Since its inception the Society has responded to over sixty requests for indexers from publishers and authors.

At a Special General Meeting on September 15th, Mr. A. R. Hewitt, who was the Chairman for the first two years of the Society's existence, was unanimously elected its first Vice-President by acclamation.

G. N. K.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 1960

The Society has now come to the end of the third year of its existence, and may be said to be settling down to a feeling of permanency. This is satisfactory. The life of a society depends upon the interest which members take in its activities, and upon the enthusiasm which attracts others who will want to join. The Council wishes to record its view that while the Society is at present stable, the next year or two will show whether it will branch out into increased activity. The growth of shared experience is as important as growth in numbers.

The Society has 184 members—the same number, it so happens, as was shown in the Council's Report last year. Since then five members have resigned, and unhappily the Society has also lost two members who died during the year—Miss C. E. Wilson and Miss Margaret Neave. Our numbers were made up by seven new members, whom the Council takes this opportunity of welcoming to the Society. The number of institutional members remains at twenty-seven, of whom ten are overseas members. Of our individual membership it is interesting to note that 97 reside in London or the Home Counties, 4 in Scotland, 29 in other parts of the United Kingdom, and 27 overseas. As the financial statement shows, a stable membership means stability of income, even though there is no increase. Subscriptions to The Indexer are, however, an additional and valuable asset.

The Chairman, Mr. J. C. Thornton, has, with regret, decided not to seek re-election.* He feels that his other occupations prevent him from giving the continuity of attention which is all-important if the Society is to thrive through the efforts of its officers. Dr. L. E. C. Hughes, the Hon. General Secretary, who is also a busy man, has done much in putting the Society's records in good order and in furthering its contact with the publishing trade as a point of reference on indexing problems and the availability of indexers. During the past year Mr. A. T. H. Talbot has held the new office of Hon. Membership Secretary, and has proved the worth of this function in fostering friendly contact between members and in promoting interest in the Society among potential new members. It is to be hoped that he will continue in his office. The Council wishes on behalf of the Society to record its grateful thanks to these officers and also to Mr. Collison for his continuing work as Hon. Treasurer.

* At the Meeting he was, fortunately, persuaded to change his mind.—Ed.
The Society has reason to be grateful for the work done by Mr. J. L. Thornton as Editor of *The Indexer*. A lively and thriving journal is essential to the well-being of the Society. The Council would like to congratulate the Editor on the two issues which have appeared during the year at the scheduled times, and asks the Society to appreciate the importance of the journal, which has a considerable circulation outside the Society. *The Indexer* must be able to expect and to receive a wider range of contribution from members of the Society. The Council is also able to report that, as foreshadowed in the previous Annual Report, the cost of production, although high, is within the Society's means.

The problem of the remuneration of indexers, to which reference was made in the previous annual report cannot be said to have shown itself as capable of a final solution. A useful paper on the subject was drawn up by a small committee, which under the chairmanship of Mr. A. R. Hewitt made a number of recommendations, and was published in *The Indexer*, Vol. 1, No. 2. The paper was discussed at a meeting of the Society held on 26th May, 1959. The general view taken was that current methods of estimating payment are so varied and the chances of uniformity so limited that each individual indexer might do better batting on his own wicket with whatever strokes come handiest to the occasion. Nevertheless, the recommendations remain on record and have a weight of opinion behind them for those who wish to draw upon the corporate wisdom of the Society.

Acting on the decision of the Society at the last Annual General Meeting, the Council planned a series of monthly meetings, which were held during the months October, 1959, to March, 1960, and at which speakers were invited to address the Society. Dr. P. R. P. Claridge of the Low Temperature Station at Cambridge gave an address on the indexing of information on chemical compounds in plants (in November), Mr. Kenneth Day, a director of Messrs. Ernest Benn, on the typographical indexing (in December), and Mr. J. P. Saville, Information Officer of the Iron and Steel Institute, on the storage and retrieval of information (in December). About twenty-five to thirty members were present on each occasion, and those who were there will be likely to agree that the addresses were well worth hearing. As always at our meetings, the discussions which followed were lively and stimulating. At two other meetings the Chairman (Mr. Thornton) and the Hon. General Secretary (Dr. Hughes) spoke on literary indexing and practical indexing respectively, and the session closed with an amusing and provocative discourse given by Mrs. Hatt, a member of the Council.

The Council would welcome suggestions for meetings during the coming year or proposals for other activities which the Society could undertake.

The Council has been asked during the year to suggest the names of indexers for various specialized publications, covering mid-European history, pre-Revolution French diplomacy, and individual biographies. Publishers and editors have sought the Society's advice over intricate indexing problems, and on behalf of the Society the Hon. General Secretary has dealt with enquiries concerning the indexing of
such compilations as a year's minutes of a trade union, the issue of an engineering journal over a hundred years, the re-indexing of a large military index, the product indexing of an industrial syndicate, and the indexing of a work on nuclear reactors, and a Who's Who in engineering.

The British Standards Institution has recently revived its interest in drawing up an agreed standard for indexing, work which it undertook on the Society's initiative. The Society will continue to take part in this project.

The Librarian of the Alderman Library of the University of Virginia invited the Society to formulate and distribute a set of basic rules for the indexing of learned and scientific periodicals. This has been compiled, being mainly the work of Mr. John L. Thornton, and will, it is hoped, be printed and distributed on the strength of a grant which the American Library Association has undertaken to make.

As the Society has no premises of its own, it has been a great advantage to have been allowed to hold meetings in Chaucer House, and the Council on the Society's behalf wishes to record its gratitude to the Library Association. The Council also expresses its thanks to the National Book League for permission to hold the Annual General Meeting on its premises.

On behalf of the Council

J. C. Thornton, Chairman.
L. E. C. Hughes, Hon. General Secretary.

27th April, 1960.

INDEXES VERSUS INDICES

"Our imputation shall be oddly poised
In this wild action; for the success,
Although particular, shall give a scantling
Of good or bad unto the general;
And in such indexes, although small pricks
To their subsequent volumes, there is seen
The baby figure of the giant mass
Of things to come at large."

Shakespeare: Troilus and Cressida, i, 3.

Quoting the above in his book What is an index? 1878, Henry B. Wheatley adds the following footnote: "I would here, under cover of our great poet's name, protest against the use of the plural indices. As long as a word continues to take the plural form of the language from which it is borrowed we cannot look upon it as thoroughly naturalized. Surely Index may be considered an English word when it was treated as such by Shakespeare".