EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS

1—American periodicals


'There is no index, but I was much more troubled by the location of the (indispensable) footnotes at the back of the book—surely a delinquency of the publisher. But these are trivial matters: this is a splendid volume.'

Peace and counterpeace: from Wilson to Hitler, by Hamilton Fish Armstrong (Harper & Row, $12.95). New Yorker, 10 Jul. 71.

'The publishers of Peace and counterpeace should be ashamed of its execrable index. Mr. Armstrong writes affectionately of his house on Georgia Pond, in Wainscott, but there is no mention of either in the index; of nineteen proper names to be found on a single page chosen at random—page 113—no fewer than ten are omitted from the index.'


'The index consists almost entirely of names, and this brings out the fact that Sir Julian has known so many interesting people and that he writes about them as well as about himself. Yet the index would be more useful if it also helped to locate events and places.'


'Books of this sort ought to be especially well indexed; this one falls a bit short in this respect.'


'...I hope that this imbalance (and some poor copy-editing, lack of illustrations, shockingly steep price and a wretched index) will be corrected.'


'But it is a bit difficult for one who did not get to Prague to use this record as a professional book. He can only read every word and underline. There is no index and no abstracts. This is a minor matter. But a research man or engineer looking for ideas and information beyond that reported would have to do a great deal of international searching to reach the authors. A roster of the principals with their organization addresses would have been very useful—telephone numbers would be dandy, too.'


'It's value as a ready reference work is somewhat diminished by lack of any but the most rudimentary subject index.'


'As a text and reference, the Insects has one of the best taxonomic and subject indexes available. A supplementary table of contents and typographic distinctions within the index make it easy to locate the illustrations and major discussions of the various topics.'


'In a reference book such as this, the index is of paramount importance. Can one quickly find any topic that is discussed in the book? The subject index in this book covers only eight pages, but it passes the test with a good grade. The author index (13 pages) is also well arranged, even including references to articles mentioned in the book for which the authors' names are not mentioned.'


'The 35-page index is an example of how an index should be but seldom is prepared.'

'Finally, the two indexes specially prepared for the English edition are, admittedly only partial.'


' . . . contains 74 of the author's pieces (most relatively short), a refreshingly candid introduction and an invaluable index.'


' . . . this is perhaps a suitable place to mention the main criticism I have of the whole work, namely that it contains no index. There is a rather detailed list of contents, but this is not quite sufficient to lead one to an elusive item.'

This is the shih tzu, by Reverend D. Allan Easton and Joan McDonald Brearley (T.F.H., 232pp., $6.95). Rev. by Evelyn Haskel, Dogs, Jan. 72.

'And then there's the sin of the publisher: a one-page, almost useless index that seems an afterthought. Readers without instant recall are advised to jot down page references as they read along.'

All the above extracts have been submitted by Mrs. Miriam Steinert except the last by Jessica L. Harris.

2—In English periodicals

Itself an education (six lectures on classification), by Bernard I. Palmer (Library Association, 1971, 2nd ed. (containing a continuation by Derek Austin), 115pp., £1.50). Rev. by C. A. Crossley, Library Association Record, Nov. 71.

'In conclusion, this reviewer must record his sad conviction that critical examination and comment count for nothing. In his review of the first edition of this book . . . attention was drawn to the unhelpful nature of many of the entries in its index and some examples were cited. Not one of these has been removed. The index itself has merely been enlarged to cover Austin's essay (with acceptable entries) but remains a disgrace in a book concerned so much with indexing as a tool for the transfer of information.'

Mr. Palmer commented:

'I assure Mr. Crossley that I did take his complaint to heart, and reconsidered the offending entries and discussed them with Mr. Austin. He agreed with me that it is just this kind of elusive reference that an index can help with. Whether my behaviour has been disgraceful is a matter of opinion; I am rather proud of it.'

The original review in the Library Association Record, February 1963, read:

'The index is a disappointment: such fanciful and unhelpful terms as Hedgehog example, Jabberwocks, Malaise of the librarian, Sophisticated notation should be replaced by entries for topics which he has treated usefully and omitted in the index.'

TLS "Commentary", 26 Nov. 71.

'The Grand Prix of the Academy has been awarded to Jean d'Ormesson's La Gloire de l'empire (536pp. including, somewhat eccentrically for a novel, the index) . . .'


