INDEXES REVIEWED
edited by Norman Hillyer

These extracts from reviews do not pretend to represent a complete survey of all reviews in journals and newspapers. We offer only a selection from quotations that members have sent in.

Our reproduction of comments is not a stamp of approval from the Society of Indexers upon the reviewer's assessment of an index.

Extracts are arranged alphabetically under the names of publishers, within the sections: Indexes praised; Two cheers! Indexes censured; Indexes omitted; Obiter dicta.

Indexes praised


'There are also good author-, subject- and place-name indexes.'


'The alphabetical subject index extends over 20 pages, providing a relatively easy reference to the regulations. This is, I feel, the most useful section in the book, the others merely providing summaries for further investigation.'


'Well-written with adequate references for further reading, and a good index, this book fills a gap in nursing literature.'


'The author has given us a work well-equipped with a biographical index, a select bibliography and an excellent index.'

Batsford Academic: All the queen's men: power and politics in Mary Stewart's Scotland, by Gordon Donaldson, Scottish Historical Review 65(1), No. 179, April 1986.

'Here the index of persons is of great value, enabling the reader to trace the allegiances of any individual in whom he may be interested. For example, Sir Walter Ker of Cessford, a staunch Protestant at the time of the Reformation, was among the supporters of the queen in 1565, but ranged against her three years later at the time of Langside; at that battle his kinsman Sir Thomas Ker of Ferniehurst was with the queen. Using the index in this manner many interesting facts of this nature can readily be traced.'


'Few of us can hope to visit all the regions, so The Living Isles must substitute description for personal experience. It does so by providing a clearly written, non-technical, entertaining and informative account of the natural history of these islands, illustrated throughout by full colour photographs and drawings, and with a full index.'


'A simple map and evocative photographs, biographical notes and an excellent index, make this book a pleasure to read.'


'There is an extensive and erudite bibliography, some useful diagrams and a faultless index.'


'The index is excellent, but should not refer to Peter I (the Great) as Peter II.'


'While the level of detail and coverage varies with each contributor, the book is well presented, and the good index completes the impression that this book will soon find a home on the shelves of reference librarians and information officers as well as law librarians. [index by G. C. Jones]


'There is an extremely good index.' [index by Author]


'It is especially useful to have the numerous legal issues mentioned by Fielding clearly explained and set in context. Booth's confinement to the Verge of the Couri, for example, is the subject of several notes, helpfully drawn together by the index . . .'

‘Resplendent with inset quotations allowing Zwingli authentically utterance, this is a well-produced volume often providing extensive footnotes, and including immensely valuable indices [sic] and an up-to-date bibliography, all such detailed apparatus being remarkably free from misprints.’ [indexes by Author]


‘The excellent biblical and subject indexes facilitate the use of this scholarly book.’


‘. . . all will be assisted by the good index.’


‘Notes, bibliography and index are what they should be.’


‘The editing has been well done, with much cross-referencing between different chapters and little repetition . . . The index is well compiled and helpful.’


‘Related conditions are grouped together and the book has a comprehensive index.’


‘Three indexes make the book easy to consult.’


‘References and cross-references abound and its index and bibliography are both extensive.’


‘The book is thoroughly researched and well indexed.’


‘As with similar American nursing textbooks, the size and comprehensive approach can be off-putting to the user, despite a comprehensive index and glossary.’


‘The importance of some of the collections (Erskine of Alva, Mure of Caldwell, Nisbet and Stuart of Castermilk) is rather hard to appreciate from the brief general descriptions of their contents, particularly of the “charters”. This is, however, largely compensated for by a detailed index, whose value is enhanced by entries correcting or supplementing the indexes of volumes 1 and 2.’


‘More significant indicators of late sixteenth-century Scottish society may be the forty or so cases of failure to pay rent and a handful of entries pointing to a certain resistance to the more regular imposition of national taxation from 1581. Both can conveniently be traced via a most useful innovation—a combined office and subject index, which is twice as long as the index of offices in volume vii . . . The index, like the volume as a whole, conforms to the highest standards of the scholarship. It is a delight to use and fairly detailed perusal revealed only one slip in it: the reference to a ship, the Fle Boit, is given in one index as 417 rather than 471.’


