side of the angels or not? I rather think it is.

With a certain feeling of nostalgia I recall that for the first quarter of the present century I resided in your county borough, Mr. President. That was in the days of one of your predecessors, that other great Croydon Librarian, Stanley Jast, with whom I was very friendly.

I shall always treasure this medal. For the rest of my life it will remain a source of the utmost pride.

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**CRITERIA FOR AWARDING THE WHEATLEY MEDAL**

‘Criteria for the Award of the Wheatley Medal’ was the subject discussed at a joint meeting of the Cataloguing and Indexing Group of the Library Association and the Society of Indexers held on Thursday, March 4th, 1968, at the Library Association, Ridgmount Street, London, W.I. Mr. Richard Bancroft, Chairman of the Society of Indexers, was elected to the chair.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Bancroft said that the representatives of the Society of Indexers on the Wheatley sub-committee had hammered out a list of criteria for evaluating an index which had been submitted to the Library Association Publications Committee and which he was to have presented to the meeting. However, he had now been elected chairman and naturally it would not be proper for him to support or oppose any particular views: he had to remain impartial. Nevertheless he thought he might still tell the meeting what these criteria were without arguing in their favour in the hope that they might stimulate clarifying discussion. The criteria he gave were ten, each further defined by the sort of question a judge would ask in trying to apply each criterion:

**Depth.** Has the work been indexed as thoroughly as it deserves? Is the index complete and of sufficient size—not too meagre to be useful nor unnecessarily large? (Perhaps 5 per cent of the length of text as a minimum?)

**Reflection of author’s intention.** Does the index contain the items the author would have chosen and does their treatment in the index preserve the proportions of the book?

**Nomenclature.** Have suitable terms been chosen to describe the concepts in the text? Have the terms been chosen consistently? Have appropriate cross-references been made to relate out-of-date or idiosyncratic terms used in the text to those in current use?

**Cross-references.** Have sufficient and suitable cross-references been made to connect related items (concepts) usefully?

**Accuracy.** Do the references in the index refer to the right page of the text? (The index must be compared with the text.) Do items in the text have references in the index? (The text must be compared with the index.) Where related entries, or entries under different terms but for the same concept, each include page references, are these consistent? (The entries in the index must be compared with each other.)

**Filing Order.** Is the index arranged in correct alphabetical or other order? Are personal and other proper names arranged in accordance with the usual conventions?

**Differentiation of references.** Are page references sufficiently distinguished by subheadings to avoid long strings of numbers?

**Clarity of layout.** Does the layout help to make the index easy to understand and use?

**Clarity of intention.** If the index departs from indexing conventions, have the departures been clearly explained at the beginning of the index?

**Contribution to indexing.** Does this index make an original contribution to the art of indexing in any way?
Note that too much is as often bad as too little—a good index contains what is necessary; no less, no more.

Note also that indexes are intended to help the user to obtain information from the text, and the overriding criterion is how successful they are in doing this.

Mr. Peter Lewis opened for the Cataloguing and Indexing Group of the Library Association. The discussion, he said, might perhaps be taken as casting a critical eye on some previous awards of the medal, but he had no criticism of the indexes to which the medal had been awarded, whose standards had been of the highest. He would, however, ask the meeting to consider the difficult question of why the entries for the award had been so few in the previous year (1967), and what could be done towards stimulating interest, which was rather low.

The main difficulty, he continued, may lie in the conditions of the award as much as in the fact that there is no effective advertisement of its existence. This may be a reason why librarians had not taken an interest in it.

It was a question of approach. Indexes by librarians were a different thing from book indexes, and were concerned with information from whatever source, relating them to the context from which they came, a larger context of the world and knowledge generally. The book index tended to be related to the author's intentions, whereas the librarian's tended to relate back to information generally. Librarians were not compilers primarily, but extractors of information. Indexes they tended to make tended to be ineligible for the award of the Wheatley Medal. This was reinforced, suggested Mr. Lewis, by the librarians making indexes not as individuals but as part of a corporate effort, arising out of their corporate work. Work by corporate bodies might be among the most significant developments in indexing.