'Here all the early lists and inventories of the college's books are transcribed in full, the works listed are identified (though it is sometimes necessary to consult the author index concerning books which are now unlocated). . . .

'By using the keys, concordances, and indexes which follow the lists it is possible to follow the general development of the library and the careers of its individual books in amazing detail.'


'... since the foreword states that the new format "offers opportunities of further expansion ", may we repeat last year's plea for an index of names to add to its usefulness?'


'There are one or two mistakes. Pope's friend Charles Jervas is named as "Jervis" and the date of the epistle to him is given as 1718, though it first appeared with Dryden's "Parallel" in 1716. In addition, Jervas is not in the index.'

'... this edition provides what the original so sadly lacked—an excellent index.'


'... it is not easy to find one's way about (Olschak's) book; even an index of proper names, in the absence of something better, would have been useful...

'By comparison, Dr. Rose's book is perfectly plain sailing for the reader, adequately indexed and equipped with a full apparatus criticus.'


'There are plenty of illustrations but many are poorly reproduced and the writing in them is hard to read; the captions are often confusing, more dates and references need to be given, and as there is no index much time and patience are lost. In other words, this is an inadequate book for its subject.'


'The new edition is good, but Chapman's is better... The lazy inquirer will miss the index of characters and places which Chapman gave to each novel.'


'The three authors are always brief and practical, and it is solely for alphabetical reasons that the first entry in the index is "abortion". To which it is fair to add that the first entry under the letter b is "baby equipment hire".'


'There are some jarring notes in the confusing index, and a rare moment of complete bafflement— as when a superb illustration to The Hunting of the Snark by Holliday appears in a chapter on American illustration, and is apparently not mentioned either in the main body of the text or the index.'


'The absence of an index is regrettable... There are nearly 2,000 items listed, which presents a major problem if a collector wishes to seek out books written or illustrated by a specific author or artist.'


'At the price, a critical apparatus can hardly be expected; but there is a helpful (and very necessary) annotated index of persons...'

'Sixty pages of index ensure that every scrap of relevant information can easily be found.'


'(The editor) gives copious footnotes identifying the various persons mentioned in the narrative and informative details of their rank and career. The index lists these persons and the biographical notes upon them. These supplements by the editor add a great deal to the value of the book.'


'There is an index of persons, periodicals and subjects, preceded by a 28-page "Explication Index" of textual as well as critical discussions of individual poems, which offers ample testimony to Emily Dickinson's hold on her countrymen's continuing interest.'


'The "apparatus" is exemplary. There are several indexes, including one of former owners, and another of subject matter.'


'The index, which is full and helpful, has been successfully combined with a glossary.'


'Everything outside the text and the index has been cut to the bone: the index takes the place explicitly of the traditional historical introduction, and tacitly of most cross-references in the text. Given this reasonable policy, one would like the index to come up to the impeccable standard of that Treasurer's Accounts (see above): it falls slightly short in instant usability.'


'The book contains a wealth of suggestions for further work, but its usefulness is marred by the omission of an index.'


'No attempt is made to reduce the number of technical terms, which are, however, carefully explained at their first appearance and duly listed in a comprehensive index.'


'This second title in the Ship and Boat series has ten chapters, but no index or reference list within which to seek confirmation of the several surprising statements upon which the reader frequently stumbles.'


'A total of 425 companies are listed, and which are broken down, in the index, by state and country, but the British ones seem to have been omitted from this index.'


'One feels that a good index would be helpful even though the very detailed contents list makes this less of an absolute necessity than usual.'


'The second (interesting) feature is the index, which in the author's words "is in itself an exercise in the use of direct phrase headings as differentiated from structured headings". As a book index it is unconventional and to some users may even be irritating. It is defended by the author in the last sentence of his work: "It is intended for use as a means of instruction and criticism like the text of the book."'

'A good index at the front of the book cross-references films under subject and alphabetical listings.'


'An extensive subject index in the three languages and indexes of authors and contributors and of registered delegates with full postal addresses add to its value for reference.'


'The only substantial improvements are in the index, where a detailed analysis is now made of subjects as well as authors and titles, and in the increased sub-division of chapters . . . '


'A feature is the index, which provides easy cross reference. In addition to referring to individual materials, it lists classes and types of materials which—with the background available—leads up to specific choices even if a reader is unfamiliar with the specific material which he requires. Thus assistance is given in seeking materials for new products or processes, and in selecting materials better suited than those already in use.'


