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FLYING CLUBS and the FINANCE BILL A

N interesting debate took place in the Commons on April
30th, when consideration was given to the Budget
>. petrol-duty proposals and their effect on flying clubs. Several
Members had tabled an amendment to the effect that the tax
should apply "except that in the case of aviation spirit supplied for the use offlying and gliding clubs duly authorized and approved by the Minister of Civil Aviation the rate of duty shall be nine-pence a gallon."
The amendment was withdrawn after Mr. J. Boyd-Carpenter, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, had reminded M.P.s that he had replied in the affirmative when asked on April 4th whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer was prepared to extend the arrangement made last year to relieve the civil flying clubs of the increased petrol duty. Several Members, nevertheless, took the opportunity to stress the national value of the flying-club movement. Moving the amendment, Mr. Frank Beswick (Lab., Uxbridge) stressed the difference between those who spent their spare time in flying and those who walked or cycled. In time of war, he said, a person who could fly was in a position to help the country more than the cyclist, as such. Similarly, in peace time, the more people could spend their time in the air, the more likely we were to throw up an individual of genius who would spur us on in our progress. Sir Wavell Wakefield (Con., St. Marylebone) suggested it was one of the vital interests of this country that every possible encouragement and opportunity be given to our young people to glide and fly. Everyone knew that with rising costs the oppor-tunity was becoming increasingly difficult. He thought the amend-ment would not cost the Treasury very much, but it would mean a great deal to the clubs, many of whose members were young people with very little money to spend, and for whom any help would be a great advantage.

A. Cdre. A. V. Harvey (Con., Macclesfield) said the flying clubs, which had existed for something like 27 years, had done nothing

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S an incentive to private pilots and as a recognition of piloting
- experience, the Royal Aero Club is to introduce, on June 1st, four categories of Pilots' Certificates (to replace R.Ae.C. Aviators' Certificates). The respective qualifications necessary, beginning at the most elementary category, are as follows :—
Fourth-class Certificate.—25 hours' flying as pilot in command; one flight as pilot in command to a point not less than 75 miles from base. Alternatively : The holding of an R.Ae.C. Aviators' Certi-ficate issued between January 1st, 1940, and May 31st, 1952. Third-class Certificate.—50 hours' flying as pilot in command of
a private or club aircraft; evidence of landing at five different air-fields; one flight as pilot in command to a point not less than 100 miles from base. Alternatively : 200 hours' flying as pilot in com-mand of any type of aircraft; or the holding of an R.Ae.C. Aviators' Certificate issued between January 1st, 1919, and December 31st, 1939.

Second-class Certificate.—125 hours' flying as pilot in command
of a private or club aircraft; evidence of landing at ten different airfields; two hours' dual instrument-flying of which one may be on a synthetic trainer; one flight as pilot in command to a point not less than 200 miles from base; one flight involving Customs clear-ance ; flying experience as pilot in command of three different types of civil aircraft. Alternatively : 500 hours' flying as pilot in com-mand of any type of aircraft; or the holding of an R.Ae.C. Aviators' Certificate issued between January 1st, 1915, and December 31st, 1918.

First-class Certificate.—500 hours' flying as pilot in command of
a private or club aircraft; evidence of landing at 20 different air-fields; ten hours' dual instrument-flying, of which five may be on a synthetic trainer; one flight as pilot in command to a point not less than 750 miles from base; one flight involving Customs clearance; flying experience as pilot in command on five different types of civil aircraft including a twin-engined aircraft, an aircraft with retractable undercarriage, and an aircraft with variable-pitch air-screw. Alternatively : 2,000 hours' flying as pilot in command on any type of aircraft, or the holding of an R.Ae.C. Aviators' Certificate issued between March, 1910 and December 31st, 1914. Applications for these Certificates must be made on an official application form to the Royal Aero Club, Pilots Certificates' Department, 19 Park Lane, London, W.i, or through an R.Ae.C. Official Observer. Logbook or other evidence will be required to substantiate claims.

