puter use for indexes, and strive to make it use rather than misuse. We do not want to make a plea for our own code in particular, even though, thanks to so much helpful outside criticism, it is really no longer ours alone. But there should be a general machine-compatible alphabeting code, adopted where there is no special reason not to do so, for indexes, library catalogues, and bibliographies. It should certainly be an Anglo-American code, and an Anglo-American standard. We hope you will be interested in what we have done. More importantly, we hope you will work for adoption of a new, logical, computer-compatible standard for all our work.

We would, in closing, like to thank those officers and members of the Society who so helpfully gave us extensive criticism and assistance, and to invite similar help from the rest of the Society.


THE USE OF CAPITALS

The invaluable A dictionary of modern English usage, by the late H. W. Fowler, which was first published in 1926, has now reached a second edition, having been revised by Sir Ernest Gowers.

It is interesting to note that the new edition's article on capitals, occupying four columns, has been entirely contributed by Mr. G. V. Carey, President of the Society of Indexers. In this article, which will be found useful by index makers as well as by men of letters generally, Mr. Carey takes the view that the use of capitals is largely governed by personal taste, and his own, while not favouring seventeenth-century excess, happens to favour even less the niggardliness now sometimes apparent. 'The printed page that is starved of capitals suffers not merely in appearance (to my eye at any rate) but also in function, for denial of capitals to well-known bodies, institutions, officials and the like militates against ready reference.'

There follows a number of useful instances with alternative usages mentioned and sometimes criticized. The new edition of Modern English usage is published by the Clarendon Press at 21s., but those readers who are interested solely in the use of capital letters can obtain Mr. Carey's views by consulting his two pamphlets, Punctuation and Mind the stop, both published by C.U.P.
Mr. Carey does not, of course, refer specially to indexes and in particular does not mention the modern tendency to confine the use of initial capitals to such main headings as would in any case possess them naturally. Nor, as far as I can trace, does he allude to this topic in his Making an index, which forms part of the same very useful series of C.U.P. pamphlets. Thus, to adapt certain entries in the index to the fourth volume of The Indexer (which, I am glad to say, does not adopt the new method), we might expect to see:

*How to Catch Trout (Dickie), index to, 49-50*

Hughes, Fielden, 'Introducing the Indexer', 95, 137

hymns, how not to index, 139

hyphenated proper names, 138

Robert Collison, in his Indexing books (Benn, 1962), states: 'It is not essential to capitalize the initial letters of ordinary words, but even if lower case is chosen, the printer will probably restore the capitals of his own accord'. Be such an instance of compositorial conspiracy as it may, my own preference, as I have already indicated, is for capitalizing the initial letter of every main heading. This is the old-established method and seems to add dignity and finish to the appearance of the printed page.

It would be interesting to hear the views of other index-makers** on this subject.

G.N.K.

**I have used this old term deliberately, since as a result of my name's appearing in the Buff Telephone Book under the heading of INDEXERS I am being constantly rung up with requests for my terms for constructing those marginal thumb indexes to be found in certain trade publications!

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INDEXING*

E. J. Coates

In case the title of this paper carries the implication that there is something peculiar or fundamentally different about scientific and technical indexing which marks them off from other kinds of indexing, I should make it clear that I do not think this is so. Very few of the points with which I shall deal will have no application to indexing in other subject fields. The main factors which from the indexer's viewpoint distinguish science from non-science material are questions of degree only. Scientific literature contains a greater number of concepts in toto and a far higher proportion of precisely defined concepts than does the literature of the humanities, so that from the point of view of the multiplicity of concepts scientific indexing looks at first glance formidable, but from the point of view of the battle between words and meanings, the scientific indexer gets off relatively lightly, I say relatively because, despite all essays at standardised nomenclature, there is plenty of ambiguity in scientific, and more particularly technological, terminology. But at least, despite all that is justifiably said about the sheer incompetence of much scientific writing as communication, the scientific author usu-