THE SOCIETY'S PROGRESS

Now well in the sixth year of its existence and with a membership of over 200, the Society of Indexers seems to have come to stay and to have justified the claim that it fills a public need.

There was a good attendance of some forty members at the Annual General Meeting on 29th May. Several changes were made in the officers of the Society. First and foremost, the office of President was filled for the first time, Mr. Gordon V. Carey, doyen of British indexers* and author of Making an Index, being elected to that post. After three highly successful years in the chair, Mr. James Thornton felt he had to decline re-election, owing to the pressure of other commitments. He was elected a Vice-President and his place as Chairman was filled by Mr. Norman Knight, who (except for a period of a year and a half) had served as General Secretary since the beginning. Similarly Mr. A. R. Hewitt, who had been the Society's first Chairman and has since been a Vice-President, wished to be relieved from the post of Vice-Chairman, which he was holding concurrently. Mr. Richard Bancroft, Superintendent of the British Museum Reading Room, was elected to hold the latter office.

For the important positions of General Secretary and Assistant Secretary two newcomers to the Society were forthcoming—Mr. Alan Baker, a Government Ministry's Librarian, and his wife, Mrs. Joan Baker. The Indexer wishes them all success in their tasks. Since the A.G.M. it has come as somewhat of a shock to learn that Mr. Terence Miller's work as a schoolmaster having been transferred to Somerset, he would be unable to continue in the office of Membership Secretary, to which he had been re-elected. The warmest thanks of the Society are due to him for his devoted and unremitting attention to the interests of members. His duties are now being shared by the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary.

The Committee which was set up by the British Standards Institution three years ago to formulate a British Standard of Indexing (and which throughout included two officers of the Society among its members) has now concluded the first part of its labours and a draft of its recommendations is to be forwarded to all members of the Society for their comments and suggestions to be sent to the Society's Secretary; those deemed by the Council to be appropriate will be forwarded to the B.S.I., who after considering them hope to publish the complete Standard next year.

It was a great disappointment that for the second year in succession, owing to the paucity of recommendations, the Library Association's Wheatley Medal could not be awarded for an outstanding index published in 1961. The originally somewhat restrictive criteria for the award are now being revised, making it possible for practically any outstanding index compiled by a British indexer for a book published in this country in 1962 to qualify for the next award. It is accordingly much to be

* Or as the Times Literary Supplement described him, "that prince of indexers". On the other hand, a visiting American (a complete stranger), who asked for a special appointment, explained that Mr. Carey was known in the United States as "the dean of English editors".
desired that members of the Society (who with members of the Library Association are jointly eligible to make recommendations) should each notify his or her choice to Mr. F. J. Cornell, F.L.A., of the Library Association. It would be a thousand pities if this award—a highly valued gesture on the part of the Library Association—were suffered to lapse for want of support.

This year for the first time H.M. Stationery Office asked for the Society’s assistance in obtaining an indexer for The London Gazette—a full-time job for any one person. It was required that candidates should be accessible to London as it was necessary for them to inspect past indexes at the Stationery Office. Mrs. Grace Holmes of Reading was successful in obtaining the contract.

During the year ended 30th June, 1962, no fewer than 44 requests were received from authors and publishing houses and other bodies for the names of members qualified to undertake the compilation of particular indexes. Short lists were accordingly supplied and it is believed in each case met with the satisfaction of the inquirer. In this connexion the Council have now decided to prepare a circular letter calling the attention of the more prominent publishing firms to these services and also inviting them to apply for membership of the society.

Encouraged by the success of their second Course of Training in Indexing last year, the Society have made arrangements with the North Western Polytechnic for a similar course to be held there weekly from Friday, 28th September, to Friday, 7th December. On this occasion there will be an additional lecture on the subject of Documentary Indexing, to be given by Alderman L. C. Johnson, who was the first Archivist of the British Transport Commission. For any member who has had but little experience of indexing, the course is recommended as a means of becoming proficient in the art. A syllabus may be obtained on application to Mr. Norman Knight, 3 Western Mansions, Barnet, Herts. (Tel. BAR 4231).

Last season’s monthly Discussion Meetings proved without exception interesting and informative and were well attended. It is hoped to produce an equally successful series during the forthcoming season.

The Indexer continues to receive high praise both for the quality of its contents and its production. It is gratifying to note that its circulation to outside subscribers—on both sides of the Iron Curtain—already exceeds the membership of the Society.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1961-62

DEATH OF DR. HUGHES:

It is fitting at the outset to refer with very real regret to the great loss which the Society has sustained through the death of Dr. Leslie E. C. Hughes, B.Sc., Ph.D., M.I.E.E., on the 9th June, 1961.

A Founder Member of the Society, Dr. Hughes was at the time of his death serving as Hon. Assistant Gen. Secretary, but for the year 1959/60 had been the