Holders of a lower-grade certificate who qualify for a higher grade must return their certificates to the R.Ae.C. for endorsement. The cost of a certificate (including postage) is (with one endorse-ment), 15s; for subsequent endorsements, 5s.

but good. Flying and gliding had always been an expensive hobby but, nevertheless, the situation had improved recently in that organizations like the London Passenger Transport Board had their own flying clubs. A. Cdre. Harvey then recalled the days of the pre-war Civil Air Guard. Many people had laughed at it, but when war came it included hundreds of men who not only flew under active service conditions but who also delivered air-craft in Transport Command. The C.A.G. had, in fact, paid a tremendous dividend. Credit for that rested not only with its younger members, but also with men of over 50 years of age. He stressed that, apart from the defence aspect, the flying clubs were helping to make the population air-minded.
If ever this country had an opportunity of building up a large merchant air service, now was the time. It was happening in the U.S. and Canada, and already there were indications in this country that we had got to move very rapidly indeed if we were going to do something in the air as we had done with our merchant marine. He thought any concession to the flying clubs would be small compared with the very large sums spent on defence, and it would produce a much greater contribution than was generally appreciated.
Mr. John Grimston (Con., St. Albans) drew attention to the Government's statement of April 4th. He wanted to assure the Financial Secretary that those who tried to "keep their hand in" in civil aviation were very grateful indeed that the efforts of flying clubs were being recognized.
Replying to the debate, Mr. Boyd-Carpenter said it was in fact the intention of the Government to follow last year's procedure and by way of a grant to compensate approved flying clubs for the increased petrol duty. The cost of this concession would be some £9,000 in the present financial year, and £11,000 in a full year. He said the Government did accept what had been said as to the valuable purpose served by these clubs.

A diploma (5s) and a neck-tie (10s) will be available for each grade of Certificate. The ties have a royal blue background and bear a number of gold stripes varying with the category. Scarves may also be obtained, 54 in by 10 in, priced 17s 6d each.

WEST LONDON TROPHY AIR RACE

DURING the weekend of May 3rd-4th, the Vintage Aeroplane

Club held its second rally—an event considerably marred by bad weather but, nevertheless, carried off with enthusiasm typical of this newly formed club.
By 1100 hr on Saturday, the weather—which had been par-ticularly fine earlier—had deteriorated to such an extent that the items scheduled for the morning were postponed until" after lunch. Only three of the machines entered for the West London Trophy Race had so far arrived. For the rest of the day the scene was reminiscent of the King's Cup and Daily Express races of last year, and by mid-afternoon the race was postponed with the hope of better weather on the following day. However, in order that the crowds should not be too disappointed, demon-strations of formation flying and aerobatics were staged.
On Sunday the weather seemed even worse. Hopes of holding the race had almost faded when a break in the low cloud appeared and the rain temporarily ceased; and at 1650 hr the six competing aircraft were at the starting line (three of the original nine entrants had been unable to get through). The first man off was Mr. B. Snook in his Aeronca, G-AEVS, followed by a Tipsy B, G-AFSC, flown by Mr. H. Davies. These two were closely tailed by the old Cirrus Moth, G-EBLV, and the Avro Avian, G-ABEE, flown by W/Cdr. C. Pike, A.F.C., and Capt. A. Marshall respectively. David Ogilvy was next away in the V.A.C.'s Gipsy-powered Avro Club Cadet, G-ACHP, and the scratch man was of course, Mr. I. Forbes in his Miles Nighthawk, G-AGWT. The race was flown over three laps of an 8-mile course. Lap-ping at 161 m.p.h. and aided by his steep pylon turns, it was Ian Forbes who swept past the finishing post to win the West London Trophy (and also to gain 12 points, putting him in third place for the Vintage Aeroplane Club Trophy, to be presented at the end of the year to the pilot gaining the greatest number of points during the season. Second machine home was G-EBLV, with a speed of 93.5 m.p.h., and the Avian came third at 95.5 m.p.h. The Tipsy, with a speed of 87 m.p.h., was fourth and, rather dis-appointing perhaps, the Cadet fifth, with a speed identical with that of the Cirrus Moth. The Aeronca, lapping at 73.5 m.p.h., finally crossed the finishing line to end the first air race of the season.

FOUR-CATEGORY R.Ae.C. CERTIFICATES