

Old and New Testament. This was Cruden's attempt to cover all possible meanings of the word 'beast' that appear in the Bible, and we can only imagine the surprise of the indexer himself when he saw the result of his meticulous reading presented like this, in a succinct list of headings.

Yes, indexes bring order by helping the reader follow connections which would otherwise remain far from obvious, but discovering connections between seemingly dissimilar phenomena can be daunting. It often calls for an unorthodox (read 'heretical') reading, and there was no shortage of supposed heretics and people 'seldom less than eccentric and sometimes undeniably mad' among the first practitioners of the craft. This last quote is from a background note accompanying yet another early index, and it made me think of a person who, though he never put pen to paper, can by right be celebrated as somebody who practised the kind of close reading that makes a good indexer – unfortunately for him. An Italian miller by the name of Menocchio was an almost exact contemporary of the first British indexer of the Bible, and he too was interested in understanding the Holy Scriptures. Having taught himself to read, the poor man found connections between concepts and ideas in the sacred text that were obvious to him and, he thought, needed to be communicated to the world. Thanks to Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg's *The cheese and the worms* (1976/1992) we know how events developed. When arrested by the Inquisition, Menocchio explained that the world had been created

by God much in the same way as cheese is created, and living creatures populate it just like worms would make their way into cheese. He knew that he was right, because this is what the text said, and had he been asked to compile an index, it would have probably made the potential reader approach the sacred text from this very perspective. In Menocchio's case it never came to an index, though. Too unconventional a reader, he was executed.

Baffling, tragic or comical, these are stories about taxonomies, about how categories and forms of classification can be created, questioned, broadened. Taxonomies make up knowledge, in so far as an understanding of how things can be divided into groups implies an understanding of the nature of these things – the order of things, to speak with Michel Foucault. Every time we create an index, we create a (new) order, on however limited a scale. It is a big responsibility and a privilege, and it is good to know that, even if we get things wrong, we will not be burned at the stake.

Reference

Ginzburg, C. (1976/1992) *The cheese and the worms: the cosmos of a sixteenth-century miller*. English edn, trans. J. and A. C. Tedeschi. Baltimore, Md., Johns Hopkins University Press.

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Fire, fury and index mentions

There can surely be no class of individuals more given to searching an index for mentions of themselves than politicians and their aides, so Philip Bump has done them a real favour by analysing the index of the new best-seller *Fire and fury: inside the Trump White House* for the *Washington Post* (8 January).

Evidently the index assists him by cataloguing every single mention of a named individual within the pages of Michael Wolff's book. This might raise eyebrows from those schooled in cutting down their lists of locators, but it clearly has benefit in this specialized context. (It's reassuring too to learn that subentries do feature.) Bump has added them all up and ranked them (see www.washingtonpost.com/news/politics/wp/2018/01/08 for the full analysis). As he points out,

It's important to note that this ranking isn't actually a ranking of the power within the White House. It's not

really even an approximate ranking of how Wolff views the distribution of weight in the administration. It's probably best understood as an analysis of how *Stephen K. Bannon* conveyed the power structures within the West Wing, given how heavily involved he appears to have been in the development of the book.

Bump proffers as evidence for his thesis the ranking of Trump's children in the index, from Ivanka with 122 page mentions to Barron with one (surely the least publicized presidential child in decades), and Tiffany an enviable zero.

With those 122 mentions Ivanka only rates fifth in the significance order, though: her husband Jared comfortably beats her in third place. (Steve Bannon is the person who comes a long way behind Trump himself in second place.) Should feminists be disheartened by this news, they can be reassured that Hillary Clinton in 14th place gets a lot more coverage than Bill in 41st.

Indexes reviewed

Edited by Christine Shuttleworth

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 readers have sent in. Our reproduction of comments is not a stamp of approval from The Indexer 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.*

Indexes praised

ALA Editions: *The wiki way of learning: creating learning experiences using collaborative web pages*, ed. by M. Notari et al (2016, 183 pp, \$55). Rev. by Sue Gwilliam, *Information Professional* (formerly *CILIP Update*), October 2017.