‘It is the flexibility of choice, and the sheer variety of material contained within one cover, which will make this book an answer to many a heartfelt prayer—and the exhaustive indexes are a small tour de force in themselves.’ [indexes by Michael Perry et al.]


‘What’s more, it has a good index and will furnish you with many an arresting sermon illustration.’


‘There are diagrams and tables in abundance which are clear, colourful and enhance the text, and a detailed index at the end.’


‘Its excellent index will likewise make the volume of real use as a reference book in the minister’s study.’ [indexes by Author]


‘The book is accurately printed and lavishly indexed.’ [indexes by Author]
Kimber, William: Lions rampant: the story of No. 602 Spitfire Squadron, by D. McRoberts (1985, 238 pp., £11.50). Rev. in Aeronautical Journal, Dec 1985. 'The remarkable story of the Second World War experiences of 602 Spitfire Squadron is unfolded almost day-by-day in this detailed account which fortunately is well indexed.' [index by Lesley & Douglas McRoberts]

KTAV, New York: Studies on Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, by Leivy Smolar and Moses Aberbach; Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, by Pinkhos Churgin (pub. together; 1983, 435 pp.). Rev. by Steven D. Fraade, Jewish Quarterly Review 75(4), 1985. 'To sum up, the present two works contain a wealth of information concerning the ancient Rabbinic Aramaic rendering of the Prophetic canon of the Hebrew Bible. The excellent indexes to both monographs make this information easily accessible to scholars with a variety of interests.'


Little, Brown & Co.: Critical care nursing: body, mind, spirit, by Cornelia Vanderstaay Kenner et al. (1,250 pp., $35.96). Rev. by Jenny Haywood, Nursing Times, 16 April 1986. 'A comprehensive index makes it easy to locate specific points even though the book is so thick.'

Local Heritage Books, Newbury: The story of Godalming, by John Janaway (1983, 77 pp., £3.50). Rev. in Local History 1, July 1984. 'For the more serious among us who view such publications with a critical eye, we are glad to report that it has an index and a guide to further reading.'

Longman: World energy directory (2nd edn, 1985, 582 pp., £120). Rev. by Paul Weisenklam, Energy World, April 1986. 'It is a well-indexed reference book and will become even more valuable with stringent professional editing before the next edition is published.' [index by editorial team under Brenda Wren]

McGraw-Hill: The discoverers: an encyclopedia of explorers and exploration, ed. by Helen Delpar (1980, 471 pp., $47.95). Rev. by Dorothy Middleton, Geographical Journal 152(1), March 1986. 'Asia is rather awkwardly subdivided, with insufficient cross-references, but once the reader masters the simple and efficient index, and knows what he or she is looking for, this is not a serious difficulty.'

Mayhew, Kevin: Hymns old and new, compiled by Patrick Appleford et al. (1986, £1.80). Rev. in Church Times, 3 Oct 1986. 'The book is arranged alphabetically, with indexes that include an excellent one for themes in the new lectionary and other special times.' [two indexes by Susan Sayers, five by Judy Smith]


Mowbray: Prayers for use at the Alternative Services, by David Silk (1986, £3.95). Rev. by Michael Hocking, Church Times, 26 Sept 1986. 'A helpful feature is the comprehensive index that enables prayers about almost any subject to be found in a few moments.'

Oxford Univ. Press: A journey to the Western Isles of Scotland (1775), by Samuel Johnson, ed. by J. D. Fleeman (£35). Rev. by Ian Campbell, Books in Scotland 20, Spring 1986. 'Presentation is excellent, and the index is large and particularly clearly laid out.' [index by Editor]

Oxford Univ. Press: Victoria history of the county of Oxford: vol. XI, Wotton Hundred (northern part), ed. by Alan Crossley (348 pp., £60). Rev. by D. M. Barratt, Oxoniensia 49, 1984. 'The index is a good guide to the contents of the volume. There is the usual sensible breakdown by subjects within each parish entry, and also some useful general sub-entries such as "emigration" and "epidemics". All the interesting references to "crops, less common" and "industries, trades and professions" are brought together by these cross-references.'

