to do the index in my own time without
pressures from publishers or compositors,
or anybody else. I could, indeed, enjoy
the luxury of doing the job to the best of
my ability and I may say it took me much
longer than I expected, to my surprise not
all the time being spent on the index as
such, but quite a bit on amending the text
of the book itself, for when one gets down
to an index it is astonishing how many
flaws seem suddenly and annoyingly to be
revealed in the material being indexed.

THE 1964 MEDAL
—A SUGGESTION

May we suggest to members of the
Society that during the next seven months
they examine indexes to books issued by
British publishers during 1964 and send
particulars to the Library Association be-
fore 1st May, 1965, of any they consider
worthy of consideration for the award of
the medal.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Peter Ferriday is Editor of British
humanities index formerly the Index to
periodicals.

Detective Chief Superintendent J. W.
Godsell is head of the Fingerprint Depart-
ment at New Scotland Yard, and a recog-
nised authority on this subject.

PERSONALIA

Miss Delight Ansley, a New York
member of the Society, is at present on
vacation in this country and will also be
visiting Scotland. On September 16th,
Miss Ansley, who holds the position of
Indexing Supervisor in the McGraw-Hill
Book Co., honoured the officers of the
Society with her company at a dinner at
the East India & Sports Club.

Indexing of Periodicals—contd.
that the titles of novels and of periodical
articles are analogous. One can imagine
an enquirer, of no exceptional memory,
looking up Anna Karenina or The Mill
on the Floss but hardly 'Spark-advance
device for electronic ignition' or 'Why
change to decimals?' (With reference to
this it is interesting to note that the
former article appears in the British Tech-
nology Index under a word not given in
the title, 'Petrol, Engines, Ignition, Spark-
advance units': there were also the nec-
essary See references from Spark-advance
units, Ignition, etc. The Nature form
would have produced entries under Spark,
Advance, Device, Electronic, Ignition but
not under Petrol Engines).

Obviously there are complicating fea-
tures in periodical indexing that have not
been touched on in this paper, but that
much current indexing is unsatisfactory
in method and application does seem
apparent. Indexes seem at present con-
structed for those who know what they are
looking for, to the extent of the word
order of titles, and therefore not likely to
use the index at all. But the majority of
users must surely be assumed to use an
index to locate an article about something
or by somebody. The author entry is a
straightforward matter; the problem lies
in the subject entry. Perhaps the examples
given have displayed the deficiencies of
many indexes in that respect. The re-
quired development would seem in the
direction of subject indexing as used in
the British Technology Index and the
abandonment of the chance involved in
such notions as 'significant words' and
'key words'.

Manual of style. 'The value of any
index lies in its service for quick refer-
ence' (University of Chicago Press).