CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of The Indexer.

Dear Sir,

Grateful as we should be to Hebrew scholarship for preserving for us with such care much of the oldest and best literature in the world, Mr. M. Z. Barkai must find better evidence if he and his colleagues are to continue patting themselves on the back for being the first to compose indexes (Vol. 8, No. 1, page 6).

Taking Cruden’s Concordance of 1737 (by no means the first concordance to the Bible) as the first index ‘in the correct meaning of the word’, he cites three Hebrew indexes dated 1691, 1699 and 1728.

I think a little research will find indexes in European languages dating back to the 14th century. So far as English is concerned, I had only to cross the room in my cottage to find two earlier than the dates given.

Edward Halle’s Chronicle, printed in 1550, which I have in facsimile, has as stated on the title page ‘added to every kyng a severall table’. These tables are useful alphabetical indexes of names, places and subjects, with sub-headings run on in the longer entries. The rather cumbersome references are to folio, page and line, in Roman numerals.

Sir Thomas Browne’s Pseudodoxia Epidemica (Vulgar Errors), sixth edition, 1672, has an alphabetical Table, a full index of eleven pages, double column, with quite a modern appearance. A part of one of the entries reads as follows:

Jews, 236. How dispersed, 237. Some of their Tribes quite lost, ibid. Uncertain in their Chronology, or account of times, 324.

Yours sincerely,

C. H. INGE.

CREDITING THE INDEXER

Readers may have noticed that Mr. Dunn, in his letter to The Bookseller, which is reprinted in this issue, mentions that it is the policy of Messrs. Harrap to print the indexer’s name above indexes in books compiled by them.

We are delighted to be able to reprint (with permission) the following letter from Sir Robert Lusty, Managing Director of the Hutchinson Publishing Group Ltd.


10th December, 1971.

Miss P. M. Trew, Secretary, Society of Indexers.

Dear Miss Trew,

It occurs to me that you may care to know that I have today given an instruction that in future all of our books which contain an index should credit its compilation to the indexer.

I hope that this move will be indicative of the importance we place upon the services of reliable and experienced indexers.

All good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

(sgn.) ROBERT LUSTY.

Such acknowledgement of the compilation of indexes has been advocated by the Society for several years; we should be pleased to know of any other publishers who adopt this practice.

VAT

VAT as it affects the author is dealt with in the Autumn 1972 issue of The Author. Some indexers may well find that this new form of tax will apply to them also.