FURTHER ASPECTS OF INDEXING

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ALPHABET SOUP

That the indexes of books on mathematics and natural philosophy may be charitably described as sketchy is notorious: the only relentless indexes to such books that I can cite offhand are A. J. Ellis's to the 1885 edition of Helmholtz's Sensations of tone and Lola Deming's to Selected techniques of statistical analysis (McGraw-Hill, 1946).

The index to R. v. Mises's Mathematical theory of probability and statistics, New York, Academic Press, 1964 (a posthumous work) suffers not only from shortness (8 pages of index to 700 of text) but from a remarkable failure to alphabetize. Page 688, column 2, lines 13-24 of that index read:

Contingency coefficients, 580.
Copeland, A. H., 43, 47, 73, 99.
Convergent sequence of sets, 79.
Correlation, 566.
Bernoulli, 572.
in k variables, 599.
measure based on c.d.f., 582.
matrix, 600.
Correlated variables, 568.
Convex set, 616.
Convolution, 249.
generating function of convolution, 248.
Correlation coefficient, 568. [sic oo]
asymptotic expectation and variance of, 584, 587.
distribution in normal samples, 591, 594.
distribution of partial, 607.
Fishar's transformation of r, 596.
multiple, 601, 606.
partia1, 601.
Covariance matrix, 149.

The last three subentries under 'Correlation' should have single indention, not double, i.e. not 'Bernoulli correlation matrix' but simply 'correlation matrix'.

The editor thanks the indexer, by name, on page vii of the preface!

THE HAGUE

The index to the 1969/70 Statesman's year-book contains the entries
's-Gravenhage (Neth.), 1171 [alphabetized under G]
Hague, The, 7, 1168, 1172

No see also flags; and nothing at all under Den Haag, as the Hollander now call the town.

INDEXES TO FICTION

Your review of Rees (The Indexer, vol. 7, p. 34) states that the 'section on indexes mentions that outsize works of fiction would benefit from indexes'! 'Benefit', to be sure, is a strong word: the rule is that a book that will be used as a reference book needs an index; and who shall say, in advance of publication, what fiction qualifies? A posteriori, the question is easier (from a point of view of U.S. universities): when a modern fiction has been adopted in enough courses to warrant the preparation of crammer's notes (for example, J. G. Salinger), index it.

I can think of only two novels whose authors supplied indexes: Lewis Carroll's Sylvie and Bruno (index shamefully omitted in cheap reprints) and V. Nabokov's Pale fire. In the latter, the index is half the fun. N. Smith's index to Tolkien's trilogy (printed at the end of Return of the King) attempts to cover 1359 pages of text in 24 pages; and further vexes the reader by dividing these 24 pages into eight alphabets.

If the names of the personae in a collection of short stories are more memorable than the titles of the stories, an index is called for. Here the publisher is not working in the dark: he can call on the experience of readers of the stories as they originally appeared in periodicals.
The opportunity for unwanted collocations (Indexer 7:37) is greater in indexes devoted in part to subject matter than in indexes confined to personal names: we know that Romulus Augustulus will follow Romulus in the alphabet, and we are not surprised when Daniel Jones’s dictionary treads on the heels of Samuel Johnson’s. The examples below are culled from recent issues of almanacs.

New York Times encyclopedic almanac, 1970 (a beautiful example of bookmaking to measure: the text runs for 1024 pages, and the index for 32 pages more):
- Assassinations/Assemblies of God
- Chomsky, Noam/Chopin, Frederic
- Dandolo, Enrico/D’Annunzio, Gabriele
- Ehrlich, Paul/Eichmann, Adolf
- Irving, Washington/Isabella I
- Maugham, W. Somerset/Maupassant, Guy de
- Trudeau, Pierre E./Trujillo Molina, Rafael L./Truman, Harry S

Statesman’s year-book, 1969/70:
- Council Bluffs (Iowa)/Council of Europe
- Gbanga (Liberia)/Gdansk (Poland)
- Hawaii (USA)/Hawali (Kuwait)
- Kilmarnock (UK)/Kilometre 110 (Terr. A. & I.)
- Kumamoto (Japan)/Kumanovo (Yug.)
- Manga (Niger)/Mangaia (Cook Is.)/Mangala (Bulg.)/Mangalore (India)/Manganese, product of
- Mbulamuti (Kenya)/Mcal Estigarribia (Para.)

[This is a ghost entry, resulting from failure to expand an abbreviation in the Paraguayan source: the name of the town is ‘Mariscal Estigarribia’.]
- Oak Ridge (Tenn.)/Oasis (Sahara)/Oats, world production of
- Statistical abstract of the United States, September 1969:
- Actors, dancers, and entertainers/Addicts, narcotic
- Bands, orchestras, and entertainers/Bankruptcies filed and pending
- Cemeteries, national/Center of population
- Delicatessen stores/Delinquency, juvenile
- Hepatitis/Heroin, drug addicts using
- Mobility of population/Molasses
- Theatrical presentations/Theft

The first, second, and last pairs suggest Histriomastix.

World Almanac, 1970:
- Anne of Cleves/Anniversaries, wedding
- De Valera, Eamon/Devlin, Bernadette
- Eddy, Mary Baker/Edict of Nantes
- Hillary, Sir Edmond/Himalaya
- Sark Island/Saskatchewan
- Twenty-four hour time/Twilight
- Witchcraft/Women/Wonders of World

ABBREVIATIONS OF TITLES OF PERIODICALS

The British Standards Institution has issued a twelve-page Standard on this subject (BS 4148: 1970. Part 1. Principles) at five shillings. Part 2, the word-abbreviation list, is still to be published.

The terms used are defined, and the rules are concerned with truncation and contraction; word order; articles; conjunctions and prepositions; capitalization; punctuation; diacritical marks; symbols; plurals; compound words; word and title abbreviations; sections and series; different editions; personal names in a title; transliteration.

A useful guide to anyone having to decide on the most acceptable way of abbreviating periodical titles.

DIRECTORY OF LIBRARIES

Crosby Lockwood have published a very useful Directory of libraries and special collections on Asia and North Africa x, 123 pp. Price 40s. Compiled by Robert Collison and continued by Brenda E. Moon after he went to work in the U.S.A., it follows familiar lines of such publications, giving particulars of collections, their contents and the times and conditions for consultation.