

Soon after the war ended in 1945, English scientists could again discuss how to improve the world-wide exchange of ideas, interrupted for so long in some cases. It was David Martin of the Royal Society in London who had the brilliant idea to call an International Conference in 1948 on the subject of "Scientific Information" with J.D. Bernal giving the opening address. Among the many contributions to the theme, I submitted a paper on the use of punched cards. [See Title 33] Each one would contain all relevant information about a single scientist, his research topic, qualifications, publications and address. If one scientist wanted to know his co-workers in the same field, all cards would have to be run through the then existing primitive sorters, a lengthy and quite impracticable task. Even today with Internet and e-mail no such search is possible, as there is no world-wide data base of all scientists.

In November 1962 I made another proposal, to start *The Science Daily Newspaper*. I had just spent a few months on the Staff of the London *Daily Telegraph* as a temporary replacement for the Science Correspondent, Anthony Smith, on safari in Africa. [See Title 83] I thought I knew all about a daily newspaper—except the vital matter of financing it! I still have a copy of the five-page memorandum on the subject, about Editorial Policy, contents subdivided according to disciplines with relevant advertisements on opposite pages, staff, office facilities, distribution and initial print order. I argued that if specialist newspapers like the *Financial Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* could exist and make a profit, so why not one for scientists world-wide? The idea was then just too utopian!

Ten years later, I was able to start a project that was more practicable and profitable. It had been decided that in February 1971 English currency would go decimal and much opposition existed because it was argued that no-one could rapidly convert in his head the new into the old currency. I had just then in 1968 acquired a facsimile of Apianus' *Astronomicus Caesareum* originally published in 1543. The reprint, like the original, had many splendid volvelles, the circular paper slide rules, which allowed the reader to calculate easily any given positions of the Moon or of the stars, throughout the year.

My simple idea was to construct such a circular slide rule with one circular scale of the new currency values outside and another circular scale inside with the old currency. One could easily rotate a cursor also provided, all made from stout cardboard. My employer, then the *Daily Telegraph*, took up the idea enthusiastically, advertised it in its columns, and sold many thousands of these gadgets for many months. I received a royalty which was much to be preferred to a patent. When the EURO currency appeared, the same idea was no longer possible, I discovered, as electronic calculators had become universal. [See Title 217]