EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS
edited by Bruce S. C. Harling

It is regretted that a number of extracts have had to be held over to the next issue due to pressure on space.

Contributions of review extracts are always welcome and thanks are due to the following: Mrs June Angus, M. B. Dean, Mrs Veronica Findlay, M. R. Hails, L. M. Harrod, Dr J. E. Holmstrom, N. F. Moore, D. Pygott and Anthony Raven.

NO INDEXES

Answers from Dial-a-Scientist, by Michael Bright (BBC Publications, £0.60). Rev. by Judith Mirzoeff, New Scientist 8 Apr. 76.

'There is no index, so you can't try to answer your own questions.'

King of the Gypsies, by Peter Maas (Cape, 171pp., £3.50). Rev. by C. H. Rolph, TLS 4 Jun. 76.

'... (lacking) ... an index (which I should have thought simply essential) ...'


'A list of the origins of the essays would have been welcome, as would an index.'

Statistics in small doses, by W. M. Castle (Churchill Livingstone, 1972, 216pp., £2). Rev. by I. R. Perry, Medical and Biological Engineering, Jan. 76.

'The book lacks a conventional index, but is split into relatively small sections, which are listed at the start of the text.'

Inns and inn signs of Norfolk and Suffolk, by Alfred Hedges (Cicada Books, £2.75 or £1.95 (paper)). Rev. by Bruce Robinson, Eastern Daily Press, 21 May 76.

'This is not a comprehensive account of the hostelries of Norfolk and Suffolk. Nor, for those who merely like to browse, is there an index, which is a pity.'

Railways in the Yorkshire dales, by K. Hoole (Dalesman, 1975, 96pp., £1.10). Rev. Modern Railways, Nov. 75.

'More maps, an index and a bibliography need not have added unduly to the modest price.'

Canal, by Anthony Burton and Derek Pratt (David & Charles, £4.50). Rev. by A. M., Motor Boat & Yachting, Jun. 76.

'... strangely, there is no index.'

The language and style of Anthony Trollope, by John W. Clark (Deutsch, 238pp., £5.75). Rev. by Stephen Wall, TLS 18 Jun. 76.

'It is a pity ... that the book has no index.'


'The book is beautifully and flawlessly produced, but the editing is too slight: there is no biographical information on the eminent lecturers, there are no translations and no index.'

Bill W., by Robert Thomsen (Hamish Hamilton, 373pp., £4.50). Rev. by E. S. Turner, TLS 27 Feb. 76.

'(The) book ... contains no picture of (Bill W.), nor is there an index, which is perhaps forgivable when so many characters are called Hank P. or Fitz M.'

Finery, by Quentin Bell (Hogarth, £6). Rev. by Margaret Lane, Daily Telegraph 17 Jun. 76.

'(The lack of an index is, I suppose, only an Inconspicuous Outrage, but one to be regretted in such an informative and entertaining book.)'


'... the lack of an index is a disgraceful piece of sloth from so distinguished a publishing house.'
The mystery of Atlantis and Mysteries from forgotten worlds, by Charles Berlitz (Souvenir Press, £3.50 each). Rev. by Joan Forman, Eastern Daily Press 19 Mar. 76.

'The book's illustrations are enlightening, the lack of indices [sic] in both irritating.'

INADEQUATE INDEXES


'With so much in it, this record must be a useful weapon in conservation battles yet to be won; it would be more so with a fuller index.'

Roman and Islamic water-lifting vessels, by Thor-kild Schiøler (Odense, Acta Historica Scientarium Naturalium et Medicinalium Universitatis Hauniensis). Rev. by John Peter Oleson, TLS 5 Mar. 76.

'Dr Schiøler felt himself unequal to the task of preparing an index of the obscure Arabic terminology which appears in the medieval Islamic manuscripts, but the lack of at least a tentative tabulation of the Greek and Latin terminology is less excusable. Most of the ancient and modern terms do, however, appear in the thorough index at the end of the book.'


'It is also very badly designed and has an inadequate index.'


'... the index is misleadingly disorganized [sic] and has many partial and total omissions.'

The barefoot librarian, by D. E. K. Wijasuriya, Lim Huck Tee & Radha Nadarajah (Bingley, 1975, 120pp., $8.00). Rev. by Henry Scholberg, College & Research Libraries Nov. 75.

'Despite an index which could be more adequate (considering that the three authors are librarians), the authors are to be congratulated ...'


'Slight criticisms can be made ... the index consists only of personal authors and titles, and presumably entries in italic are subject entries? (There are no institutional entries it seems).'

'Readers... have the right to expect a better index than the woefully inadequate one which they are given: those who want to follow up the Campetti affair, for instance, which engaged Schelling so deeply during his early years in Munich, will not find Campetti even mentioned in the index.'


'The "Signpost Index" for the text can only be described as poopety (a y on the word poop, meaning "to make an abrupt sound, blow, gulp"; Webster's New World Collegiate Dictionary, 1964). It consists of a two-page compilation of about 100 broad titles; no generic names for the chemically lame; no authors' names for the academically vain.'


'A more comprehensive index would make it still more useful.'


'The editing of this volume is better than that in Volume 1, but still leaves something to be desired, especially in the index. For instance Antonin Besse... was knighted, but, being a good Frenchman, was never "Sir Antonin". And a quick dip into a public library would have supplied the forenames or initials and subsequent titles of men and women who are mentioned when young, and have since distinguished themselves (Edmonds, Major; Gibb, Professor; Lambton, Nancy; Forbes, G. Ogilvie). Some of the entries are indexed as "later Lord..." and even "of Hungerford". To treat all alike would have required little effort, and consistency is a virtue.'


'Except for one omission from the index, the whole book... is a model of its kind.'


'More detailed indexing is required.'


'... the index is totally inadequate.'

Protestant church music, by Friedrich Blume (Gollancz, 831pp., £15). Rev. by Denis Stevens, TLS 2 Apr. 76.

'It is impossible to use a volume of this kind as a work of reference or as a research tool unless there is a first-rate index. The one supplied is not only inadequate; in many cases it is downright misleading. To begin with, there are no entries for titles of compositions, so that a scholar attempting to trace through history the career of a melody such as "Aus tiefer Not" can do so only by reading almost the entire book.

'Yet there are unexplainable exceptions: why is "Also heilig ist der Tag" listed, and without mention of its composer, Senfl? What business has Bizet in the index? Carmen is there, large as life, but she turns out to be merely carmen and stands in apposition to the Senfl piece just cited. There is an incredibly feeble attempt to index forms and styles, not the worst example of which is the term "imitation". From only a general knowledge of Protestant church music over four centuries, it would seem that the best comment on "imitation" might be the one word passim; what we are given is one single page reference! Ripieno suffers a similar fate.

'Two page references for Georg Forster should be deleted and added to those for Sebastian Forster (79 and 145). Valentin Bapst is indexed in two places, the numbers all being different, but in the book he is called Babst or Bapst. There is nothing in the blocks of numbers to show where the principal reference occurs. Twice does the savage Doppelmeister raise its head, for there are Americans as well as Englishmen named William Byrd and Henry Purcell, but they are thrown unceremoniously into the same mid-Atlantic trough. It is a pity that such a fine volume was not thoroughly checked by a competent editor; and one can only hope that the second printing will set matters to right.'


'... the editing is far below the standard which the material deserves... there is no discernible method; annotation is incomplete... cross-referencing and indexing are infuriatingly poor...'

Compare the Sunday Times review printed in the April Indexer:

'Mr Nigel Nicolson's preface to this edition... is exemplary. So are the notes and the index.'