'Full references are given in footnotes for all texts and figures quoted, but the volume would have gained from the inclusion of full bibliography and index.'


'An index and more precise bibliography with exact references . . . would have been helpful.'


'This treatise is an excellently produced and edited book of reference, which must be of immense value to the marketeer and researcher. The two-page index, however, is quite unworthy of a work of this quality. A prime worth of any reference book lies in the ease with which researchers can find their reference. Please, Mr. Penguin, do take note!'


'The index essential to this kind of book is lacking.'

Motor vehicle workshop exercises, by J. T. N. Gilleard (Intertext, 148pp., £0.75). Rev., The Training Officer, Sep. 71.

'... it could have been made even better by the provision of an index, for which a contents page is no real substitute.'


'The volume is well illustrated with diagrams and contains copious notes but it could have been further improved by the inclusion of an index.'


'The author has covered this field with commendable conciseness, with useful suggestions for further reading. But he has carried brevity to extremes in the index, by omitting some matters, such as pole amplitude modulation, which are mentioned, albeit briefly, in the text.'


'There can be no doubt that this is the most authoritative biography that has yet appeared in English, and the few criticisms of detail one ventures to make have been provoked by minor slips.

'The index, for example, is here and there misleading; and in "Marriage-A-; a-Mode " the Countess's husband be entitled "the Earl" and not "the count ."

'The rest of the random checks showed me that to the best of my knowledge and belief the references were accurate and correctly up-dated. They are also easily findable by way of an excellent index, by means of pages which are numbered by chapters and sub-chapters.'


'Other sections include an abbreviations index, and a publications index.'


'One hesitates to terminate the review of such an excellent book on a critical note, but it is felt that it would have been helpful to readers looking for particular ships if changes of name could have been listed in the index.'


'... a fuller general index, together with a ship index, has been provided.'


'For more general use it could be an aide memoire but it is not indexed for quick reference.'


'The index, so essential to a work of this sort, is rotten.'


'What I advocate is the public hanging of an author, a translator and a publisher who with a subject as fascinating, terrible, ironic and significant as is the one dealt with in this book, can between them, include gibberish ... (Also, there is no index; the publisher should be flogged before being hanged.)'


'Also included are an index of authors whose writings have been mentioned in the text, a subject index, and a generous number of charts and graphs.'


'The editor has been generous: 23 chapters on rather more themes, 831 pages, including a splendid 105-page index, a work of art.'


'A l'origine une suite au chapitre 17 demeuré inachevé de l'Introduction to the principles of morals and legislation de Bentham, cet ouvrage constitue en fait une création originale dépassant en profondeur et en pénétration le volume dont elle est issue. La présente édition comporte des changements importants par rapport à celle de 1945. Le texte authentique et intégral de ce qui peut être considéré comme l'œuvre majeure de Bentham est entièrement annoté et assorti de plusieurs annexes. Un index des matières remarquablement détaillé y figure également.'

Political memoranda: revision of instructions to political officers on subjects chiefly political and administrative, 1913-18, by Frederick Lugard. 3rd edition with a new introduction by A. H. M. Kirk-Greene ( Cassell, 479pp).

'The index occupies p. [457]-479 of the 3rd ed., the previous editions having lacked an index. Izard was an Assistant District Officer in Nigeria. The index could have been greatly improved with a little judicious editing (e.g. "Agriculture head N.A. estimates" is even more obscure than "Agriculture teaching of") and better proof-reading (e.g. "Change" for "Charge"). But I suppose it is worthy of note, if only on the grounds that any index is better than none!


'The book's pages are not numbered, and there is no index. Sidgwick Jackson and Ewart, you will please come to my study afterward.'
Operanatomy: an eclectic introduction to the art of the conductor, instrumentalist, composer, producer, and to score reading; analysis of sound, singer, libretto and public, and adjudication of the critic, by Alfred Alexander (Grant and Cutler, £2.85). Rev. by J. R. Hamilton, TES, 2 Jul. 71.

'This is one of the most original books on music which has appeared for some time. But it ought to have an index. It cannot be emphasized too often that all books imparting information (and in this case an immense amount of useful information) should be thoroughly indexed.'