Pan Books: The other medicines, by Richard Grossman (320 pp., £2.95). Rev. by Anita Elaine Davies, Nursing Times, 21 May 1986. 'This book provides a comprehensive index and extensive bibliography.'


Pergamon Press: Information Bulgaria: a short encyclopaedia of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria, ed. by Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (1985, 976 pp., £98). Rev. by R. J. Crampton, Soviet Studies 38(3), July 1986. 'Both the index and the table of contents give a detailed guide to the subsections into which each main part is divided, and this greatly facilitates that quick foray for information which is so often necessary.'

Pierian Press: Downloading/uploading online databases and catalogs. Proceedings of the congress for librarians, February 18, 1985, ed. by Bella Hass Weinberg and James A. Benson (1985, 135 pp., $39.50). Rev. by Dwight Ittner, Sourdough (Jnl of Alaska Library Assn), Fall 1985. 'When I am judging the utility of a book, one of the first things I do is to look at the index. This proceedings has one of the best indexes I have seen. It not only indexes the articles, it also indexes the bibliography and gives cross-references. If you look up "SciMate," it gives seven pages where it appears, and four bibliographic citation numbers. If you look up "Bibliographic Utilities," you get two page references and the note "SEE ALSO OCLC; RLIN. etc." The indexer also tells you the filing conventions used.' [index by Professor Weinberg]
Pluto: *AIDS and the new Puritanism*, by Dennis Altman (228 pp., £4.95);

Picador: *The plague years: a chronicle of AIDS, the epidemic of our times*, by David Black (177 pp., £3.50);

Gollancz: *The deadly epidemic*, by Graham Hancock & Enver Carim (191 pp., £9.95);


'As the only author to provide footnotes or index (both of real utility), Altman offers the best value.' [good indexes sell books!]


'There is a useful detailed index and all chapters have bibliographies. More than 500 references are cited in total and the text is interspersed with tables and figures.'


'There is a helpful glossary of terms and a detailed index.'


'There are excellent indices [sic]; in addition to a general index giving places and persons mentioned there are two plant indices, one for Latin names indicating in which county the plant was found, Westmorland, Cumberland or Furness, and one for English plant names.' [indexes by Author]


'An enormous wealth of detail is provided in intelligently organised sections, backed up by a comprehensive list of sources and a lengthy index.'


'The work contains both tables of derivations and destinations and is comprehensively indexed to ensure maximum ease of reference.'


'The copious footnotes which give depth to the work and point the way to further research deserve special mention, as do the appendices which provide a handy guide to various functions and powers; and the comprehensive index, essential for quick and easy reference.'


'Not that any of the contributions falls below the high standard which the editors have plainly set. Contents apart, they should be congratulated on providing not only an index of names but also an index of subjects: most editors no neither.'


'As one steeped in "affirmative" and "negative", and still finding the recently adopted "affirm" rather awkward, it was natural for this reviewer to consult the index first. It is up-to-date.'


'The work's detailed index provides quick access to the information provided and the book is a necessary acquisition to those who want to know the who, what and where in the UK aerospace industry.'


'... our understanding of these documents is greatly enhanced by Robert Hill's considerable skills as an editor. Volume 3 of the Garvey papers is a model of its kind. The introduction is concise but illuminating, the illustrations effectively complement the text, the index is both detailed and well organized, and the annotated footnotes constitute a positive treasure trove of background information.'


'The book certainly deserves a prominent place on Pacific history bookshelves. Added bonuses are well-drawn maps and a comprehensive index.'


'There are splendid illustrations and maps, thirteen pages of notes related to the text, six pages of bibliography and a superb index.'


'The first comprehensive guide of its kind, it contains over 3000 references, 1000 notes, detailed indexes, and six maps.'

Westview Press: *Bibliography on Soviet intelligence and security services*, ed. by Raymond G. Rocca and John D.
'The volume includes biographical and organisational charts and full indexes.'

'Oppenlander's work, designed as a companion volume to Anne Lohrli's Household Words . . ., is an index to the many contributors and works published in All the Year Round. It contains four indexes that include a number-by-number table of contents, an index of known contributors, an index by title, and a lengthy keyword index. While Oppenlander does a credible job in compiling these indexes, this volume will probably be of use only to Dickens's scholars or to advanced graduate students.'

