EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS
edited by Bruce S. C. Harling

Items in this issue are arranged under the following headings: No Indexes, Inadequate Indexes, Satisfactory Indexes, Excellent Indexes, Unusual Indexes, Exploiting Indexes.

Contributions of review extracts are always welcome and thanks are due to the following: K. G. B. Bakewell, Michael B. Dean, Neil Fisk, Gerald Fowler, L. M. Harrod, B. C. Head, Rev. Norman Hillyer, Ann Hoffmann, A. Raven and Mrs E. Wallis.

NO INDEXES

The National Front, by Martin Walker (Fontana, £1). Rev. by George Hutchinson, Spectator 11 June 77.

‘Martin Walker has done splendidly well ... I have only one reproach—and it is not directed towards him but against his publishers. They have let him down. Collins, who are the owners of Fontana, have failed to provide an index to his book. What I am expressing is not just a routine objection to the lack of an index, much as the omission may be deplored in any work of history, contemporary or otherwise. What I am saying is that this particular book is one that will be referred to again and again, and that the publishers' failure is especially deplorable. I have a practical suggestion however: let Collins/Fontana set about the making of an index at once, so that it may be incorporated in subsequent editions.’


‘There is no bibliography, and more importantly, no index. The book is the poorer for their absence.’


‘... the omission of an author or subject index and the amputation within the first paragraph on page 4 represent minor annoyances.’


‘There is neither a map nor an index, and there are enough inaccuracies to diminish confidence in Mr Simpson’s knowledge of naval history.’


‘He [the author] is at times over emotional and the book lacks an index.’


‘Despite ... the unfortunate absence of an index, the book is a source of much extremely useful material.’


‘Professor Field has done the memory of Nabokov little service by regurgitating and inflating this flotsam of family legend, which merely misrepresents his remarkable hero as an egocentric megalomaniac, retailing trivial or invented family associations, with Marie Antoinette or Pushkin, while scorning mediocrities like Dostoevsky or Stendhal or Balzac. It is in character that he has furnished his book with no index, no bibliography and no footnotes.’


‘Apart from a list of biblical references there is no index, and for this grievous omission the editors deserve consignment to purgatory for the expiation of their venial sin. Festschriften are in any case bibliographically messy, and without the redemptive key of a decent index they remain a book (sic) sealed with seven seals which, we are told in Revelation 5, only the Lion of the tribe of Judah can “open and loose”.’
INADEQUATE INDEXES

Charity costumes of children, scholars, almsfolk, pensioners, by Phillis Cunnington & Catherine Lucas (Black £8.50). Rev. by Margaret Lane, Daily Telegraph 26 Jan. 78.

'...the index has many gaps and there is no bibliography. (If you want to know the source of some detail it is tiresome to find So-and-So, op. cit., and to have to hunt backwards through the notes for So-and-So's work and identity.).'

Mozart: the man, the musician, by Arthur Hutchings (Thames & Hudson, 131pp., £16). Rev. by Denis Matthews, TLS 10 June 77.

'The separate page-numbering and indexing of each part of the book may ... cause initial confusion.'


'Poor textual organization was ... evidenced by the occasional inclusion of topics in chapters which were not appropriate to their subject matter. ... A carefully detailed Index might have served to compensate for this poor topical organization. Unfortunately, the Index is not extensive and consequently is of little help in locating topics in the text.'

The figure in the landscape, by John Dixon Hunt (Johns Hopkins University Pr., 271pp., £12). Rev. by John Gage, TLS 2 Sep. 77.

'The index is quite inadequate and, like the text, perpetuates a mysterious William Beckforth.'

The appeal that was never made, by Jukka Nevakivi (C. Hurst, 225pp., £7). Rev. by Harry Hanak, TLS 2 Sep. 77.

'His index is sometimes faulty.'


'Printing errors are nearly nonexistent, but the indices [sic] seem to be full of slightly wrong page numbers. To take just two examples of greater interest to myself, the author index lists pages 85, 87 and 113 behind my name, and pages 113, 114, 136 and 137 behind Beauchamp, all these being too small by 2! Perhaps the printer inserted two extra pages somewhere?'

Cycles of disadvantage, by Michael Rutter & Nicola Madge (Heinemann Educational, 413pp., £2.50). Rev. by Stuart Sutherland, TLS 24 June 77.

'The book will be a useful work of reference to anyone concerned with any aspect of human disadvantage: the bibliography contains over 1,200 references, but the subject index is inadequate.'

Semantics. Theories of meaning in generative grammar, by Janet Dean Fodor (Harvester Pr., 225pp., £12.95). Rev. by John Lyons, TLS 8 July 77.

'...that the bibliography ... is highly selective and the index very inadequate.'

The universe (Reidel, 1976, Dfl.70; paperback Dfl.43). Rev. by John Gribbin, Nature 5 May 77.

'The confused reader will gain little comfort from the index in which some topics are broken down in nit-picking detail, whereas others receive no mention; the entry under "B", for example, consists entirely of "Big-Bang", with no mention even of black holes, although they are discussed in the text.'


