What has often been predicted has now come to pass. An American Society of Indexers has been set up. This is clearly the most important and vital event in the indexing world since the formation of the original society twelve years ago. The Society of Indexers can but feel sincerely flattered by this form of imitation. We welcome the initiative shown by the American indexers and applaud their enterprise.

We invite our readers' attention to the report on page 91 of the meeting in New York City on November 18 at which the new society was established. This had been preceded by a preliminary meeting held as far back as April 24 last year, as well as a working luncheon in London on September 23, at which Mr. Robert Palmer, representing the American indexers, discussed the whole project with officers of the Society of Indexers.

Had it been intended to make the American Society a completely separate body, much might have been said in favour of the adoption of a distinctive title, such as the Association of American Indexers. But, after all, in another field, there already exist the Library Association and the American Library Association, which are entirely distinct bodies. Curiously the former is not the prior association, having sprung in 1877 (as the Library Association of the United Kingdom, which title it retained until 1896) from the American Association, which had been founded the year before.

But no such separation, we gather, is contemplated in the present instance. It is a source of gratification to read in the report that ninety per cent of the members of the new society favour affiliation with the Society of Indexers. Now the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines "affiliate" as follows:

affiliat, v.t. (Of an institution) adopt (persons as members, societies as branches); attach (persons, societies) to, connect (them) with (a society); (Law) fix paternity of illegitimate child on putative father . . .

But the legal part can be disregarded, because there is no question here of any illegitimacy in the case of this particularly welcome offspring. In any event, "affiliation" certainly implies a degree of fairly intimate association.

Another interesting suggestion that has been made is that *The Indexer* should be shared by the two societies. This opens up exciting new vistas and conjures up visions of extra pages to the journal's present average number of 48 or even of its becoming a quarterly publication. But this is a point of long-term policy and will require detailed examination and careful negotiations, as indeed will all matters affecting the relations between the two bodies, such for instance as the difficult question of dual membership.

In a covering letter Mr. Palmer (to whom we are indebted for kindly supplying the report of the founding meeting) remarks: 'I have attended such meetings for other societies and I was particularly impressed by the spirit of friendliness and co-operation shown here.' There must be something peculiarly inherent in our profession to produce such friendly qualities, because similar comments have been made from time to time regarding the British indexers. Quite recently a visitor who had been present at one of the Society's meetings exclaimed to her host: 'But what wonderfully pleasant people these indexers are.'

We notice that a well-known member of the Society of Indexers, Mr. Alan Greengrass of *The New York Times*, and
Mrs. Jessica Harris, another valued member, have been elected President pro tem and Secretary pro tem respectively. We venture to congratulate both them and their members upon the appointments and trust that The New York Times will say of the new society what The (London) Times said on the formation of the Society of Indexers in 1957: 'Here is a necessary body if ever there was one.'

We can foresee nothing to prevent the two societies existing side by side in the utmost harmony, each mutually supporting the other. George Canning declared in 1826 that he had 'called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old'. Could not, on a more modest scale, a similar claim be made for this latest development in the world of indexing?

G.N.K.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS

FOUNDED IN NEW YORK

The following report has been kindly supplied by Mr. Robert Palmer, the (British) Society of Indexers' Honorary Correspondent in New York. It is a summary of the minutes and has been approved by the new Society's constitutional committee and the President pro tem.

The American Society of Indexers was founded at a meeting held in New York City on November 18, 1968.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Theodore Hines of the Columbia University School of Library Service. He reported on the initial organizational meeting that was held on April 24, 1968, mentioning that Mrs. Mary Flad, who chaired the first meeting and who gave the original impetus to the formation of the society, had moved with her husband to Syracuse, New York. Nor could Mrs. Patricia Alonzo, who carried on Mrs. Flad's work, be present, since she had just given birth to her first child.

Dr. Hines mentioned that in response to a questionnaire distributed at the initial meeting about ninety per cent of those present stated that they favoured affiliation with the (British) Society of Indexers. Therefore the committee on organization (authorised by the original meeting and headed by Mr. John Berry of the R. R. Bowker Company) had asked Mr. Robert J. Palmer, a free-lance indexer, to enter into preliminary talks with members of the British Society on his forthcoming trip to England.

Mr. Palmer reported on these informal conversations, which were held in September. Such questions as the possibility of dual membership* in the two societies, the financing of such dual membership, and American support for The Indexer were discussed by Mr. Palmer and the members of the British society. Mr. Palmer stated that it appeared that a general meeting of minds was reached but that any specific agreement would depend of course upon subsequent formal approval by the two societies. What impressed Mr. Palmer was the spirit of friendliness and cooperation shown by members of the British Society.

At this point in the meeting, a motion was made and carried that the American Society of Indexers be formally established.

A motion was then made and carried that pro tem officers of President, Secretary, and Treasurer be elected to serve until a meeting to be held in or about April, 1969, at which time a proposed constitution would be presented to the membership by a committee to be appointed by the President pro tem.

* The Society of Indexers has 45 Individual members overseas, 31 of whom are in the United States, plus 12 Institutional members, 7 being in the United States.—EDITOR.

(Continued on page 133)