Some regarded it as beneficial to exclude scientific or highly technical works. But there might be a need to reconstitute the award body and its terms. He himself, although he might look to this as one of the few awards to which he could aspire, could not do so within its terms. He thought they might open up competition to indexers working as teams and in fields and subjects not at present eligible—widen the area, in other words, just as the Margaret Mann Citation for services to cataloguing in the U.S.A. was not necessarily awarded for the compilation of a catalogue. On this basis, the Wheatley Medal might even go to the firm or corporation which had made the most notable contribution to indexing during the year.

Mr. G. V. Speaight, a publisher member of the Society of Indexers, who described himself also as author and compiler of an index—to his own book—said he took five years to do the research on his book, and added ironically, with reference to the index, 'so why should anyone be able to pick it up and find in five minutes what it took me five years to do? Let them bloody well find it themselves.' 'We publishers,' he added, 'think sometimes indexes have been put in for their own sakes rather than to serve the book.'

Indexes should be comprehensive and consistent, systematic and selective, copy-perfect and easy to read, and need not be afraid to be amusing. In this respect, he quoted entries in Field-Marshal Lord Montgomery's History of the War: 'Abstemiousness in generals'; 'Haircuts, military.'

On how a publisher likes to see his index prepared, Mr. Speaight said that length was a problem. Very often an indexer was told to write 500 entries and did 1,500—but this was not always catastrophic. Then there was letter layout: the indexer should type his entries to the measure of the type. Another helpful thing, which indexers did not regard as their job, was to pick up all the inconsistencies in spelling, etc. He was in a better position than the proof-reader to do this, as the latter would need a fantastically marvellous memory for the mistakes.

Further, if the index were found to be too long, the indexer could previously have indicated possible cuts, perhaps less important
entries for omission if necessary at the last moment.

He supported the award of the Wheatley Medal, as a splendid idea, but was surprised that publishers were not asked by the two societies to nominate books. Good publishers were proud to see their books receive these recognitions; they were glad to see anything that would enhance and increase the prestige of good books.

Mr. T. Bell, for the Cataloguing and Indexing Group, one of the Library Association's representatives on the award committee, said that the absence was deplored of a great range of reference books and so on. He spoke mainly as a user of book indexes. On the criteria desirable in assessing the Wheatley Medal nominations, he said he was convinced that an index must meet the requirements of two categories of reader: (1) the one who had read the book and was already conversant with the terminology of the author, and (2) the other, primarily the librarian, interested in the type of approach that the document might contain. Their requirements should be met in the index by up-to-date terms, cross-references, etc. The criteria always placed too much reliance on reflecting the author's demands. The author's demands of an index were always more exhaustive than the reader's.

With reference to Mr. Bancroft's plea always for the page number, Mr. Bell suggested that they might, because of the hurry in which indexes were demanded, have to refer rather to paragraph numbers in the typed copy, and wait for the page numbers.

He spoke of the difficulty in assessing an index and questioned the validity of spot checks—the assessor should really read the book first! But he would opt out of this! Did one page-number mistake invalidate an index? Printers often moved type because of alterations after an index was done. The indexer had no control over layout, even where running it into paragraphs instead of separate lines made it look horrible.

Mr. G. Norman Knight asked why publishers were not included among the sponsors; they were as much involved as authors. He moved the following resolution:

'That in the opinion of this joint meeting, British publishers should be added to the members of the Library Association and Society of Indexers as potential sponsors of nominations for the Wheatley Award.'

Mr. F. H. G. Tatham seconded the resolution, and added that he thought the adjudication committee should be widened not only by publishers but also by authors.