... there is an extensive index and author biographies.

lulu.com: *British librarianship and information work 2011–2015*, ed. J. H. Bowman (2017, 564 pp, £35). Rev. by Barbara Band, *CILIP Update*, September 2017.

There is an extremely detailed index and the contents pages clearly signpost the reader to relevant chapters.

Nicolle, Dean (self-published): *Taller eucalypts for planting in Australia: their selection, cultivation and management* (221 pp) and *Smaller eucalypts for planting in Australia: their selection, cultivation and management* (2016, 226 pp each, price not known). Rev. by Dick Turner, *Native Plants for New South Wales: journal of the Australian Plants Society*, **52**(3), July 2017.

The index is in easy to read print and a unique feature is the cross reference of each species to the companion book in this series.

Oxford University Press: *Unlocking the church: the lost secrets of Victorian space*, by William Whyte (2017, 272 pp, £18.14). Rev. by Richard Davenport-Hines, *Books of the Year, Times Literary Supplement*, 14 November 2017.

Whyte proves himself the Otto von Simson of Anglicanism as he explains the Victorian interaction of theology and aesthetics, new visual perceptions and expressions of spiritual ideas in stones, church fittings and space, and the design of buildings to arouse emotions. His index contains delightful mischief.

Palgrave Macmillan: *The Palgrave handbook of child mental health*, ed. by Michelle O'Reilly and Jessica Nina Lester (2015, lii + 647 pp, €229.33/US\$239). Rev. by Lise Claiborne, *Discourse Studies*, **19**(5).

This volume is superbly edited, with a good index and glossary.

Sage *Analysing quantitative survey data for business and management students*, by Jeremy Dawson (2017, 161 pp, £21.99). Rev. by Sue Greener, *Management Learning*, 1–3.

In conclusion, this is a really helpful little book. ... Throughout, there are short chapter summaries, boxes with explanations, definitions and examples, clear references to other helpful work and an effective index if you simply wish to reassure yourself about a term you should know, but did not retain.

Thames & Hudson: *Archaeology: the whole story*, ed. by Paul Bahn (2017, 576 pp, £24.95). Rev. by Mike Pitts, *British Archaeology*, 157, November/December 2017.

... it is profusely illustrated, with a long index. ... an attractive work for reference and educational use.

University of Toronto Press: *Donald Creighton: a life in history*, by Donald Wright (2017, 472 pp, \$90). Rev. by Donald B. Smith, *International Journal*, **72**(3).

Well-chosen illustrations and a complete index add greatly to this well-constructed biography.

Wordwell: *That field of glory: the story of Clontarf, from battleground to garden suburb*, by Colm Lennon (2014, 304 pp, €40). Rev. by Ruth McManus, *Irish Economic and Social History*, **44**(1), 2017.

As expected in a high-quality academic volume of this type, a comprehensive bibliography and index are also provided. Overall, this splendid volume is a must-have, not just for those with a local interest, which presents an impressive amount of research in an immensely readable and engaging work.

Indexes censured

Anthem Press: *The Anthem companion to Hannah Arendt*, ed. by Peter Baehr and Philip Walsh (2017, viii + 284 pp, \$115). Rev. by Christopher Adair-Toteff, *Theological Studies*, **78**(3).

The least successful chapters are the one on 'power' by Guido Paretto and the one on the 'life of the mind' by Liah Greenfield. Paretto ignores Max Weber's thinking on power politics while Greenfield misinterprets Weber's sociology (129, 138–139, 143, 146). Weber can be regarded as the political antithesis of Arendt and Weber is considered *the* sociologist of the twentieth century, so these are not minor problems (Weber is not listed in the book's index despite being cited on more than 30 pages).

Cambridge University Press: *In search of the true universe: the tools, shaping, and cost of cosmological thought*, by Martin Harwit (2013, xvii + 393 pp, £35). Rev. by Marc Rothenberg, *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, **48**(3).

