

CORRESPONDENCE

Fusion Confusion

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*The RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif., and
Editor, Glossary of Meteorology (1959)*

It would be nice
If water turned ice
At a temperature precise and invariant.
Then no one would fool
With words like "subcool"
When they mean something quite the contrariant.

We would be pleased
Were liquids to freeze
At fiducial degrees, quite dependably.
For suffer, we'd not,
With that "undercooled" rot
Meteorologists mouth, uncommendably.

But liquids withstand
(We agree, to a man)
Cold in grand *excess* of nominal.
So, how can we dub,
As "under" or "sub,"
Cooling that's downright phenomenal?

Those who would coax
This linguistic hoax
Upon us poor folks who are innocent,
Should be run up a tree
Or, better yet, be
SUPERcooled 'til its meaning is evident!

Author's Note: The enclosed is submitted for consideration as an item of "correspondence" in the BULLETIN, my hope being that the poetry is of such quality as to shock its message firmly into the consciousness of the dedicated (I did not say "stubborn") cadre of cloud physicists to whom it is directed. They know who they are.

On Membership Structure

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I am strongly opposed to the creation of a hierarchy of professional members in the Society, as proposed by the Committee on Membership Structure. I can see no significant advantage in it and I envision, if the constitutional amendment is approved by the members, the appearance

of jealousy, cliques, political jockeying, and mutual "back-scratching" within the Society.

Of the reasons given by the Committee in justification of the proposed amendment, only two seem to be pertinent to the question as to whether the grades of Senior Member, Fellow, and Honorary Member should be added:

1) "The present grade of Professional Member embraces too broad a spectrum of education, achievement and professional responsibility." Too broad for what? All the professional members of the Society could be seated in a not-very-large auditorium; will anything have been achieved by splintering the group? Instead of four professional grades, why not an even dozen? We could then number the grades from I to XII, as is done in the schools, and wouldn't it be pleasant to look forward to a promotion at regular intervals?

The fact that there is diversity among the professional members does not seem to have harmed the Society, as far as I have been able to note. The publications are in control of those members who themselves are important contributors to atmospheric research and the members have consistently elected as their Society officers those professionals who are near the top in "education, achievement and professional responsibility."

2) "There is no present grade of membership that recognizes truly outstanding contributions to the field over an extended period." The question arises, why should there be? Why can't outstanding contributors be recognized through special awards? If there is need for such a thing, why not create our own "Nobel" prize?

In creating these additional levels, it appears that we are emulating the British scientific societies, despite the fact that the American social and political structures are quite different than those of the British. The history of many of the Royal Societies is not so enviable; there are many instances of pettiness and myopia on the part of their "elite" groups.

In conclusion, I wish to state that I have no objection to stiffening the requirements for professional membership; however, I do hope that the members will defeat this attempt to create an aristocracy within our Society.

Editor's Note: The category of Honorary Member has existed for some years. (See Membership Directory, February 1962 BULLETIN, p. ii.) Our current 3900 professional members, if assembled, would require a fair-sized auditorium.

Results of the election are given on page 384; we regret that Dr. Miller's statement could not have been printed prior to the event.