

The Wealth of Nations

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Fred R. Glahe (ed.) *Adam Smith's An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations: A Concordance*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1993, pp. vii + 599, ISBN 0-8476-7797-4, \$US95.

This work indexes virtually every word that appears in the *Wealth of Nations* from "a-day" to "Zurich." Every date is indexed. The Glasgow edition of the *Wealth of Nations* is 950 pages long. Glahe's Concordance, which is based on the Glasgow edition, is 600 pages long. The index to the Glasgow edition is 62 pages long, which is adequate for most purposes but not for all of the requirements of a Smith specialist.

When I say that "virtually" every word is indexed in Glahe's book I mean that in cases like "a," "an," "and," "but," and "the," only the frequency of occurrence is indicated. Still, the edition indexes words that appear not to be warranted. Let me give some examples (with the number of occurrences in brackets) of trivial words that are indexed: "all" (1832), "any" (1656), "can" (1079), "has" (1105), "his" (1443), "its" (1046), "much" (1010), "no" (1007), "not" (2227), "one" (1041), "other" (1532), "same" (1114), "so" (1253), "upon" (2101), "very" (1172), and "would" (1266). Admittedly, sometimes it is hard to decide what to include and what to leave out: "greater" (1089) is one of the more frequently used words that I would have retained because of its possible connection with price. This edition has erred on the side of inclusiveness.

Given the recent enthusiasm for literary criticism generated by McCloskey's *The Rhetoric of Economics*, greater interest is sure to follow in the analogies of the great economists. Finding out the word usage of the great economists therefore takes on great importance. Glahe's work is invaluable in such research.

A few years ago, I prepared an analysis of Smith's mechanical and biological analogies. Glahe's work would have saved me enormous time in finding a whole range of words, including "counter-balance". The 12 references in the *Wealth of Nations* to counter-balance are listed by Glahe under three headings: "counter-balance," "counter-balanced", and "counterbalance". In sampling Glahe's book I realised for the first time that the *Wealth of Nations* contained these differences in spelling. Printers in the Eighteenth Century did not have computer spell-checkers.

How accurate is Glahe's book? A quick survey of words that I indexed in the *Wealth of Nations* revealed that Glahe's work contains all of the references I noted, as well as some that I missed.

While the price is prohibitive for most HETSA members I strongly recommend that HETSA members ask their library to acquire a copy of Glahe's book. I should also mention that a similar Concordance is available for Keynes's *General Theory*. In an era of economic contraction another HET industry has begun! Another economist has found another niche in the market. In seeking to exploit such an opportunity Glahe has benefited himself and the community of Smith specialists.

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