The book is also flawed by an inadequate index and the lack of any bibliography. Given the extent of Harwit's research and his hope to reach 'young researchers' (p. xv), I believe that a bibliographic essay would have been invaluable. That a scholarly book appears without proper indexes and bibliographies is a shame. Please, Cambridge, never again.

Everyman: *Selected letters*, by Horace Walpole, ed. by Stephen Clarke (2017, 638 pp, £16.99). Rev. by Margaret Drabble, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 September 2017.

The forty-eight large volumes of the Yale edition of Horace Walpole's correspondence march along three open shelves in the Rare Books and Music Room of the British Library. They occupy a lot of space. Their indexes and footnotes are formidable. This monumental undertaking by W. S. Lewis, the great, wealthy and obsessed scholar and collector, was launched in 1937 and brought to completion after his death in 1979. ... A clear call, here, for a one-volume selection, to appeal to that general reader, and Everyman have obliged, with a 2017 reprint of their 1926 edition, originally edited by William Hadley and now re-edited by Stephen Clarke. And there are many attractive features to this offering. Clarke has added new critical and biographical material, and prevailed on the generosity of Yale to include updated and slightly expanded footnotes. ...

There is much to enjoy in this 600-page Everyman, but there is also some room for complaint. ... There is an index, but it is irritatingly defective and incomplete: Thomas Walpole (a cousin) certainly appears more than on the one page with which he is

credited, as does Van Dyck (or, as Walpole sometimes has it, Vandyke).

Head of Zeus: *Glasgow: a history of the city*, by Michael Fry (2017, 448 pp, £25). Rev. by Alan Taylor, *Literary Review*, October 2017.

Finally, the index is not worth the paper it's printed on.

Routledge: *The Neolithic of Britain & Ireland*, by Vicki Cummings (2017, 309 pp. £29.99). Rev. by Mike Pitts, *British Archaeology*, 157, November/December 2017.

... a long bibliography finishes off a good student text that should encourage wider inquiry. All it lacks is a more comprehensive index.

Sweet & Maxwell: *Carver on charterparties*, ed. by Howard Bennett (2017, 1300 pp, £295). Rev. by F. D. Rose, *Lloyds Maritime and Commercial Law Quarterly*, 4, 2017.

Fortunately, the reader will find most of what he expects to find in the new book, although possibly needing some imagination in navigating the index.

World Scientific Publishing: *Dear Martin, Dear Marcello: Gardner and Truzzi on skepticism*, ed. by Dana Richards (2017, 458 pp, \$88/\$48). Rev. by James Randi, *Skeptical Inquirer: The Magazine for Science and Reason*, November-December 2017.

I note that there are occasional spelling errors in this book, which may well be due to [Martin] Gardner's very rapid typing style, and his individual input to this book far exceeds that of the others. I was surprised, for example, to see that an astronomer named Clyder Tombaugh had contributed (it should be 'Clyde'). The index to the book is eight pages of only where the names first appear (and 'Clyder' persists) though as expected, persons such as Shipi Strang and Uri Geller are very generously represented....

Rev. by Ray Ward, *Skeptical Inquirer* (as above).

The editing of this book is decidedly poor, with many oddities of punctuation, wording, and spelling, and it is not clear whether they are in the originals (in which case this should be indicated) or are transcription errors; the index is almost useless: there are only two references to Gauquelin (one misspelt 'Gauguelin'), who is actually mentioned in hundreds of letters, two each to Klass, Carl Sagan, and Targ, and three each to Velikovsky, Geller, Puthoff, and Kurtz, all of whom are also in fact mentioned many times.

The book is a treasure-trove of apposite comments on many well-known people and claimed phenomena, and it is a pity that they will so often be untraceable because of the poor indexing. ... This is an indubitably valuable book, but its value could have been greatly enhanced by better editing and indexing.