'...an index of scholars' names, but an index of subject matter and a bibliography would have been a great asset.'


'The publisher really should have given more in the way of an Index than a mere list of recipients. One hopes such a lack will not be repeated in future volumes.'

Also rev. in The Guardian 6 Jan. 78.

'...that the index, consisting only of the names of recipients, is lamentable for such a work. But that, though not a small thing, is nothing to set against the revelation which this collection affords of a rich and subtle life.'
Satisfactory Indexes


'The editors are to be commended on the results of their onerous task in presenting a well balanced, well documented source of scientific and technical information augmented by numerous photographs, illustrations, references and good indexing (author and subject).'


'The book is well illustrated and—praise be—well indexed.'


'The book is well illustrated and—praise be—very satisfactorily indexed.'


'. . . a comprehensive work, fully annotated and indexed, with an excellent bibliography.'


'There is an index of principal wines, too, in itself a mark of quality. A book without an index is like a wine without a bouquet.'


'The book is rounded off with five valuable appendices largely statistical in matter, and an index comprehensive even if microscopic in type.'

The Good News Bible: today's English version (The Bible Societies/Collins/Fontana, 1292pp., £2.95; paperback £1.50). Rev. by the Most Rev. Donald Coggan, Archbishop of Canterbury, Sunday Telegraph 10 Oct. 76.

'There is an index which, while obviously not attempting to be a concordance, will serve as a useful guide to the reader.'


'The standard of scholarship is high, the reviews are exhaustive and the indexing first class.'


'The seventh volume contains the discipline and geographic indexes. In the discipline index (340 four-column pages) names are grouped under 79 main subject headings, most of which are sub-divided. The geographic index (393 four-column pages) lists scientists by location—state and town for the United States and Canada, and by country for exiles. There is no entry for Britain or the United Kingdom in this section—only England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland! This is either ignorant or premature!'


'A first-class feature of the book is the index of timbers under both common and botanical names linked with a table of uses and properties.'


'Appendices on airfields and good indexes covering general, aircraft and military unit subjects are useful inclusions.'

The first three minutes, by Steven Weinberg (Deutsch, £3.95). Rev. R. W., New Scientist 3 Mar. 77.

'The book is lucidly written for a general readership and is amply provided with a mathematical supplement and a selection for further reading. Welcome too for such a book is a substantial index.'

Lamy of Santa Fe, by Paul Horgan (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 523pp., $15). Rev. by John Tracy Ellis, Southwestern Historical Qtrly. Jan. 76.

'Last but by no means least at a time when such matters are all too frequently overlooked, this splendid biography carries a very helpful index.'

The Indexer Vol. 11 No. 1 April 1978

'The entries are well indexed—by depository item number, by SupDocs classification number, by issuing agency, and there is a title/subject index. In addition, an appendix identifies issuing agencies by SupDoc classification numbers. Another is a bibliography of the sources used in compiling the data.'


'The presentation of the book is thorough. It possesses full indexes and source references, and a large bibliography, both of source material and of secondary literature.'

**Who's who in architecture from 1400 to the present day**, ed. by J. M. Richards (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £8.75). Rev. by Sheila Upjohn, *Eastern Daily Pr.* 1 July 77.

'... an index of individual buildings means that checking the architect of Longleat, Brasilia, Hajima City Hall or Zurich Polytechnic takes only a moment.'

Also rev. by Bruce Boucher, *TLS* 29 July 77.

'The entries, major and minor, are enhanced by cross-references, and there is a useful index of important buildings, arranged according to countries so that one can find out who was responsible for the membrane roof of the Olympic Stadium in Munich or the monument to Vittorio Emanuele II in Rome.'


'But the index, which in a book of this nature is naturally arranged geographically (under country), is a confused arrangement of building type and place name. What could have been a convenient means of adding architecture to the holiday plans hardly merits inclusion in this form.'


'The 2,632 items listed on these capacious double-column pages are handily sorted out into sections, and are well headed, cross-referenced and finally indexed.'


'The problem of locating particular information has to a large extent been overcome by means of a detailed contents list (of 17 pages) and a comprehensive subject index extending to 47 pages. There is, too, an author index and—a most valuable feature—63 pages of references.'


'It remains to record that the book has been exceptionally well produced: the maps and illustrations are good and the index is comprehensive.'


'It is interestingly illustrated and possesses that comparative rarity, a large yet sensibly organized subject-matter index.'


'... no less than fifty-five pages are taken up with a well-compiled and extremely useful "index nominum et rerum" enabling the reader to trace painlessly, by incipit, any work discussed or analysed.

'... The final pages discuss secular music (including a thematic index of the French chansonnier in the Biblioteca Colombina). . . .'


'It is economical and cumulative in reasoning, clearly arranged and conscientiously indexed.'


'The book is beautifully produced and the index well done (a rare thing these days).'

