tongue in his cheek, responded: 'Considerable perspicacity . . . characterized the reviewer . . . That makes five down and twenty-one to go!'

EXTRACTS AND COMMENTS

'We can recommend the expenditure of two guineas on The sea, ships and sailors, a collection of poems, songs and shanties edited by William Cole (Hart-Davis, 42s.).

'Robin Jacques' decorative illustrations make this an enjoyable anthology to wander through, even without taking the contents into consideration.

'One criticism: the indexing is inadequate. There is an index of authors and an index of titles, but no index of first lines—the most vital one of all.'

This review, from Lloyd's List and Shipping Gazette, could well have been titled 'A case of spoiling the ship for a ha'porth of tar!'

Weidenfeld & Nicolson received a reprimand from Isobel Murray in the Scotsman on the 12th October, 1968. In reviewing the American historian Professor Gertrude Himmelfarb's book Victorian minds she said, 'Professor Himmelfarb has been ill-served by her publishers—footnote numbers constantly go haywire, and the index contains no more than half of the names mentioned in footnotes: as there is no bibliography, this is not merely cumbersome, but a serious omission'.

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A review in the British Medical Journal by T. Moore draws attention to the lack of an index in a book on a subject never treated before as a separate sub-unit of the science of nutrition. The book, Natural antinutritive substances in food stuffs and forages by Iancu Gontzea and Paraschiva Sutzescu (S. Karger, Basle and New York), was published first as a monograph in Hungary two years ago. It is well documented, over 800 references being cited, with inclusion of full titles of the original papers. With these titles, and a table of contents in the front, the reader can usually refer to desired topics without undue delay. Nevertheless the absence of either a subject or author index is a serious omission, which should be put right if further editions are contemplated.


'The book is handsomely produced, and one is glad to see the extensive notes placed where they should be, at the foot of the page. But some wrong references have gone unchecked, and the index is an unskilled job: it lumps together the two Anaximander's, the two Aristippi, the two Hecataei, whom Edelstein was careful to distinguish. There is no index of passages discussed.'

The book went to the printer after the death of the author.

'Richard Aldington (1892-1962) is a writer who has been undeservedly neglected. This "book of reminiscence" [Life for Life's Sake: Cassell & Co.] was first published in New York in 1941 and has only just reached us (still with no index) six years after his death.'—Cyril Connolly in the Sunday Times, November 17, 1968.

The italics in the quoted part are ours.

We had always imagined that Messrs. Cassell were among the more index-conscious publishing houses.

The Times Saturday Review of November 23, 1968, commenting on Nobody ever tells you these things by Helen McCully (Angus
& Robertson) as 'A good idea that hasn't quite come off, a problem of form rather than content. The book consists of a series of actual questions ('What is pesto?'), so to use it for chasing up a specific enquiry one has to use the index which, while perfect, is in small print at the back'.

Also from the Times Saturday Review on December 14 an observation that The Crackerjack book of games (BBC Publications) is without an index, an irritating omission as there is not even a list of contents either.


'There are over six hundred entries to books and original papers and there is an index of over eight pages. The latter, however, is a great disappointment and does not do the book justice. For example, almost three pages of references are sub-entries beneath "neutrons" or "scattering" and such topics as absorption, dipole moment, electric charge and fission do not appear in their own right. Nevertheless the reader is recommended to persevere and is assured that he will find the book increasingly useful as he becomes more familiar with its contents.'

With a good cluster of pictures, some useful street maps showing sites, a guide to architects, but, unfortunately, no full detailed index, this book is more expansive and talkative than the authors' Theatres of London'—Harold Atkins, reviewing The Lost Theatres of London, by Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson (Hart-Davis) in the Daily Telegraph, January 30, 1968.

Charles Curran, reviewing Octave 8 by Compton Mackenzie, the eighth volume of his autobiography (Chatto and Windus), writes, 'he describes the people he met (his index of names fills 24 columns)'. From the Sunday Telegraph of February 2, 1969.

'The Bodley Head should be reminded that an index is indispensable for any biography or autobiography—and this book is both'—from a review of My father and myself, by the late J. R. Ackerley, in the West Indies Chronicle of December, 1968.

We could have dispensed with the scathing eleven words which open the otherwise amusing review (October 20, 1968) by Phillip Oakes, who now writes the 'Atticus' column in the Sunday Times:

"The index is usually the most boring part of any book (except political memoirs) but Lord Egremont has turned his to some good account in his unassuming autobiography, Wyndham and children first, which Macmillans publish this month. For example:

Amateur, author a hereditary, 207.
Camel-pats, lethal, 92-3.
Cuckoo, see Shaftesbury, Constance Lady.
Fishing, Uncle Charles's imaginary, 72.
Bing Crosby's unsuccessful, 208.
Gazelles, attitude of Min. of Ag. to, 174.
Levitation, 55.
Macmillan, Harold, Character, revealed by feet, 137 . . .
Speeches, must be ready when needed, 155-6 . . .
Victoria, Queen, sitting habits of, 155."

Why the title? As John Wyndham, Lord Egremont was Macmillan's private secretary, and on one occasion, in the Mediterranean, he suggested his chief shouldn't go on a dangerous mission. But Mac insisted. "I said if the worst came to the worst, the cry would be Wyndham and children first! Whenever we got into a fix thereafter the blessed Minister would shout Wyndham and children first! The cry has haunted me ever since."

The issue of The Daily Telegraph for January 23, 1969, has a word of praise for an index. The opening sentence of its notice of A History of the Vikings by Gwyn Jones (O.U.P.) reads: 'Prof. Gwyn Jones packs such a remarkable amount of information into this very well indexed book that it is hard to know where to begin defining its many striking aspects'. The italics are ours, but the review is by Anthony Powell.
B.S.I.