Indexes omitted

Böhlau Verlag: *Grundzüge der Agrargeschichte* (vols 1–3), by Rolf Kießling et al (2016, 329, 256 and 248 pp, £24.73, £24.57 and £25.23). Rev. by Frank Uekötter, *Agricultural History*, 91(3), summer 2017.

... the volumes occupy a somewhat unspecified place between agricultural and rural history, with individual volumes making different choices about topics and the degree of attention that they receive. Unfortunately, the books do not have a subject index that would

provide easy access to this abundance of issues.

Casemate Publishers: *Recce: small team missions behind enemy lines*, ed. by Koos Stadler (2015, 352 pp, £16.88). Rev. by André Wessels, *Insight on Africa*, 9(2), 2017.

The fact that the book contains 12 excellent maps, as well as 53 photographs (mostly in colour) and six sketches, is of great assistance to the reader. There are 16 endnotes, but unfortunately no index.

Clontarf Books: *From village to suburb: the building of Clontarf since 1760*, by Claire Gogarty (2013, 222 pp, €30). Rev. by Ruth McManus, *Irish Economic and Social History*, 44(1).

While it is unlikely that this book will be read from cover to cover, it provides a trove of valuable information on the development of suburban Clontarf. In this regard, the absence of an index is an unfortunate omission, while the way in which the references are numbered by section within chapters, resulting in no less than eighty notes of the same number, is rather confusing. Despite these minor quibbles, this is an indispensable addition to the local history of Clontarf and a testament to the high quality of local history research currently being undertaken in Ireland.

Fourth Estate: *Ma'am darling: 99 glimpses of Princess Margaret*, by Craig Brown (2017, 423 pp, £16.99). Rev. by Rachel Cooke, *The Guardian*, 16 September 2017.

Brown has done something amazing with *Ma'am Darling*: in my wilder moments, I wonder if he hasn't reinvented the biographical form. Subtitled *99 Glimpses of Princess Margaret*, it is described by his publisher (which, infuriatingly, hasn't given him an index) as 'kaleidoscopic'.

Rev. by Steven Poole, *The Spectator*, 14 October 2017.

And so, having noticed her ubiquity in the indices of other books, the satirist has written a hugely entertaining sort-of-biography ... it has no index, which is rather a sorry sign of the times.

[Tom Evans, *London*, in a letter to *The Spectator* (21 October 2017) comments:]

In his review of Craig Brown's new biography of Princess Margaret (14 October), Steven Poole rightly laments the lack of an index. Someone once argued that publishing a non-fiction book without an index should be against the law, and I entirely agree. I would go still further, and suggest that many works of fiction would also benefit.

Rev. by Nicola Shulman, *Times Literary Supplement*, 3 November 2017.

In a book full of good jokes and sprung with comedic traps for its own dramatis personae, one of the funniest is that it hasn't got an index. Thirty years as a satirist of British public life and almost as many as the senior book critic for the *Mail on Sunday* have taught its author Craig Brown that it is the fate of biographies of late twentieth-century figures to be used as a fund for anecdote or, in the case of a dwindling but enthusiastic subset of readers, stories about themselves. To turn to the end of what appears to be a biography of Princess Margaret and to find, instead of the reassuring appendage, that there is *nothing there*, may therefore be to experience a momentary spasm of outrage and bereavement. One cannot help feeling that Brown has done it on purpose, and not only to frustrate old socialites, but because he wants the book read.

[See also *By the way...* on page 35.]

ibidem Press: *The instrumentalisation of mass media in electoral authoritarian regimes: evidence from Russia's presidential election campaigns of 2000 and 2008 (Soviet and post-Soviet politics and society)*, by Nozima Akhrarkhodjaeva (2017, 280 pp, £38). Rev. by Elena Fell, *European Journal of Communication*, 2017, 32(4).

The book is written in a clear and accessible language and is easy to use despite typos and the absence of an index.

Michael Joseph: *Mythos*, by Stephen Fry (2017, 432 pp, £20). Rev. by Edith Hall, *The Guardian*, 22 November 2017.