'The value of the book is enhanced by the extensive bibliography, the list of those who have given the author information, and the three indexes—author, location and subject.'

'The book is well indexed and there are two valuable appendices . . .'

'The book is by no means free from printing errors. For example, on page 51 we are informed that the first king of unified Nepal 'once called his kindgom (sic)' a yam between two bounders (sic)'. In a way this phrase can serve as an epitaph to the whole four-volume series, since the multiple-sprouting yam of Progress has now been crushed between the twin boulders of existing research journals and full-length textbooks. But to end on a happier note, this volume does at least have a good index.'

'Illustrations, tables, diagrams and tabulated data are ample; all contributors list numerous reference sources and a good index makes rapid reference easy.' [index by the editors]

'The utility of the book is enhanced by a full index, a chronological chart of the 'Seasons of Dura' (pp. Xxi-xxiv), and seventy-eight photographs, maps, and drawings. The work is a fitting memorial to the archaeologist, the scholar, and the man.'

'As well as being unusually readable for such a subject, it is well organised for future reference, with a comprehensive index referring to numbered paragraphs.'

' . . . the whole is very much on the practical level, with much stimulating information made easily available to preachers and leaders of church classes. To this end the indexing is most impressive, with full indexes of Greek and Hebrew words, subjects and biblical references. Conservative the book may be, but such workmanlike indexes (76 pages!) make it easy and quick to use and of profit to everyone. [good indexes sell books!]

Two cheers!

'The editors stress that the project is intended for the historian rather than the bibliographer, and each volume is furnished accordingly with indexes of imprints and subjects. Thirty-three Scottish places are recorded in the "Index of Imprints", which lists all places of publication except London, grouped by county, with the running entry numbers arranged chronologically under each place. The user can thus see immediately that four works were published in Stirling in 1806, or two in Kelso in 1815, and refer back to the main author entries for details. Unfortunately the "Index of Subjects" is less satisfactory. It is a broad classified arrangement by a modified version of the Universal Decimal Classification—acceptable in itself, but difficult to use in the absence of an alphabetical key: the key at the beginning of the volume merely duplicates the classified arrangement. Moreover the verbal subdivisions provided under some numbers are insufficiently detailed. Scotland can be identified only as a heading under "History and Geography", with subheadings for "Institutions" (5 items), "Laws and Courts" (15), "Politics" (16), "Religion" (2), "Social and Agricultural" (21), "Local History" (14) and "General History" (33) . . . Only the entry numbers are recorded under each heading and the researcher must look up each one individually for more detailed information—an intimidating task for, say, "Practical politics—general and special" (some 350 items) or "English poetry" (over 1000). This promises to be an even more serious problem for the more prolific periods to be covered by later sections. The editors were understandably keen to start publishing an interim catalogue as quickly as possible, but it is to be hoped that more detail—at the very least individual persons and places—can be incorporated in future subject indexes. Indeed, a cumulative index to each set of volumes would be more useful than separate indexes to each volume. However the researcher on the early years of the nineteenth century does now have a valuable if time-consuming tool which assembles much material hitherto inaccessible.'
Indexes censored

'The index is not so satisfactory.'

'The book is generally well produced but lacks an adequate author index and, in several places, refers to figures in other books that are not reproduced here.'

'His index (or maybe his indexer's index) is a disaster. Among many lacunae, the most bizarre is the apparent deliberate exclusion of all the many individuals named or cited in the text, except for the dead.' [well, you can't be too careful with the laws of libel these days]

'Many occurrences . . . are ignored by the index, and places which occur as a supplemental element to a personal name do not seem to be indexed at all.'

'His style is occasionally banal, and the index is patchy.'

'His thesis is not well presented. Phrases like "(see above)" are used when page references are needed; there is an index of place-names but not of biblical references or authors (who could fail to admire George Adam Smith?) and there is no bibliography. Mistakes occur in the transliteration of Hebrew words, and he is quite wrong on some linguistic points. If he really wants to challenge the established positions of scholars, he ought to take more care, and back his enthusiasm with more references and accuracy!'

