipmates, who attend the meetings. This was particularly noticeable at the Institute of Marine Engineers, where during the past session a number of young Lieutenants (E) were regular visitors. At the reading of Mr. Hillier’s paper, *Feed Distribution and Hunting in Marine Water Tube Boilers*, before the Institution of Mechanical Engineers last November, quite a number of naval engineer officers in and out of uniform took part in the discussion. The Shipwrights’ Exhibition was also well attended by the Engineering Branch, particularly during the lectures delivered on engineering subjects, and at the discussion of Mr. Calderwood’s paper on gas turbines the author was bombarded by questions from the junior officers present. This interest in the activities of the institutions is by no means confined to attendance at meetings, as on two occasions during last session papers were presented before the Institute of Marine Engineers by naval engineer officers, while a third is scheduled to be read early in the autumn. Marine engineers, whether serving in the Royal or Merchant Navies have much in common, and the exchange of technical information on the common platform of the institutions must lead to mutual understanding and appreciation.—*Shipbuilding and Shipping Record*, May 29th, 1947.