But his subtitle 'The Greek Myths Retold' is misleading; it implies certain comprehensiveness. In fact he has selected a rather small group of stories. ... Disappointment awaits readers expecting the myth cycles centring on Troy and Odysseus, Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, Jason, Medea and the Argonauts, Heracles' labours, Theseus and the Minotaur, Perseus and Andromeda or the Theban royal house of Oedipus and Antigone. Fry's collection is the equivalent of a book advertising itself as retelling 'the stories from Shakespeare' that leaves out Hamlet, Othello, Lear, Julius Caesar, Romeo, Juliet and Henry V. Since there is no contents page, nor even an index, the eccentricity of his choice of myths would not be immediately apparent to a shopper browsing in a bookstore.

Rev. by Harry Mount, *Catholic Herald*, 24 November 2017.

My only criticism is the lack of an index. You can read this book straight through as a jolly narrative. But, with an index, it would also work brilliantly as a light, entertaining dictionary of the myths.

Palatino Press: *The Voynich Manuscript: A facsimile of the complete work* (2015, 210 pp, £27.20). Rev. by Nicholas Gibbs, *Times Literary Supplement*, 8 September 2017.

For medievalists or anyone with more than a passing interest, the most unusual element of the Voynich manuscript – Beinecke Ms. 408, known to many as 'the most mysterious manuscript in the world' – is its handwritten text ... the herbarium of the Voynich manuscript must therefore be a series of ('simple') recipe ingredients with the necessary measures. One other noticeable difference from the *Herbarium Apuleius Platonius* is that not a single plant name or malady is to be found in the Voynich manuscript. This was problematic until I realized that not only had the folios of the manuscript been cropped (the images of flowers and roots have been severed and the tops of folios hacked) but, more importantly, the indexes that should have been there were now absent. Indexes are present in many other similar books: a system of cross-reference for illness, complaints, names of plants and page numbers. For the sake of brevity, the name of both plant and malaise were superfluous in the text so long as they could be found in the indexes matched with a page number. Recipes require an index to function in a reference book. The same recipe format is replicated throughout the manuscript: recipes for bathing solutions, tonics, tinctures, ointments, unguents, purgatives and fragrant fumigations – and not a name in sight. Not only is the manuscript incomplete, but its folios are in the wrong order – and all for the want of an index.

Picador/Pan Macmillan: *Wish lanterns: young lives in new China*, by Alec Ash (2016). Rev. by Michael Sheringham, *Asian Affairs* (2017).

This is not an academic book, but it would have been helpful to have included an index with names, places and topics, such as

education, housing, weddings, festivals, customs, political issues and historical events.

Routledge: *The botanic garden*, by Erasmus Darwin, ed. by Adam Komisaruk and Allison Dushane (2017, 652 pp, £215). Rev. by Christy Edwall, *Times Literary Supplement*, 6 October 2017.

There is no index. In a work where one might want to look up Darwin's references to the balloonist Joseph-Michel Montgolfier, or to the deadly Upas tree, or to Lot's wife, an index would have been of great utility, though perhaps Herculean ambition. It is likewise a shame to omit the 'Catalogue of the Poetic Exhibition', the 'Contents of the Notes', and the 'Index of the Names of the Plants' Darwin appended to *Loves of the Plants*. For a poem so invested in paratextual apparatus, the omission of any paratexts – however seemingly frivolous – feels like an amputation. Unfortunately, there are also several typographical errors, several of which are comic – 'By each cold numph her marble lover lies' (for nymph) – and several of which can be put down to misreading the long-s, like 'For thee descends the funny shower' (for sunny).

[And the omission of an index, in addition to the comic typos, is disgraceful in a book costing £215.]

Seagull Books: *Phantom Africa*, by Michel Leiris, tr. by Brent Hayes Edwards (2017, 722 pp, £42.50). Rev. by Duncan Fallowell, *The Spectator*, 19 September 2017.