'This is an infuriating book. The authors conjure up an amazing sight, a door in a tree in a Surrey wood, and eagerly you turn to the photographs, but there is no picture of the door in the tree. And that is just the beginning, for the photographs do not even follow the sequence of the text; nor do they figure in the index.'
Rev. by Nicholas Bagnall, Sunday Telegraph, 22 June 1986.
'I can recommend Messrs Headley and Meulenkamp to any reader who likes the frisson that follies can give, and never mind the theories. They have certainly cast a nice wide net in exchange for his or her £15. But I must warn him that the admittedly lavish pictures are in no logical order and are not referred to by page either in the text or in the index, nor do their captions direct him to the relevant page in the text. It nearly drove this reader mad.'

'Whilst being delighted by the text and photographs of the above book, as a Chartered Librarian I found the quality of its index appalling. It is at best, inadequate and at worst, inaccurate. Irrelevancies and inconsistencies abound, along with not only incomprehensible omissions, notably "Florence Dugdale" but also baffling inclusions such as "Donkeys", "parties" and "Hardy's mother's cousin, Stephen Burden". Sadly, my letter to Messrs Jonathan Cape concerning this index has yet, after several months, to elicit an acknowledgment. This seems to confirm my belief that all too often an index is regarded as a begrudged and dispensable added extra. As a result, the enlightenment and interest within the pages of a book can be severely obscured and perhaps be totally lost to the reader. Do any other members, librarians and non-librarians alike share my concern? Publishers' attitudes to the vital fact-finding index element of a work?' [yes, as Mrs Tootill has discovered from joining the Society of Indexers!]

'Those who struggle through the thicket of the author's chronologically muddled quotations, over 900 Notes (not really "Notes" but rather "Sources", sometimes unclear, never illuminating or enlarging the text, always requiring reference to a Bibliography), tables (sources unidentified) and the most wretched index I have ever experienced (on a spot check, a dozen names were un-recorded) will be introduced to some interesting and unusual sources . . .'

'This is a Festschrift for H. P. Grice . . . who deserves a less slack job of editing . . . The index is only of names, not topics; it contains rubbish, including the names of irrelevant royalty and of Grandy's dog; "Rene" and "Esheté" have no accent, but "Hector" has one and "Amélée" gets two; "Castañeda" is misspelled (it is misspelled differently on p. 335); the "Grice" entry is absurd—an unstructured list of seventy-seven page references.' [and it was his Festschrift . . .]

'The index includes seven references to "Koheleth" under non-biblical texts and two from Ecclesiastes under Old Testament—yet these are the Hebrew and Latin names for the same book! Tobit, Wisdom, I Maccabees and Ecclesiasticus (books of the Apocrypha) all appear in the index under New Testament! (Did she leave someone else to compile her index?) A pity, because so much else is so good.'

'The book makes a useful complement to Arthur Marder's matchless and majestic more general study of the North Sea clash in "From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow". It is a pity that Mr Campbell has made no acknowledgement to the one source upon which he must have relied more than on any other. Also Marder's book required, and has, a wonderful index. This index needs an even more detailed index but, alas, has such a sketchy one—just numerals—that some of the value of Mr Campbell's painstaking work is lost.'


'The bibliographical method in the index is frustrating and I hope that this book is not setting a trend.'


'Another weakness which may limit the book's value as a work of reference is the index. It suffers from many omissions, particularly of the names of contemporaries of the Coles—some very important.'


'The most disappointing section of the book contains a two page summary of GKS, a one page bibliography, and a two page index with 1 to 3 pages referenced for a limited number of topics. In these days of word processors it is sad that a teacher in the application of computers does not appear to enlist the computer to prepare a good index, particularly when the book is designed for students.'


'A further criticism is that the index, as is so often the case, is whimsical, inconsistent, and incomplete. This greatly reduces this book's value as a work of reference.'


'A second criticism is that the index, although it attempts to cover broad areas, lacks detail.'


'It is not enough for him to muse "Have I told you about . . ." or to excuse himself with "I am taking things out of order"; if he was glad to submit his films to the editor's cut so the story of his life deserved a blue pencil (plus a decent proofreader and index). Such loose organisation is disheartening coming as it does from the director of one of the most beautifully structured of all films, *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*.' Rev. by Charles Barr, *Listener*, 30 Oct 1986.