'The index is an index as a glass eye is an eye; it avoids anyone remarking its absence.'


'Yet there are flashes of perception like his two "do-it-yourself kits" to start or to meet protest movements (Unfortunately for him Prof. Cantor has been given an index that is haywire for half the book, at least.)'


'All chapters have comprehensive reference lists and the author and subject indexes appear to be complete. Incidentally "Zyzygites" (p. 632) must surely be the last word ever in any index!'

'This valuable volume is likely to be the authoritative textbook on methods in mycology for a very long time to come.'

The foregoing extracts have been submitted by Mr. Bruce S. C. Harling, Mrs. Veronica Findlay, Mr. G. Norman Knight and Mrs. Elizabeth Wallis.


'He has provided the means for deciding whether or not to keep an index of one's collection, what kinds of index would be suitable for particular circumstances, and enough technical detail about the indexing techniques to enable one to run an index properly and profitably, once started. . . . Gerald Jahoda is rightly very concerned with the time taken . . . in maintaining an index . . . Referring to a book chapter by W. M. Batten he says: "The author states that an index to 800 patents on one card can, in most cases, be sorted in 10 minutes". This, I believe, is a case of typical British understatement and assumes that the searcher has a cup of tea in the process.'

The following have been reviewed with a brief statement that the books have no index.


Mrs. Fraser on the fatal shore, by Michael Alexander (Michael Joseph, 185pp., £2.50).

The last year of Leo Tolstoy, by B. F. Bulgakov (Hamish Hamilton, 235pp., £2.25).

Teach yourself O & M, by R. G. Breadmore (English Universities Press, £0.55).

Foreign policies in South Asia, edited by S. P. Varma and K. P. Misra (New Delhi, Orient Longmans, 403pp., £2.50).

The following have been reviewed with a brief statement that the books have an index.


Do you sincerely want to be rich? by Godfrey Hodgson and Bruce Page.
Who's who in the ancient world, compiled by Betty Radice (Anthony Blond, 225pp., £4).

Iconography of Christian art, volume 1, by Gertrud Schiller (Lund Humphries, 473pp., £10.50).


Stanley Morison: his typographic achievement, by James Moran (Lund Humphries, 184pp., £5.25).


Jane Austen's English, by K. C. Phillips (Deutsch, 229pp., £2.25).

Rich and poor in Renaissance Venice, by Brian Pullan (Blackwell, 689pp., £6.50).


Renaissance Europe 1480-1520, by J. R. Hale (Collins, 350pp., £1.50).


The distant magnet, by Philip Taylor (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 326pp., £5.25).

Byron: a portrait, by Leslie A. Marchand (John Murray, 518pp., £4).

I fantasmi dell'opera, by Giovanni Macchia (Milan, Monadori, 204pp., L2,500).


The age of Aquarius: technology and the cultural revolution, by William Braden (Eyre & Spottiswoode, £2.60).

Robert L. Collison, the author of two standard works on indexing and the Society's Hon. Corresponding Member for the Western states of the U.S.A., writes from Los Angeles University that he invariably reads every word of The Indexer from cover to cover.

Enclosing a cutting from the TLS review of Constantine the Great by John Holland Smith (which appeared on page 200 of the last number of The Indexer), he stated that he had never before found an index described as a 'chink in the armour'. The reference is to the following passage:

'The misprints are duly reproduced in the index supplemented by a series of additional errors, which remind us how often an index is a chink in the armour of the collaboration between author and publisher.'

The words which we have italicized are also a new one on us.'

From correspondence columns, TLS, 17 Dec. 71.

'Your reviewer's interesting account of recent Dürer publications contains a major error which should be corrected. He maintains that Ruskin was maliciously disposed towards Dürer, and that "many vitriolic remarks on him "punctuate the thirty-eight volumes of his collected works". Your reviewer's bookshelf perhaps lacks the thirty-ninth volume, the index, which would have quickly shown him that the opposite is the case . . . '

The reviewer replied in the same issue

'Mr. Hilton will be relieved to hear that I am familiar with the index, volume 39 of Ruskin's Works, where there is indeed a long series of references to Dürer and his art. But if all these citations, pro and contra, were separated and weighed, I have little doubt which side of the scale would go down with a heavy thud.'