work of indexers, notably publishers. It was suggested that a general leaflet should be prepared, for use by all the societies, which would include brief statements about the historical development of the societies, some general comments on the nature of indexing, and at the end a blank 'box' in which each society could rubber-stamp (or even over-print) its current official address.

It was emphasized that there should be maximum communication between the societies. This could be assisted by the exchange of newsletters, to serve two purposes. First, each society could devote a section of its newsletter to items quoted from the newsletters of the other societies. Secondly, enough copies of newsletters should be sent to central depositories, to enable those members with sufficient interest to have access to the full text of the newsletters of the other societies. An overseas development officer could be appointed by each society, to facilitate this and other forms of communication as well as to promote the activities of the society in its neighbouring countries.

The role of *The Indexer* was discussed. It was agreed that, as this is the only scholarly journal in the field of indexing and, as such, is used by many who are not members of the various societies, it would not be suitable to use it as a vehicle of inter-society communication. It was suggested that the journal could help to promote the international image by including abstracts of articles in at least French and German.

Consideration was given to the role of registers of indexers and the possibility of exchanging those among the various societies. Publishers may well want to 'shop around' for an indexer with suitable expertise and price, and this search may be across national boundaries. Any increase in 'internationalism' would encourage publishers to feel more comfortable using, someone recognized by a society in another country. Indexers should be encouraged to join the society in their own country, but should not feel constrained to do so if the availability of work makes it more expedient to join that of another country.

Finally, brief consideration was given to the time and place of the next international conference. It was agreed that these matters should be decided within the next few months, so that proper notice could be given both to the host country and to society members.

**An Unconventional Indexer**

On Saturday evening, William S. Heckscher, Emeritus Professor of Art History (Utrecht & Duke Universities), consultant to Rare Books Department, Princeton University Library, and sole founder-member from outside the UK of the Society of Indexers, spoke on *Unconventional indexes*. Basing his approach on an analysis of Albrecht Dürer's graphic work, especially his *Melencolia*, in the light of contemporary texts as well as modern criticism, he suggested that the modern tendency towards rigid standardization may produce efficient indexes (it very often doesn't), but it destroys their power to illuminate the works to which they refer.

The text of Dr Heckscher's talk will appear in a later issue of *The Indexer*. Meanwhile, as an earnest of good things to come, we print part of his letter to the editor concerning the publication of his talk:

In order to present to you and to the Journal for the benefit (or: hollow laughter) of its readers something which carries enough force to stimulate and/or provoke. . . . I would need above all TIME in order to document and round out what will come haltingly when I appear before my betters. This is not an attempt at being humble but pura veritas. If you tell me: Look, in that case it would take much too long and the whole affair will be a matter of the gray past. . . . I would realize that offering you a manuscript long after the feast would not contribute to your happiness.

I have first to compose—ab ovo—an article that will have to serve as a contribution to a Polish Festschrift. This, horror of horrors, has to be written in Latin and I have to think it out from a very speculative beginning to its glorious end. In the course of the so-called Spring Semester I engaged myself to read a paper at a meeting on English emblems. So you see that when 1979 is well on its way, I will have a little more time (not counting preparations for a lecture in Florence, Italia) that Spring. If I make the impression of a harassed peasant with too much hay on his fork, that is unfortunately a very true image. If (if!) I survive this stack of obligations (which I cannot escape) I will settle down to write a manuscript for you (I never make promises, so this should be taken as a prognostication).

P. S. This letter, written under the stress of endless interruptions, is so poorly structured, it needs an INDEX.