'The index to Michael Powell's immense autobiography merits a review to itself, and ought to get one in the pages of

*The Indexer*, since the case for proper competence in this department can never have been more starkly made than it is, by default, here. Up to a point, the chaotic indexing of *A Life in Movies* works to enhance the book's already high entertainment value. Actresses Violet Hopson (from the silent period) and Valerie Hobson are merged into a single impressively long-lived performer named Violet Hobson; the even more disparate figures of cameraman Basil Emmett and commentator E. V. H. Emmett (unforgettable voice of a thousand British newsreels) become the versatile individual Basil Emmett; others undergo change of name or even sex. But it's more than a joke. Even a superficial scrutiny of the page-referencing uncovers a mass of significant errors and oversights. The point is that this is a type of book that particularly needs an effective index . . . nearly 700 pages . . . if I may risk labouring the point, the book's reader does need reliable help in the abundantly worthwhile business of re-exploration and reference.'


'The independent nature of the articles caused the index to become slightly clogged by multiple references—in a book of this nature it would have been very helpful to have had an alphabetical author index.'


'"My only criticism is the inconsistency in the provision of indexes. There are three indexes: arts and humanities; medicine; science and technology. The other main classes have summaries of all the principal subdivisions. Whilst both systems are usable, I feel that it would have been more helpful to have indexes for all the classes.'


'This reviewer, however, would have welcomed an index as thorough as the rest of the book. There are no listings for such important organisations as the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux, the Food Standards Committee or the Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives, although they all appear in the text. Some abbreviations receive cross-referencing; others, such as FSTA, do not. There is no entry under "online searching"; the reader must know to consult "computerized databases", and so on. In a text designed at least in part for quick consultation, the lack of a comprehensive index is to be regretted.'


'"Ironically, the book has a rather poor index and some technical inconsistencies between chapters—for example, on digital data rates. Better than any words I could muster, this sums up the futility of storing large quantities of potentially valuable data without tight editing and efficient means of retrieval.'

Somerset Record Society: *Wesleyans and Bible Christians in South Somerset. Accounts and minutes, 1808-1907*, ed. by

'But the weakest link in the chain is the index, which not only fails to take into account the repagination of the Introduction (occasioned by the insertion of an otherwise useless map on pp. viii–ix), but is an inept and inadequate affair, quite unworthy of any serious contribution to scholarship.' *The reviewer is a life SI member, Wheatley Medal winner, 1976, and former Vice-President of World Methodist Historical Society (British Section)*


'But in addition to such inadequacies, there are positive stumbling blocks set up to try the patience of the most determined enquirer. Footnotes are often unusable because of the innumerable op cit without a bibliography to refer them to. Much worse, finding one's way about the whole undigested mass of miscellaneous material is repeatedly frustrated by the vagaries of the very large but maddeningly unhelpful index.'

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**Indexes omitted**


'The book's next edition might usefully include an index, but such minor points apart, it is satisfying in every way and would widen the horizons of barge aficionados.' *[minor points? in a book the reviewer himself pronounces the standard reference on the subject?]*


'No index is included.'


'There are appendices of specifications data and production numbers, but unfortunately no index.'


'No index is included.'


'Regrettably there is no index.' *[When will they ever learn?]*


'Two aspects of this otherwise admirable narrative displease. First, the historical introduction is marred by numerous errors of fact; secondly, why no index? The omission greatly impairs the book's value for reference purposes.'


'Turning to the bibliographical volume, we may observe, to begin with, that even if the quality of the annotations made the list a worthwhile read in itself (and it does not), the lack of an index would still mean that the user has to slog through the whole thing to find anything he needs.'


'It's easy to follow and explains many useful tricks. But an index would have been helpful.'


'A difficult but worthwhile read for those with some prior exposure to this material, it earns only one black mark: why is there no index?'


'A few colour pictures would have lifted the appearance of the pages and the absence of an index is a definite minus.'