Miss Sally Coole, answering Mr. Lewis's point about considering books indexed by committees rather than individuals, said that individual work could not fairly be compared, for such a purpose, with indexes done under the guidance of a committee, especially scientific, enormous works. There had been some thought of varying the award year by year, but it had been turned down by the Society of Indexers because they took the view that 'an index is an index is an index'. In reply to Mr. Speaight, she said it was really up to a publisher to indicate what he wanted an indexer to do. In general, the sub-committee tended to eliminate at the start any index only of names and places.

Mr. C. R. Raper said the Society of Indexers invited nominations of books from any source. He was for a motion which would encourage more names of potential indexers and perhaps provide more publicity for the award, but he moved an amendment, seconded by Mr. P. Lewis, that an approach be made to the Publishers' Association so that it should be represented on the Wheatley Medal Sub-committee. The amendment was, however, withdrawn when it was pointed out that not all publishers belonged to that organisation.

The original motion was put and carried.

Mr. Knight said it admirable that collaborators in an index should receive an award, but that seemed a separate matter from an index. The Library Association should be asked to make a second, separate award for such indexers.

After further discussion by various members on the difficulty, pointed out by Mr.
Lewis, of the sub-committee not always having sufficient entries to choose from, the following resolution was proposed by Mr. K. G. B. Bakewell and seconded by Miss Moys:

' That every index published in Britain should be eligible for the Wheatley Medal.'

On being put to the vote, the resolution was carried by 16 votes to 4.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman and the speakers, Messrs. Lewis, Speaight and Bell, was warmly accorded, on the proposal of Mr. J. L. Downing.

A NOTE ON SOME DIFFERENCES IN INDEXING

JUDY LANTZ

I had the good fortune to talk with indexers in Warsaw, Stockholm, Amsterdam, and London while on a tour of Europe during October and November of 1967. I have prepared indexes for medical books for a number of years, working in Carbondale, Illinois, U.S.A. My talks brought to light some good similarities and some interesting differences in techniques.

In Stockholm, for example, continuous cards are used frequently for index-making, 5in. x 3in. tan cards in a perforated strip, which eases the flow through the typewriter. They also have two largish holes punched in the lower part of the left side, and I was told that this was to facilitate their use by the printers, who could 'string' them up in correct order as they were set in type by hanging them on the 'copy' hook with which various typesetting machines are provided, or place them on a 'spike', from which they could be strung in proper order when reaching the proof-reader.

I have for some years used heavier, white 5in. x 3in. index cards, which come in strips of 1,000 to a box, manufactured in New York. I found them to be quite a boon. I do not mark the various items on page proofs for indexing but read and type the cards at the same time. Consequently, when I have finished going through the book all the cards are prepared. I know of a few other indexers in the U.S. who work this way. In my experience, working with an electric typewriter that, by pressing the 'Return' button, automatically rolls these continuous cards through to the desired typing position, is much more helpful than having to put each index card separately into the typewriter, and it saves a surprising amount of time. These white cards are heavier than the ones I saw in Stockholm, which makes them quite good to alphabet and to work with in general. However, the Swedish tan cards probably have the advantage of less expense for carriage or mailing purposes, especially in bulk.

In Amsterdam, Mr. Cornelissen, of the Excerpta Medica Foundation, was good enough to show me some rather impressive things that they are doing with indexing. When the copy for the indexes for the Excerpta Medica journals is prepared it is done on a Friden Flexowriter. This machine prepares a 1-inch tape called a Friden Business Systems—Tape-Talk. The tape is of paper and has small round holes punched in it. When editors at Excerpta Medica wish to prepare a cumulative, or combined, index from previous journal issues, the tapes (two or three or more) are fed into the Flexowriter. The person combining the indexes 're-alphabets' from indications printed or typed on regular paper, and pushing various buttons, one for each of the tapes, causes the machine to print out the new combined index.

A task of considerable magnitude is under way at Excerpta Medica, under the direction of Mr. Cornelissen. A sincere and patient attempt, by means of automatic equipment, is being made to organize the very considerable number of synonyms in medical indexing into a workable system. The number of entries in this undertaking will probably run into about 100,000, and the project will take about three years more to complete.