works of art and if so, which. Generally speaking, works taken out had to be important, historically or artistically;

The rule-of-thumb of at least two facts was strictly applied; and from biographies of writers, painters, etc., works were taken out very sparingly. But famous works by minor performers were favoured, e.g., Uncle Tom's cabin.

Indeed, we made a real effort to index the names of well-known works the authors of which most of us are hard put to specify. Who of us could now remember off-hand the name of the writer of 'Rule Britannia'? James Thomson is better remembered for 'The Seasons'. Or for that matter who wrote The Star Spangled Banner? This became the national anthem of the United States by Act of Congress in 1931, 117 years after it was written by Francis Scott Key.

I have made no reference to the indexing of the scientific articles. One of the leaders of the team who undertook this specialised work is a member of our Society and I could not possibly venture to offer a word on this topic except to express, once again, my thanks for her expert labours and those of her colleagues, including Mr. Skelton.

The Encyclopaedia, indeed, was marvelously well served by its indexers. On the first round Mr. Laurance Fitch was in general charge and the late Mr. Hubert Pitchew's team checked most of the galley proofs. And on the second round, Mr. Merton Atkins was in general charge, with Mr. Sandison added to the scientists.

---

JAMES THORNTON’S INDEX TO THE LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

PHILIP WRIGHT

The late James Thornton's last published work was his Index to Volume Two of the Pilgrim Edition of the Letters of Charles Dickens (edited by Madeline House and Graham Storey. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1969). The compiler's name does not appear under the heading of the Index, but the editors in their Acknowledgments express their gratitude to him both for the index and for much help and advice (as a member of the editorial committee for the series). Also a special Publisher's Note, recording his death while the index was in proof, pays tribute to his contribution to the work. This contribution was sufficiently striking to win praise from reviewers. A review in The Times Literary Supplement (11 December, 1969) referred to 'that often forgotten man, the indexer—in this instance J. C. Thornton, whose indexes to the first two volumes are another special merit of the edition'.

James Thornton discussed his approach to the task of indexing the Letters in a talk reproduced in this journal (Autumn 1965, v. 4, no. 4), and he obviously had it in mind when writing his article on 'The Long Index' in the recently published symposium, Training in indexing. To members of this Society, it may seem hardly necessary to add that this large-scale index is a work of impressive stature: immensely thorough, expertly planned, and stamped with the scrupulous
scholarship for which its compiler was distinguished. The text of the volume, comprising Dickens's letters of 1840 and 1841, with very full annotation, runs to just over 500 pages, and the Index occupies another 47. Formally it is confined to proper names (persons, places and publications), since a general index is reserved for the final volume of the series. But within these limits (more or less), the compiler has spared no pains, and deployed considerable ingenuity, to ensure the most exhaustive retrieval of information.

One or two features may be mentioned. Publications are indexed under the name of the author, and the entry for Charles Dickens himself, apart from a section listing the addresses from which his letters were sent, consists entirely of references to his published works; the sections relating to his principal books at this period being each subdivided under the headings: 'CD at work on'; 'Illustrations'; 'Publication of'; 'Other references'; 'Characters'. References to 'CD' himself are distributed throughout the index, especially under the names of other persons (sometimes grouped under the sub-heading, 'CD, relations with'), but also in some less obvious places; e.g. under 'Parliament' there are references not only to 'Bills, Acts, etc.' and other proceedings in that place, but also to Dickens's expression of political views in 1841 ('CD getting more radical'). Buildings, streets, etc., are indexed under the town to which they belong, with cross-references to separate entries for buildings frequently mentioned. It is a measure of the thoroughness of the coverage that the entry for 'London' contains references to, apparently, every street mentioned as the address of any person referred to in the text or the notes.

I think it is possible to have some reservations about the style of presentation, which, to my mind, has a tendency to pursue the perfection of analysis sometimes at the expense of clarity. As a general rule, the sub-headings and modifications are arranged alphabetically, with inversions of phrase to point the alphabetical order, e.g.

Macready, William Charles . . .
CD, relations with: advertisement about CD's father, on 224n; book, his present of (to CD) 115 & n . . .

There is also pretty frequent use of an 'identifying' word or phrase, often a quoted phrase, in parentheses following a page reference (a device discussed in The Indexer article referred to above). As a result, the longer paragraphs have an intricacy which does not make for easy reference or a rapid conspectus of the material. But this, I repeat, is merely a personal impression; more to the point would be the opinions of bona fide users of the book (if only a poll of these were ever possible!). In any case it may seem a small matter in relation to the great and admirable helpfulness of the index as a whole.

THE PROBLEM OF COPYRIGHT—AN INDEXER'S TRIUMPH

Not many indexers seem to be aware that the copyright in their indexes belongs to them, unless and until they have expressly assigned it. In certain circumstances it may prove a property of some value.

Under the Copyright Acts of 1911 and 1956—there are doubtless similar enactments in the United States—a literary copyright is defined as 'the sole right to produce or reproduce an original literary work'. There