EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS


'The text is clearly set out with a detailed subject index and list of contents, which enable the reader to locate rapidly any point of interest.'


This well-indexed, hard cover book presents all the information needed to make standard hardness tests.


'The book is well indexed, and is very well printed on excellent paper.'


'The short bibliography has been carefully selected to give a maximum coverage of many aspects for further and more advanced reading. There is also a good index.'


'... it is safe to say that nothing that Stenton ever published was devoid of value, and it is satisfactory to have this selection from his scattered essays assembled in a convenient form, with an admirable, if somewhat selective, index to give guidance to their contents.'


'A subject index and an extensive bibliography add value to this work of reference.'


'A most impressive feature is the index of examples, where the range of interests should convince anyone of the importance of the statistical approach.'

The origins of alchemy in Graeco-Roman Egypt, by Jack Lindsay (Muller, 452pp., 65/-). Reviewed in the TLS, 16 July, 1970.

'... there are seven infuriating indexes, beginning with one for Gods and one for Rulers, and ending with an index for Subjects.'


'... the extensive bibliography, together with an excellent index, make this a useful book.'


'For the satisfaction of (scholars) an exhaustive critical apparatus—bibliography, cross-references, a tale-type index—is provided.'


'The book tells only a part of a fascinating story—but certainly not "everything that is known about sharks" as the jacket blurb would have it. Rather a lot is known about teeth and denticles in sharks, for example, but neither merits proper description or its own entry in the index.'

‘The author’s own illustrations are energetic and colourful; and he sensibly includes not only an index but also a glossary.’


‘The type and illustrations are of high quality although perhaps an index would have been more useful to those unfamiliar with the proceedings than the marginal sub-headings provided.’


‘Professor Ulich . . . has written a fascinating account of the history of religious education in the western world. Strangely there is no reference in the index to two notable works which have dealt with much the same subject.’


‘He . . . conjures a thematic structure from disparate parts, which may even tempt some students to read the book through. Most will, however, find more value in selective reading, in which the sound index will help them.’


‘The element which inspires most confidence throughout this volume is that arguments are clearly marshalled and in general one can be certain no evidence has been neglected; it has a quality of reliability. Maps are clearly drawn and sufficiently numerous, and there are volume indexes which one hopes will be subsumed in the last volume into indexes to cover the entire work. The authors have earned the great gratitude not only of ancient historians but of everyone who, reading Thucydides, needs quickly to refer to a sound opinion on any of several hundreds of difficult individual points.’


‘This (third volume) contains two more descriptive chapters, on the makh celebrations and the changing of the seasons, and a 118-page “Conclusion” which is a respectable monograph in itself. The remainder of the volume consists of an admirable scholarly apparatus to the entire work: five appendixes . . . ; addenda and corrigenda; glossary and index of Cambodian words; general index (quite excellently detailed and arranged, occupying fifty-nine pages); index of Cambodian authors and informants; four maps; and a table of contents of all three volumes. It would be ungrateful to complain of the lack of a consolidated bibliography, but with this single reservation the aids to reference are of a standard that matches the quality of the text.’

Charles Dickens: an exhibition to commemorate the centenary of his death (Victoria & Albert Museum, 121pp., 89 plates, 12/-). Reviewed in the TLS, 14 August, 1970.

‘The price is startlingly low; it could still have been so if an index had been added.’

Pre-Raphaelite art and design, by Raymond Watkinson (Studio Vista, 208pp., 84/-). Reviewed in the TLS, 14 August, 1970.

‘A painting by Simeon Solomon is reproduced, but he is not referred to in the body of the book. Then the index of names is inadequately cross-referenced to the plates, while the illustration pages, inserted in three unequal batches, bear no folios, although included in the text page count. There is also no contents list of illustrations, which run to a generous 114. All this inhibits quick cross-reference.’


‘The text (well over 300,000 words) is quite simply too long. The author develops in leisurely fashion ideas that are by now commonplace and already well-documented elsewhere; rigorous pruning would have made such sections less tedious, while omitting nothing fundamental. The amount of detail is itself overpowering, the wood is hard to see for the trees. This problem is not helped by the index, whose quality is inferior to the high standard of scholarship revealed elsewhere. Only a simple index of names is provided; we need at least a further one of Voltaire’s works, and preferably a selective list of references to themes as well.’
Time and social structure and other essays,

'Professor Fortes’s defence of Radcliffe-Brown’s position is another connecting link between the collected essays and the new work, and it is even more obvious in the former—because, perhaps, there is no interference in the form of obeisance to Morgan whose name does not appear in the bibliography and rarely in the text. What excuse can there be for the lack of an index?


'... there is a comprehensive general index and a “synoptic” index which “lists all entries in relation to the specific major religions”. These too are excellent.'


'If the book had an index, it would be heavy with the names of celebrities, from the Duke of Edinburgh, through the late George Formby, to the Reverend Michael Scott.'


'Each chapter presents a useful list of references, but there are no indexes.'

Councils, committees and boards, edited by I. G. Anderson (CBD Research Ltd. 228pp., 80/-). Reviewed in the Board of Trade Journal, 19 August, 1970.

'There are indexes of abbreviations, the names of chairmen, and of subjects.'


'There are many good things about The Ulysses factor—not least its excellent index.'


'The format has changed to a two-columned page of a larger size, although the volume of material is about the same as the previous edition. Unfortunately the indexing seems inadequate.'


'The weakness however remains the same (as in the earlier volume); to judge from the bibliography (there is no index), no reference is made to Rete, La Rochefoucauld, Pascal, La Fontaine, for example, all critics of man and his behaviour...'