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'. . . he (the editor) has been kind to historians, not only by supplying cross-references, but by thoughtfully providing elaborate indexes to Parts 1 and 2, without waiting for the appearance of his third volume . . .'


'John Winton has written the most graphic and comprehensive account yet of life at sea in the last century. Pictures, bibliography and index have no fault either, and his book has been handsomely produced.'

James Joyce: the undiscover'd country, by Bernard Benstock (Gill & Macmillan, 201pp., £8.50). Rev. by J. S. Atherton, TLS 4 Nov. 77.

'The index is good, but it is a pity that the hundreds of page references refer only to American editions.'

Deciphering the Maya script, by David Humiston Kelley (Univ. of Texas Pr., 334pp., £19.25). Rev. by Gordon Brotherston, TLS 15 July 77.

'Complemented by the very full indexes at the end, this is a sound and succinct treatment.'

A subject bibliography of the Second World War, by A. G. S. Enser (Deutsch, 592pp., £11.95). Rev. by Ronald Lewin, TLS 29 July 77.

'A comprehensive index gives not only the names of authors but also the titles of their books and the page references (and alternative titles) for each book mentioned. There is also a subject index listing the large number of major and minor headings under which the literature is classified. As Mr Enser is a former public librarian one would expect this side of his work to be professional and practical.'


'... the book is produced, index and all, almost as faultlessly as it is written.'


'The book, meticulously edited, beautifully indexed, and generously illustrated, is written with dedication and devotion.'

Edison: the man who made the future, by Ronald Clark (Macdonald & Jane, £6.95). Rev. by Adrian Hope, New Scientist 24 Nov. 77.

'Well-indexed, and readily identified source-reference quotations smoothly grafted into the text, it paints a very clear and well authenticated picture of the background to Edison's life and work.'


'The book contains a unique reference section of 23 separate indices in which the various processes concerned are grouped into a logical system for easy cross-reference.'


'The index seems comprehensive, though occasionally puzzling; references to Canterbury's N. transept window and "Royal Window" (one and the same) do not tally, while some items only are cross-referenced according to subject.'


'There is ... an admirable index.'


'An extensive bibliography, two maps, and a comprehensive index, further enhance it.'


'The indexes are well prepared and even a passing reference in the text is entered.'

EXCELLENT INDEXES


'It has a glossary to 80 specialised terms, 328 citations to further literature and excellent indexes to all plants and animals mentioned.'

'Those who have not read Ancestral Voices might, perhaps, wish for the footnotes, which gave what may be called the cast list in that volume, but in Prophesying Peace this loss is balanced by the excellence of the index—National Trust properties, very rightly, appearing in capitals.'


'There are 27 photographs, some useful appendices and an excellent index—the latter essential in a book of this kind.'


'The index is 10 times more thorough, useful and amusing than most indices today.'

Lives of the Tudor Age (1485-1603), by Ann Hoffmann (Osprey, £12.50). Rev. by Julia Tompkins, The Woman Journalist Spring 77.

'And I did look at the end, because I have a thing about the index. This one gets full marks, plus a bonus, because it not only gives each reference in alphabetical order, but also lists alphabetically in categories—from Actors to Travellers.'

EXPLOITING INDEXES


'The actual passage of the biblical literatures through the West, in the past 2,000 years, has been involved, beyond disentangling, with the history of the Christian Church and, to a smaller extent, with that of Jewry, though as a matter of fact neither Christ nor Church appear in the pages of the index, in which one would look with more success for such items as Choukoutien, Namkwar, Lévi-Strauss, even Pope, Alexander, but not Pope, The.'


'This story of a famous portrait painter and his encounters with some of his even more famous sitters is called a Leslie Frewin Impac Book, and one has only to look at the dustjacket, and perhaps obtain quick confirmation from the index, to realize that Mr Frewin has devised an impac for the Queen's Jubilee. The dustjacket imposes a reproduction of Annigoni's second portrait of the Queen on a photograph of the artist, but leave his massive face free to register bitterness and discontent. The images vividly suggest Beauty and the Beast. In the index, a swarm of page numbers attaches itself to the royal title, denser by far than those that cling to the artist's two wives or even to Wildenstein's, the art dealers.'

UNUSUAL INDEXES

The know how make and do encyclopaedia (Usborne Publishing, £2.50). Rev. by Mary Sullivan, Sunday Telegraph 5 Dec. 76.

'. . . a most jolly compendium with an ingenious index, matching items to occasions (Presents, Party, and so on).'


'Attractively edited by Gilbert Guisan, who has supplied a wealth of informative footnotes and a somewhat eccentric index, they constitute an eloquent record of two lives tirelessly devoted to the cause of literature.'

Book Reviews


This volume contains the text of eleven papers on the Preserved Context Index System (PRECIS), which is rapidly gaining in popularity as well as generating an extensive amount of literature. The system has been used for the subject index to The British National Bibliography (BNB) since 1971 and Derek Austin lists 33 other users or potential users on pages 76-77. A survey being carried out by the Department of Library