There is no index, and no glossary of the countless esoteric words. But the work is unique and unforgettable, and the translation a marvel of quiet resolve. [All the more reason why it needs a good index.]

Sceptre: *Outskirts: living life on the edge of the green belt*, by John Grindrod (2017, 368 pp, £16.99). Rev. by Gillian Tindall, *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 & 25 August 2017.

... this book manages to be a coherent, deeply researched study of the whole green belt. It lacks only an index. Why this unfortunate omission?

University of Chicago Press: *Assassin of youth: a kaleidoscopic history of Harry J. Anslinger's war on drugs*, by A. Chasin (2016, 346 pp, \$35). Rev. by Tom Ellis, *International Criminal Justice Review*, first published online 4 October 2017.

The chapters are not always sequential, but the value of the approach could have been maximized by use of a detailed index from where the reader could fashion their own kaleidoscopic, or linear, journeys.

Weidenfeld & Nicolson: *Memoirs and reflections*, by Evgeny Kissin, tr. by Arnold McMillin (2017, 190 pp, £20). Rev. by Susan Tomes, *Times Literary Supplement*, 7 July 2017.

Long-standing fans will probably feel that they have read much of this material elsewhere. It does not help that some of the anecdotes feel stilted in translation, or that the book seems hastily put together: there are some inexcusable typos (a photo of the American pianist Van Cliburn is captioned 'Vain Kliburn'; the conductor Zubin Mehta is 'Metha') and some non-explanatory footnotes ('The key of the dominant is opposite to the key of the tonic'). There is a select discography, but no index.

Warm thanks to the contributors to this section:

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Contributions of review extracts welcomed by the editor of this section, Christine Shuttleworth (please see inside front cover for further details).

By the way ...

[Note: The 'Obiter dicta' section of Indexes reviewed has been replaced by a new feature, 'By the way...'. This has been created to accommodate the increasing number of items on indexes and indexing found in the media which don't fall comfortably within the scope of the Indexes reviewed categories.]

Faber (US: Farrar, Straus and Giroux): *New collected poems*, by Marianne Moore, ed. by Heather Cass White (2016, 480 pp, £30/\$30).

Farrar, Straus and Giroux: *Observations*, by Marianne Moore, ed. by Linda Leavell (2017, 144 pp, \$16). Rev. by Edward Allen, *Times Literary Supplement*, 15 September 2017.

Among the many good things to strike [William Carlos] Williams about this first authorized book was a certain resistance to 'connectives', the corollary of which might lead one to suspect that reading Moore is a bit like braving a series of 'exciting mazes'. That occasional feeling of being played by Moore, of looking for solutions or escape routes where there are none, pertains especially to the index of *Observations*, which White suggestively embeds in her edition as though it were merely different in degree, and not in kind, from the poems that surround it. In purporting to pull a conglomeration of figures, titles, attributes and subjects into alphabetical order, this charming catalogue is, to White's mind, an 'impish' example of the ways Moore sometimes made room to revel in 'the wild heterogeneity of her poetic materials'.

That seems spot on, but it is difficult not to feel that the index may also be the key to understanding what Moore's first readers found so refreshing about her poetics. For as well as commending her lack of connectives, Williams noticed in *Observations* 'a very welcome and no little surprising absence of moral tone'. It is an absence that shows up throughout the collection, to be sure, but perhaps nowhere more strongly than in its index. Glance down its jagged columns and you'll spot juxtapositions that must seem as merciless as they do mirthsome – 'leopard brocade' and 'liberty', 'snobbishness' and 'snowshoes', 'volcano' and 'volition'. It's all the stuff of linguistic accident, but how nice it would be to think that Moore constructed her index precisely because she hoped to stun and shock, and so to warn anyone who turned to her poetry for uncomplicated moral guidance that he or she would be profoundly disappointed.

Mohr Siebeck: *Werkstätten des Wissens zwischen Renaissance und Aufklärung*, by Helmut Zedelmaier (2015, vi + 167 pp, € 44). Rev. by Florian Ehrensperger, *Cataloging and Classification*

Quarterly, 24 October 2017.

