cope with their task. When asked whether indexes had been published to The Scotsman, he answered no, because the MSC claimed copyright for all material produced under MSC auspices. (It was generally agreed from the floor that this was incorrect.)

The index to The Scotsman is based on the style of The Times index, the Library of Congress Catalogue and the BBC catalogue of terms, adjusted according to local content. Infostar is used for the actual data collection, and the index is prepared daily, with monthly, then yearly, mergers. There are approximately 150,000 entries per year. The index information is on computer from 1983-6, but is not generally available to the public. Altogether 20 part-time and six full-time people, plus one editor, are involved in The Scotsman project. Over the years it has also included one ordinary member of The Society of Indexers and one Registered member (who was excellent!).

To complete the afternoon session there was a fascinating talk by Stephen Torrington, Librarian from the Express and Star, Wolverhampton. Here computers are used through every process, from desk-top publish-}

ing to compiling the index. The system was set up in the summer of 1985 using an American software package—basis on a VAX computer. Every evening some 900 'stories' are transferred to the library file, where they are sorted and marked either K (kept) or D (deleted). 300–400 are kept, and any story can be accessed in a wide variety of ways: e.g., length, office, byline, heading, date, photo or a mix and match of words. It seems that every word can be used as a heading and any combination of words also. For the moment, this information system and index is available only at the newspaper office, but it is hoped that links with the local library and University will be possible in the future.

In conclusion, there was a half-hour discussion session. The main points considered were the MSC projects; the problems of training; finance; time; what to index; and how to set up an indexing project within limited means.

Altogether, a most useful seminar, with much goodwill, information and experience!

Geraldine Beare

Reference books for indexers: some comments

K. G. B. Bakewell

Four people responded to my appeal for comments on my article which appeared on pages 131–40 of the April 1987 issue: W. F. Barrett, David Linton and my Liverpool Polytechnic colleagues Helen Chandler and Graham Matthews. I am very grateful to all of them.

W. F. Barrett, of the Council of Europe, points out that there has been progress since the 1982 edition of the EUDISED thesaurus, listed under Thesauri. The revised edition, now called EUDISED multilingual thesaurus for information processing in the field of education, was published in 1984 by Mouton Publishers of Berlin, New York and Amsterdam in nine language versions—English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Danish, Greek, and Portuguese. Each version contains the equivalents in the other eight languages. This edition was not listed in the British national bibliography, presumably because the publishers do not have a British office. Mr Barrett states that work is progressing on a revised edition but that it is no easy matter to manage a nine-language thesaurus. I am sure that all indexers sympathize!

Under The world of publishing David Linton and Graham Matthews both express surprise (rightly) at the omission of Publishers in the United Kingdom and their addresses (Whitaker), which is comprehensive as to addresses, and Cassell & the Publishers’ Association directory of publishing, which lists all members of the Publishers’ Association together with authors’ agents, trade associations, reference books, periodicals, etc.

David Linton points out, as its previous editor, that (i) the publishers of Benn’s media directory moved back to Tonbridge from Tunbridge Wells in July 1985, and (ii) the second volume has been entitled International, and not (as I wrote) Overseas countries, since 1982.

David Linton was also most surprised at the omission, under Guides to organizations, of Hollis press & public relations annual, which he describes as ‘indisputably the contact source for virtually every type of British organisation’. I have to confess that I had never heard of this work before receiving Mr Linton’s letter, so I repaired to Liverpool Commercial Library to have a good look at it. Subtitled ‘The classified guide to press contacts, public relations departments, news information sources, public relations consultancies worldwide and services to communication and the media’, it is arranged in seven sections:

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1. News contacts
2. Official and public information sources
3. Public relations consultancies
4. Reference and research addresses for communicators
5. Services for the communication industry and the media
6. Who sponsors what?
7. Regional guide to public relations consultancies.

I was pleased to find the Society of Indexers listed under 'Professional and Vocational Bodies in the Communications Field', but sorry to see an obsolete name and address given. An out of date address in Reading is also given for the Institute of Information Scientists. The Library Association is listed in Section 1 under 'Books and Publishing' (with Ridgmount misspelt as 'Ridgemount'). Aslib, the Association for Information Management, is not listed (or, at least, not indexed), though I was intrigued to find Aslib Ugo Associates, a public relations consultancy in Nigeria. The 'Master Index' appears to index names of organizations only, not subjects.

Mr Linton also feels that I should have listed The Times 1000 in this section—an invaluable work taken by 87 per cent of the public libraries in London, the North West of England and Clwyd, which Vincent Roper and I surveyed for a British Library-sponsored investigation of business information services. There are many more directories of companies—I have listed 42 in my recent book Business information services and the public library (Gower, 1987).

Graham Matthews suggests that Clover newspaper index, published weekly with six-monthly and annual cumulations by Clover Publications (8 Ashby Drive, Caldecote, Biggleswade, Beds SG18 9DJ) should have been included under Newspaper and periodical indexes. It covers all the quality daily and Sunday newspapers and their supplements, and its up-to-dateness is a valuable feature. A business supplement is also published.

Graham would also have liked me to have emphasized the growing importance of online sources and the use of CD-ROM (Compact Disc—Read Only Memory) for Library and information science abstracts and British books in print.

Helen Chandler wonders why The new Columbia encyclopedia is my favourite single-volume encyclopedia. I'm not sure, except that I have always found its articles readable and it has never let me down when I've consulted it in a quest for information.

When reviewing the 4th edition of volume 3 of Walford for this issue, I found two errors in my article, for which I apologize. Directory of British official publications: a guide to sources (page 134 and reference 84 on page 138) was compiled by Stephen Richard and not, as I suggested, Stephen Roberts (or, as Walford states, Stephen Richards). The Oxford companion to music (page 134 and reference 132 on page 138) has been superseded by The new Oxford companion to music (General editor, D. Arnold), published in 1983 in two volumes.

Finally, David Linton submits that 'the titles of all serial publications (whether newspapers, periodicals or reference books) should always use initial capitals for each significant word'. This is really a matter of editorial policy but, as a good (I hope!) librarian, I normally follow the Anglo-American cataloguing rules and capitalize only the initial letter of the first word (and also the second if the first is an article).

My thanks again to W. F. Barrett, David Linton, Graham Matthews, and Helen Chandler.

Renewed threat of VAT on books

'There is a strong movement towards "harmonization of VAT" within the European Community, [and] Britain may be forced to tax books like other member states,' warns The Author (Spring 1987, p.1). It urges readers who see the imposition of tax, not as fair and equal treatment with other cultural productions, but as yet another bar to education, information and culture, to write to their Euro-MPs, pressing for support for zero-rating for books.

The weekly newsletter of the Publishers Association, PA News, has also kept a watchful eye on the VAT campaign progress, reporting:

In March a European delegation visited large numbers of offices of commissioners to point out the damage to information, ideas, education and literary culture from taxation on books, and urging the continuance of zero-rating. The delegation was met with a high degree of understanding.

The Economic and Monetary Committee of the European Parliament has adopted a report which includes (as an amendment proposed by Ben Patterson, a UK MEP) recognition that the abolition of zero-rating is not politically acceptable. The report will be debated by the European Parliament.

European Committee Against Taxing Books has been formed, strongly supported by the British National Book Committee. Members are being nominated from all book concerns throughout the Community. Roy Jenkins MP, the former President of the Commission, has agreed to be a patron of the Committee from the UK.

A National Book Committee delegation (Earl of Stockton, Clive Bradley, Mark Le Fanu, Tim Godfray) called on Peter Brooke MP, Minister of State at the Treasury responsible for VAT, to urge continuance of zero-rating.