'There are again three sections; “Généralités”, with 7,233 entries (about 800 more than for the previous century); “Auteurs”, divided under each heading into “éditions” and “études”; and a four-part “Index”, of which the most useful is perhaps that of the authors of biographies, critical works and articles and so forth.

... In two respects this Bibliographie does not reach the very high standard set by its predecessor, which listed books and articles printed up to five years before its publication, whereas M. Cioranescu now records nothing after 1961. Furthermore the proof-reading has not been so good, more particularly of the indexes, where the numbers do not always tally with the original entries and Bodley's Librarian will be surprised to find himself listed as Richard Shackleton.'


'The final volume contains very full notes, variants and publication details for each work; useful, too, is an “Index of concepts”—not surprisingly in view of Benn’s solipsistic tendencies, one of the longest entries is that under “Ich”.'

‘Each volume has its preface. In addition there are indexes and inventories . . . ’


‘The names of almost everyone responsible for the work described have been omitted, presumably as a matter of policy to achieve impersonal objectivity . . . An even more serious defect is the complete lack of any index, which makes the book useless for purposes of reference and for which the fourteen-page table of chapter contents is not an adequate substitute.’

Fanfare for a tin hat, by Eric Linklater (Macmillan, 328pp., 75/-). Reviewed in the TLS, 27 November, 1970.

‘Though this volume has none of the pretensions of a full-dress autobiography, it is a pity that there is no index. There are many excellent pen-portraits . . . which without an index are difficult to find again.’


‘Occasionally her classifications are strange . . . But the work is so well indexed that this sort of thing hardly matters . . . With five analytical lists, two chronologies, and a good general index, it leaves little to be desired, and it is hard to imagine a bibliography which would be easier to use.’

The history of Greenland. Volume I: Earliest times to 1700, by Finn Gad (C. Hurst, 350pp., 126/-). Reviewed in the TLS, 4 December, 1970.

‘A fuller index would be desirable in the later volumes of what is shaping like a standard work.’

Hertfordshire, by W. Branch Johnson (Batsford, 224pp., 30/-). Reviewed in the TLS, 11 December, 1970.

‘There is a useful index.’


‘There are two indexes, one regional, the other general.’

Encyclopaedia of ships, by Enzo Angelucci (Odhams, 21/-). Reviewed in the TLS, 11 December, 1970.

‘To call Enzo Angelucci’s book an encyclopaedia is a misnomer. The essential feature of an encyclopaedia is that you should be able to look things up in it, and the easiest way of finding what you want is to have the subject divided into a large number of small articles arranged in alphabetical or some other obvious order. Failing this, a comprehensive index is essential . . . ’

‘There, the child seeking information on, say, the barque, which is not in the index, would be hard put to find out more than the information that James Cook’s Endeavour was a barque. Even battleship, which has ten index entries, has no definition . . . ”

‘The index, contained wholly on the inside of the back cover, is ludicrously inadequate, and, since the book is arranged in chapters under period and subject headings, the absence of a table of contents is more than irritating.’


‘There is a bibliography that will assist further research and a good index.’


‘The index, containing brief biographical particulars, could sometimes be more helpful; only the most specialist readers will know, for instance, that George Lear was Dickens’s fellow clerk at Ellis and Blackmore’s . . .”

Australia: the quiet continent, by Douglas Pike (Cambridge University Press, 244pp., 45/-). Reviewed in the TLS, 18 December, 1970.

‘The revised index converts “aborigines” to “aboriginals” (a doubtful improvement).’

'Immigrant voters in Israel does not concern itself with the problems of Israel vis-à-vis her neighbours or indeed the Arabs in Israel. The index contains no entry for Arabs, Islam, or even Dayan.'

Seven hundred years of oriental carpets, by Kurt Erdmann (Faber & Faber, 238pp., £15). Reviewed in the TLS, 18 December, 1970.

'... despite (among other things mentioned by the reviewer) ... the failure to provide a proper index, the volume will immediately take its place as one of the most useful handbooks on the subject.'


'They conclude their run of commendably brief chapters with one entitled “How to Read the Press” and follow it with over a dozen typical (and good) articles by named City editors and the like, and a comprehensive index of terms.'


'... the dates when the extracts were written are given wherever possible, for which I am grateful, but they are consigned to the index instead of being attached to the text.'

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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Mr. R. D. Gee, F.L.A., is Development Librarian with IPC (New Enterprises) Ltd.; was previously Librarian with the National Cash Register Co. Ltd., and has had experience in technical college and public libraries. Was at one time Chairman of the British Computer Society Information Retrieval Study Group.

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Mr. G. Norman Knight, M.A., is President of the Society of Indexers and Editor of Training in indexing.

Liz Stalcup has been employed for a number of years on the editorial side of book production in the U.S.A. as copy-editor, proof-reader and indexer.

A READER'S INDEX

Perhaps this cutting from a secondhand bookseller's catalogue proves that indexes are desirable in books; so much so that a reader will inconvenience himself in order to repair the omission.

—TYLER (Dr. M. L.). HOMEO-PATHIC DRUG PICTURES. 1942; thk. roy. 8vo.; orig. buck. few pencil underlinings or side notes & complete index written in pencil on rear end papers.

INDEXES IN GUIDE BOOKS

In The Times Literary Supplement for 4th December, 1970, Robin W. Winks wrote an article on guide books entitled Mis-guiding the U.S. visitor; it contained the following references to indexes:

' (In) the really good guidebook ... one wants ... indexes by special interest groups—castles, cathedrals, churches, universities, National Trust properties, and places of interest to children . . .

'The book of the road ... provides its readers ... with an index which can be found only by a sense of touch . . .

' (In) the Sunday Times R.A.C. road atlas ... there is what one wants ... a good index with only one error detected in a year of use.'