The chapter on the back-of-the-book index, with 27 pages, the longest chapter in the book, provides a short history of the book index. Zedelmaier spends considerable time discussing early modern encyclopedias and the way indexes helped to retrieve information from those. He starts the chapter by mentioning contemporary search engines and that search engines are index-based. His claim is that searching for information in early modern Europe was not different from searching for information in our days because of the importance of an index for both approaches. While I appreciate the purpose of this discussion, namely to remind us that we are less innovative than we think and that more often than not we use techniques and technologies that date far back, I cannot agree with this particular argument. The index created and utilized by a search engine has not much in common with the medieval or early modern index, or any contemporary back-of-the-book index for that matter. The difference between a search engines index and the indexes Zedelmaier discusses is the difference between automated and intellectual indexing. What differentiates the book index from a search engines index is *subject analysis*, an intellectual task that creates a subject index in contrast to a mere list, created mechanically, of words found in a text. This is a common misunderstanding also repeatedly made by computer scientists.

Sweet & Maxwell: *Scrutton on charterparties and bills of lading* (23rd edn), ed. by Sir Bernard Eder et al. (2015, 768 pp, £325.80). Rev. by F. D. Rose, *Lloyds Maritime and Commercial Law Quality*, 4, 2017.

Of course, carriage of goods by sea, and its literature, are not immune from practical changes, the most dramatic of which, in the 23rd edition, has been the decision (after considering and then refraining from integrating the discussion with that of the common law) to move the chapter on the Hague(-Visby) Rules to 'a more logical position' in the central part of the book. This has not necessarily been a great improvement. Curiously, it is easily overlooked in flipping through the contents, and it needs a trifle more effort to locate it in its new place than where it has previously been known to be. Nor was it necessary. For the great thing about Scrutton is that, provided the index is up to scratch (and there has been remarkable variation in recent editions), so long as you can find your way in, the law is generally there.

Two Hoots: *I'm just no good at rhyming: and other nonsense for mischievous kids and immature grown-ups*, by Chris Harris, ill. by Lane Smith (2017, 192 pp, £14.99.) From publisher's publicity material.

Chris Harris, who is a writer and executive producer for the US hit sit-com, *How I Met Your Mother*, and Lane Smith, who won the Kate Greenaway Medal earlier this year with *There Is a Tribe of Kids*, have clearly had a lot of fun putting this collection together. There's an interplay between the poems and the illustrations which is unique, from the little paragraph in the front of the book about the page numbers, the indices (especially the index of poems that were NOT included in the book), to the dedications – and the poems themselves, of course.

Rent tables

William Hyde summoned his sister to his office, the room where he transacted the business of his estate He was seated behind the great table, which was circular and sectioned with drawers, each bearing a letter of the alphabet. The table could turn on its axis

toward the landlord and each drawer had the contracts and rent books of the tenant farmers, filed under the initial letter of their name. Lizzie remarked idly that the drawer marked Z had never been used, and wondered that no one thought to make a table which was missing the X and the Z, since these must be uncommon initial letters in English.

Philippa Gregory, *The virgin's lover*, HarperCollins, 2005

[This novel is set in 1560. The following quotation is from another historical novel by the same author. Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, is writing in 1536:]

Prior Richard comes to me in my records room at the manor. I am seated at a great round table, with each drawer labelled with a letter. Every tenant's deeds are in a drawer labelled with the right letter, and the table can spin from A to Z so that I can draw out, in a moment, the document that I need.

The king's curse, Simon & Schuster UK, 2014

Pop-up princess

Throughout her adult life, [Princess Margaret] leaned towards the artistic, the camp and the modish, even going so far as to marry [Antony] Armstrong-Jones, a man at the centre of that particular Venn diagram. This means that she shows up without warning, popping her head around the door of every other memoir, biography and diary written in the second half of the 20th century. It is almost as though everyone above a certain level of fame met her, at one time or another.

