Indeed it was even more valuable for Pepys's diary, with its much higher count of dinner parties, family visits, river outings and general hobnobbing. Thus the entry on Sir William Penn (which occupies 3 pages or 6 columns of the printed text of the Index) has only two references under the heading 'alluded to'—only two extras or leg- byes as it were; for the rest a run scored off every ball. Similarly with Sir William Batten.

A further concern was to make sure that each reference was indexed in the right place. How, for instance, do you index Pepys's references to his health? Remedies are easy—you have only to list names: balsam, enemas, rabbits' feet, and so on. But diseases can be difficult: you have only Pepys's description of his symptoms to go on and you have to decide when he writes of 'taking cold' whether to index it under 'colds/coughs/sore throats', or under 'colic', or whether to leave it doubtful, under a query, as though it were under 'there's a lot of it about'. Fortunately, for the entry on Health I was able to consult Dr Charles Newman of the Royal College of Physicians, who combines a scholar's knowledge of Pepys and seventeenth-century medicine with modern clinical experience. Or again, when Pepys goes to the Exchequer, it is necessary to ask whether his visit relates to his work in the Navy Office or his work as Treasurer of the Tangier Committee. I found that often this could not be settled, and the Index at these points says so.

Several people told me when I started work on the Index that I ought to use a computer. But it would have been extremely difficult (as well as expensive and time-consuming) to programme the machine. I doubt in fact if a computer can be used for indexing a text like Pepys, in which there are so many indirect and submerged and ambiguous references. To have determined who he meant by 'my Uncle' or by 'the Duke' or by the unattached pronoun 'he', and so on, would have meant going back to the text. A computer print-out would be ugly to look at and awkward to handle, and its rows of figures in which the eye loses its way would lead to countless errors and constant irritation. Again, I was advised to have the Index made for me by someone else—by an expert on indexes. But the diary can only be indexed from the inside, as it were—from a knowledge of its contents and their significance. I had already come to this conclusion when I read the opening sentence of the manual on indexing published by the Cambridge University Press. There the author, G. V. Carey, says in effect: 'Get someone else to write your book for you—but be sure you write your own index'.

Well, I wrote the Index: but the important thing is that it was Pepys who wrote the book. And few editors can have had the good fortune to be given a task which from start to finish has been such a continuing delight.

Entries to note

Wheatley Medal 1984

Publishers, as well as librarians and indexers, are invited to send in recommendations for the Wheatley Medal, 1984.

This medal is awarded annually by the Library Association, in conjunction with the Society of Indexers, for an outstanding index first published in the United Kingdom during the previous three years.

Printed indexes to any type of publication may be submitted for consideration, provided that the whole work, including the index, or the index alone, has originated in the United Kingdom.

Recommendations, giving author, title of work indexed, date of publication and publisher, and covering 1982, 1983, or 1984, should reach the Development Secretary, The Library Association, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE, not later than 4 February 1985.

Forthcoming conferences

The 8th International Online Information Meeting is to be held in London, 4-6 December 1984. Information from Organizing Secretary, Online Information Meetings, Online Review, Learned Information Ltd, Besselsleigh Road, Abingdon, Oxford OX13 6LG.

The 27th annual conference of the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services (NFAIS) is to be held in Arlington, Virginia, 4-6 March 1985. The conference theme is new developments in electronic publishing and information services. Further information from NFAIS, 112 South Sixteenth Street, Suite 1207, Philadelphia, 19102 USA.

Indexers from T to S

Since its change of title from 'The Society of Indexers' to merely the 'Society of Indexers' on the adoption of its new constitution in February 1983, our organization now files under S, not T. Roseate olfactory characteristics unmodified.