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OBITUARY.

Is a clearing house of modern thought, knowledge, and achievement, through which the layman can pass his doubts and difficulties, with the certain assurance that no reasonable demand for information that he may present will be

The work has all file comprehensiveness of an ideal library, the quick accessibility as to contents of an ordinary dictionary, and (in the convenient India paper, flexible leather-bound format) the unprecedented quality in a work of reference of being as easily handled as a magazine. Its necessity as a resource is measured by the helplessness of even the most learned man alive in the face of the vast complex of things knowable, and its value in use by the thoroughness with which everything that can possibly interest a civilized people has been traversed and indexed by the experts who wrote it. If every other book in the world were destroyed it is not too much to say that, so far as essentials are concerned, it would be possible to reconstruct the human story from its pages; and as in the event of such an unthinkable catastrophe the Encyclopaedia Britannica (Eleventh Edition) would thus be the one work which civilization could least afford to lose, so in the case of the individual it is the best, in fact the only, remedy for the disabilities imposed by his enforced ignorance of all but the most insignificant fraction of the whole of recorded knowledge.

Of all kinds of loneliness, loneliness in a crowd is the most depressing, and of all kinds of ignorance, the ignorance of the modern man which is the outcome of his necessary intellectual isolation is the most humiliating.

The special torture of Tantalus was not merely that he was condemned to perpetual thirst, but that in the midst of an abundance of water he was unable to drink, and it is the similar misfortune of the man of to-day that between himself and the streams of knowledge apringing up in every direction around him there is interposed a barrier which the very richness and variety of modern intellectual life only serve to render the more intolerable. Every intelligent person has an instinct amounting to a prefound conviction that, while the special training and elaborate mental equipment of the expert are something peculiarly his own, his conception and viewpoint can be shared if only they are intelligently interpreted. What irritates and buffles him is the discovery that if he tries to translate this helief into practice the information he seeks is usually so scattered in source, so diffuse in form and so technical in expression that even the resources of well-furnished bookshelves avail to help him very little. The more valuable the contents of a technical library, the less as a rule has it to offer to anyone outside of the timited circle to whom its volumes are addressed.

It is primarily as an instrument of record and research constructed by the leading specialists themselves for lay use that the new Encyclopaedia Britannica is offered by the press of the University of Cambridge as a complete solution of the problem of the man who is desirous of being of his age as well as

In its pages 1,500 representative experts chosen solely on the ground of pre-eminence in their respective fields have co-operated to break down the intellectual isolation of the general reader by presenting him with an exhaustive account of human achievement to 1910 in which he will find what he seeks and understand what he finds. Vest as is the sum of human knowledge, it is finite, and it has been found possible to exhaust its essential contents within the compans of 27,000 quarko pages of 1,500 words each, and at the same time to preserve an encyclopasdic arrangement by which, with the further aid of an index volume containing 500,000 references, any isolated item of information is instantly accessible. And in this co-operative achievement of modern international scholambip nothing has been abated of the high standard observed by specialists writing for specialists. To the expert the book will prove fruitful of suggestion even in the field he knows so well, besides fulfilling every demand he can make on it in the vastly greater region which lies beyond the limits of his special knowledge. In the effort to produce a work of universal reference suitable for all classes of users, no sacrifice has been permitted of the great tradition for exhausive treatment with which for 140 years the name of the Encyclopaedia Britannica has always been associated. It is the organization and not the spirit of the work itself that has been changed.

As further extending its usefulness as an instrument of popular culture the editors of the 11th Edition consider that the innovation of India paper logically completes on the material side a refining process by which an aggregate of knowledge estimated to be twice as great as that contained in the 9th Edition has been brought within the covers of 28 volumes.

It is not altogether easy to realize that a thin, flexible volume, occupying one inch of shelf room as against almost three, not only contains 25 per cent. more reading matter than the bulky quarto of the Ninth Edition, but also excels it in durability. Indeed, in this respect, the substitution of India for ordinary paper is reminiscent of the change in structural work from stene to steel. While in every way the superiority of the latter material is incontestable, to an old fashioused engineer accustomed to the versein. able, to an old-fashioned engineer accustomed to the massive masonry of years gone by it must always come a little hard to associate the slender lines of a modern bridge with the idea of incremed permanence and added strength.

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The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Edition

To Build

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