She is there in the index of the Andy Warhol diaries, between Charles Manson and Imelda Marcos, and in the Kenneth Williams diaries, between Margate and Miriam Margolyes [*some alphabetization glitches here, surely*]. One moment, she is attending a dinner party with George Melly, Edna O'Brien, Shirley Maclaine and a couple of Rolling Stones; the next, she is being feted in Hollywood, in pride of place on a table with Michael Caine, Steve McQueen, Neil Diamond, Gene Hackman, Jack Nicholson, Barbra Streisand, Clint Eastwood and Joni Mitchell.

Craig Brown, 'Tennessee Williams makes me ill', *The Guardian*, 23 September 2017

'Perhaps her royal highness found alphabetical order to be frightfully dreary and insufficiently bohemian.'

Paul Gelling, letters, *The Guardian*, 14 October 2017

[As noted in 'Indexes reviewed' in this issue (p. 32), Craig Brown's own new book on Princess Margaret, Ma'am darling, published by Fourth Estate, has no index. What a pity!]

Index of tale-types

And just looking at this tale ['Old John and Young John'] and its surroundings we can see the depth of scholarship that [Katharine M.] Briggs brought to her massive work [*Folktales of Britain*]. The notes tell us where she found it, and that it's a tale of Type 1510, which we can look up in the Index of Tale-Types in the first volume (did we know there were that many tale-types? I didn't) and that it contains two motifs, which are given formidable-looking numbers. The numbers refer to the entries in a truly fascinating work called *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature: a Classification of Narrative Elements in Folktales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Mediaeval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jest-Books and Local Legends*. This is the expansion and development, by the American Stith Thompson in 1955–8, of a list first drawn up by the Finnish folklorist Antti Aarne in 1910.

A massive work in six dense volumes, it contains every imaginable motif or tale-element, all ranked in order with the most scrupulous care and attention. It's now available in its entirety online. (If *Folk Tales of Britain* is like Ali Baba's cave filled with treasures, the Aarne-Thompson *Index* is rather like the same cave after the robbers had found poor Cassim there and hung his body up in several pieces).

Will we need to look at all this apparatus of notes every time we read a story? Of course not. Most of us will skip over the notes without a second glance. But what excellent book-making, to put the notes right there at the end of the story and not tucked away out of sight hundreds of pages away at the back of the book! Then, if we want them, there they are at once.

Philip Pullman, *Daemon voices: essays on storytelling* (David Fickling Books, 2016)

Love of the index

It was the legendary Scottish judge and writer Henry Cockburn who declared that 'the author of a book without an index should be shot' (Letters, 21 October). There should be severe punishment, too, for those who give a long list of page numbers; a breakdown of entries is essential so that arresting comments can be located readily. One novel with an index is Tolstoy's *Resurrection* in an American translation. Evelyn Waugh loved it: 'the first entry is "Adultery"; the last "Why do people punish?"' he told *Times* readers on 16 October 1961 in a missive included in the recently published *Times Great Letters*.

Alistair Lexden, House of Lords, SW1, letter in *The Spectator*, 28 October 2017.

Signal remarks

Like Suzanne Hinton I've always enjoyed providing my own indices [*sic*], from time to time inserting the odd joke – but never quite feeling I could emulate John Howell, who placed inside the title page of his *Proedria Basilike* (1664) the following:

'The reason why there is no table or Index added hereunto, is, that every Page in this Work is so full of Signal Remarks, that were they couched in an Index, it would make a volume as big as the Book, and so make the Postern Gate to bear no proportion with the Building.'

Derek Parker, letter, *The Author*, Autumn 2017

Warm thanks for contributions to:

Hazel Bell, Hatfield
Florian Ehrensperger, Vancouver, BC
Kim Harris, Truro
Maureen MacGlashan, Largs

Contributions of review extracts welcomed by the editor of this section, Christine Shuttleworth (please see inside front cover for further details).