ALPHABETICAL ARRANGEMENT

The sub-committee of the British Standards Institution's Documentation Committee that has been busy for the past two years revising Alphabetical Arrangement (B.S. 1749: 1951) has now completed its labours and it is hoped that the revised Recommendations for Alphabetical Arrangement and the Filing of Numerals and Symbols (B.S. 1749: 1969) will be published shortly.

The changes have not been vast in number, but some are of considerable importance. They are designed mainly to ease the task of those who use the computers and other automatic systems which have come so largely to dominate information retrieval.

Mr. R. M. Bardwell, Technical Officer of the Institution, is the sub-committee's Secretary and the Society of Indexers was represented by three members: Messrs. Robert Collison, who until his departure to the United States was its Chairman; L. M. Harrod, at present also in the United States; and Norman Knight. Other bodies represented included the Publishers' Association, the Library Association, Science Abstracts and Aslib.

Now it has turned its attention to a revision of Recommendations for the Preparation of Indexes (B.S. 3700: 1964), which has been made necessary by the changes in Alphabetical Arrangement.

To show how versatile is the range of subjects dealt with by the British Standards Institution, for its final meeting on Alphabetical Arrangement the sub-committee found itself (by curious mischance) allotted a room already occupied by a meeting summoned to determine the Flow of Fluid!

THE 'WONDERFUL' ORWELL INDEX

A plenitude of praise has descended upon the index to The collected essays, journalism and letters of George Orwell, 1920-50, edited by Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (Secker & Warburg, 1968). 'Readers of these four huge volumes (which are wonderfully indexed, by the way) will have a huge choice of subjects', writes the critic Nigel Dennis in The Sunday Telegraph of 29th September, 1968, while, reviewing the same book in The Daily Telegraph of 3rd October, Anthony Powell speaks of 'a superlative index'.

Similarly, The Times describes the volumes as being 'beautifully indexed', and The Guardian as 'well indexed', The Economist says that 'the editing and indexing are as thorough as they are excellent', The Times Literary Supplement refers to the index as being 'exemplary' and The Financial Times as 'admirable'.

It is rare indeed for a reviewer to praise an index or even to mention it except by way of cursing its absence or inadequacy. The index in this case turns out to be the work of Oliver Stallybrass, who is a member of the Society. He tells me, however, that in compiling the index to 'these four huge volumes', which occupied him for six almost non-stop weeks, he did not employ the 'Stallybrass system' of writing his entries in a thumb-indexed notebook, as described in The Indexer, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 4-6. Instead he adopted the method recommended by Wing Commander Pemberton on page 11 of that number—slips of fairly stiff paper.

Mr. Stallybrass's name duly appears at the beginning of his index. The Society recommends that its members apply for their names to be included in the case of every substantial index, although it is possible for this practice to prove double-edged, as recounted in 'A stormy reviewer' in The Indexer, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 133-4. Should the publisher prove obdurate in refusing such recognition by name, the indexer is advised to remind him tactfully that it is strongly recommended in the British Standard on The preparation of indexes (B.S. 3700: 1964). Why should not the humble compiler of a substantial index be afforded the same recognition as the illustrator or translator invariably receive?

G.N.K.
ONE INDEX OR MORE THAN ONE?

The General Post Office's decision to defy Henry B. Wheatley's rule that 'an index should be one and indivisible' has already led to complaints.

A telephone directory is little more than a glorified index, but the G.P.O. is breaking up its London Classified Telephone Directory of Trades and Professions (the 'Buff Book') into seven distinct directories, each comprising a comparatively small area. The first of the new series, the 'Yellow Pages Classified (East) for 1969' has recently made its appearance.

Mr. Norman Franklin, Chairman of Routledge & Kegan Paul, writing in the Daily Telegraph of February 10, complains of the arbitrary line chosen for division, which seems to come at the Mansion House. Mr. Franklin continues:

If I want to telephone my stockbroker, I have to decide whether he is east or west of the Mansion House (the Mansion House itself and not Mansion House Station) and then go to the appropriate directory.

Can Mr. Stonhouse please think again before he succeeds in completely sabotaging British commerce?

There are many other objections, of course, to the new system. It is hopelessly inconvenient to have to look through seven alphabets to find a suitable London tradesman when one would suffice.

* How to Make an Index (1902), p. 69.

OVERSEAS VISITORS

Will overseas members who propose to visit this country, kindly notify the honorary secretary, so that arrangements may be made for Council members to entertain them.


"As it is, the main point seems to be an impressive index, including all the best known names of the period. He collects names as others collect engine numbers. Perversely Lady Cunard has a mention in the text, but is not admitted to the index, and Lady Ottoline Morrel is totally absent. But these two essentials are perhaps to be added to the collection in the next volume, and otherwise the list looks complete."

This passage, referring to the index to The years of promise, by Cecil Roberts (Hodder & Stoughton), occurs in Sean Day-Lewis's review of that autobiography in The Daily Telegraph of October 10, 1968.

(Continued from page 91)

Nominations were opened for President pro tem. Mr. Alan Greengrass of The New York Times information service was nominated and elected by voice vote. He took over the chairmanship of the meeting.

Mrs. Jessica L. Harris of Columbia University was then elected Secretary pro tem; Miss Dee Atkinson of the Mills College of Education, Treasurer pro tem.

The question of dues was then discussed in light of the proposed affiliation with the British society. A motion to the effect that dues be set for $10 for the calendar year 1969 was carried by voice vote.

A motion was made and carried that the President pro tem be given full authority until the next meeting in or about April, 1969, to take any required action on behalf of the Society that he deemed necessary, including appointment of committees other than the constitutional committee.

The meeting was then adjourned for informal discussion among the members present.