'Far from being a conventional essay in *pietas*, this is a stylish and well-balanced account which affords a valuable insight into a little explored aspect of Scottish architectural history. Unfortunately there is no index.' *[which would have helped other explorers]*


'Unfortunately, two astonishing omissions, one inexcusable, in this excellent, attractive and knowledgeable book undermine its value. Whatever the pressure of time, space and finance, an index should have had priority. Then, the second defect, no maps help us find our way to the place-names mentioned. . . . Such maps might even have compensated to some degree for the lack of an index. The layman, whom one would expect to use this volume more extensively than the professional, will find it useless as a book of reference without these essential tools. Without them the book runs the risk of being put in the "coffee-table" category; its overall contents really demand, and will I hope find, a better fate. In any following edition, an index must be added.'


'I must admit that I have a couple of minor criticisms of this interesting publication. I would have preferred a longer executive summary and conclusions, and an index would have been useful.' *[and surely not unreasonable for the price]*

‘One of her few complaints against the French is that their books rarely contain an index. Nor does this one: only ten blank pages where it should be. Miss Mitford does, after all, have a talent to annoy.’


‘Some will want to keep it in the glove-box of the car to identify buildings and study them on site. In that case I found the lack of an index a real snag as the gazetteer is not consistently in geographical or alphabetical order nor are the buildings in the main text keyed by number to the gazetteer.’


‘The book would have been improved if it had an index, a comprehensive bibliography, and perhaps a chart showing how the different factions relate to each other.’


‘The only substantial criticism to be made of the book reflects on the publisher rather than on the author. There is no index and the titling of the contents page is deplorably uninformativce.’


‘An index for a reference book of this kind is usually a great convenience to those engaged in research, for whom it is obviously partly intended. Its absence is to be regretted in an otherwise valuable record.’


‘Each article finishes with a good list of references, but a book the work lacks an overall subject index which would benefit the interested reader.’


‘Their book will become the standard reference on the subject. The only complaint that grateful students of development will have is that the book, oddly, lacks an index.’


‘No attempt is made to moralise from the stories, and there is no thematic structure or index. As such, teachers are left very much on their own—and busy ones may not find these omissions appealing.’


‘A list of participants was included, but no index (is this a CEC [Commission of the European Communities] house style?)’


‘A surprising omission for an otherwise very comprehensive text is the detailed index which normally accompanies any technical book. Perhaps CEC funds did not permit this.’


‘The binding of the reviewer’s copy broke at first touch and while the absence of indexes may save the publishers money, it greatly reduces the book’s value for the reader.’

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**Obiter dicta**

‘Sir,—The publisher of the paperback reprint of James Lees-Milne’s *The Ears of Creation*, reviewed briefly in your issue of August 15, as well as leaving out the excellent illustrations in the original version, has made life difficult for the reader by reprinting the original index while changing the pagination of the text. The reader of the paperback thus needs to adjust every page number in the index as he uses it. Your reviewer might usefully have noted this point as it could deter some potential purchasers of the book. Does it apply to others in this reprint series of National Trust Classics?’

—letter by David J. Hall in *Times Literary Supplement*, 17 Oct 1986

Our warm thanks to those who contributed to this section: T. Allen (Romford), Ken Bakewell (Liverpool), Judy Batchelor (Hanwell), Geraldine Beare (Knaphill), Hazel Bell (Hatfield), David Bowron (Elton), Philip Bradley (Dundee), Barbara Britton (Cambridge), Virginia Catmur (Hinchley Wood), Margaret Cranmer (Cambridge), John Cullington (St Leonards-on-Sea), Moyra Forrest (Edinburgh), Philip Found (Burton-in-Kendal), Sybil Fox (London), John Gibson (Wichenford), Ray Harrow (Kidderminster), Brian Hunter (London), Cherry Lavell (London), Hilda Pearson (Cambridge), Sheila Seacroft (Hull), Sarah Shafman (Chicago), Annette Surrey (Nayland), Madeleine Swann (Whilton), Olwen Terris (London), Tina Tootill (Calderstones), John Vickers (Bognor Regis), Elizabeth Wallis (Kew), Bella Weinberg (Jamaica, NY), Richard Wright (London).

Contributions of review extracts welcomed by Norman Hillyer (new address: Charters, The Avenue, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 3AJ). Closing dates 30 June and 30 November for the subsequent issue—the earlier, the kindlier.

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