that the new publishers recognised my claim without further ado. The last point is the importance of a contract or a formal letter setting out terms. I am sure that many indexers like myself do not have anything in writing for many of the indexes they do. I had correspondence written during the course of the indexing making it clear that I had been commissioned to do the work but giving no indication of the fee to be charged. This also could have been a subject of dispute.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Dorothy Frame.

Book Reviews


Apart from some updating of the entries in the list of books recommended for the indexer's reference library, and elsewhere in the text, a few minor changes and a new chapter on research in indexing and information retrieval, this standard text book on indexing (which was first published in 1953) is the same as the 3rd ed. reviewed in The Indexer 7, Spring 1970, p.33.

The fact that this book has seen through 4 editions in 19 years to date, speaks well for its quality and its usefulness. Considerable research has been undertaken in recent years in the field of information retrieval, particularly with automatic indexing, and the new chapter introduces this subject quite usefully and adds some bibliographical references.

The list of recommendations for the indexer's reference library now looks a little thin and could be fully expanded, especially with a few more American books, in the subsequent edition.

L.M.H.


Of the making of many dictionaries there is no end*—the Oxford University Press alone publishes more than 108. But, as each year a great number of new words make their appearance, either as colloquial or slang words or as regularly established words, destined to become part of the English language, constant revision is necessary.

The latest edition of the standard 13-volume Oxford English dictionary was published, however, as long ago as 1933, with a supplement for A to G two years ago. There has not been a new edition of the more widely used Concise Oxford Dictionary since 1951 (reprinted with revised addenda in 1954).

Consequently it was a bright idea to launch this Dictionary of new English (published simultaneously in England and the United States** and printed in the latter country), which is described in the preface as a lexical index of the new words of the past decade, a record of the most recent terms required and created by scientific investigation, technological, cultural activities, and our social and personal lives. The new words and phrases were collected from 'the reading of over half a billion running words from United States, British and Canadian sources newspapers, magazines and books published from 1963 to 1972.' It will be noticed that there is no reference to Australian sources, which seems prejudicial.

One of the best features is the provision of quotations (often more than one) with full context to illustrate the meanings of the entry words. Thus, to take for instance of one of the shorter entries:

channel, n. a tunnel for railroad trains built under a channel of water.

In recent years the idea of a channel tunnel—commonly known as the "chunnel"—has been revived. Walter Sullivan, The New York Times, July 17, 1968, Sec. 4, p.12.


(blad of channel and tunnel).

Except for actual quotations from British sources the spelling is American (e.g. 'labeling').

That great lexicographer Dr. Johnson once remarked that 'Dictionaries are like watches; the worst is better than none, and the best cannot be expected to go quite true.' Where I feel that *A dictionary of new English does not go quite true is in the editors' belief that all their entries originated in the last ten years. I feel certain that I came across lead-swinging during World War I—there could usefully have been a cross-reference from the more common expression swinging the lead, as also from the American equivalent, goldbricking. Again, kinky (in the sense of odd, queer or eccentric) I distinctly recollect encountering in

*It would be unfair to quote in the text the conclusion of the passage from Ecclesiasticus from which this assertion is parodied; the whole verse runs: 'Of making of many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.'

**The American edition has as its title The Barnhart dictionary of new English.
Edgar Wallace’s *Terror Keep*, which was published in 1927. But I could grant that women’s *kinky boots* first made their appearance about 1964.

But those are minor criticisms. The compilers and editorial staff of twenty have clearly taken great pains to make this work as thorough as possible—no fewer than fifteen readers were employed to dig out the five thousand or so entries. Any indexer who is puzzled by words which cannot be traced in any ordinary dictionary—words and expressions such as *COBOL* (acronym for Common Business Oriented Language), *exonumia*, *maryjane* (the American GI’s rendering of marijuana), *negritude*, or *terabit* (a unit of information equivalent to one million bits or binary digits) and a thousand similar instances, not to mention all the ultra modern scientific jargon—can do far worse than consult this Dictionary of new English, where he is almost certain to find them neatly docketed, with definition, national source, explanation, derivation and one or more illustrative passages. What more can one ask?

As a paid-up member, however, of the newly formed Queen’s English Society, I feel bound to register a protest against the use of *commute* as a noun in the sense of ‘a trip to and from work.’ I would suggest that the word can only be a verb and then, when referring to journeys, should be confined to meaning travel as a season-ticket holder.

G.N.K.


This little book has been a reliable reference book for indexers as well as for authors, editors, printers and publishers, for whom it was primarily intended, since it was first published in 1905.

Although similar in appearance and only thirty-two pages longer, this edition has been revised for the first time since 1956—and this time the revision has been very thorough. To take a page at random, in the 10th ed. I examined p.122 on which there are 65 entries. Of the corresponding entries in the 11th ed., 10 are new, to make way for which 6 have been omitted from the earlier edition; 10 which were not defined previously have now been defined, and the definitions of two others have been clarified, e.g. ‘Erse, Irish’ now reads ‘Erse, Irish Gaelic language.’ Minor changes have taken place with a few others. It must have been somewhat difficult to decide which entries to omit and also what to include e.g. Jacob Epstein and Desiderius Erasmus now appear for the first time. The proper names included (of places as well as of persons) are those concerning which mistakes may be made with the spelling. Such matters as capitalization, the use of hyphens, punctuation, italicization, abbreviations, printing technicalities (not excluding the international paper sizes) and foreign words and phrases are all included.

L.M.H.

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