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## BOOK REVIEWS (Cont'd.)

(continued from previous page)

art. Walter de la Mare writes the introduction to The Hampdenshire Wonder, and Hugh Kingsmill to Israel Rank. These excellent introductions add substantially to the value of the reprints. well - bound pleasant - looking volumes go nicely into the pocket. The only drawback is that with a long novel like The Wings of a Dove the print has to be small. ---A.M.

#### MAJOR WORK

OXFORD JUNIOR ENCYCLOPAEDIA. Vol. 1. General editors, Laura E. Salt and Geof-frey Boumphrey, Geoffrey Cumberlege, the Oxford University Press. English price, 30/-.

THE task of reviewing an encyclopaedia (or even, as in the present instance, one volume of it), is hedged about with peculiar difficulties. Since encyclopaedias are in the nature of things infrequent phenomena, assessment of their value by comparison with earlier work in the same field may lack precision, and unless the reviewer possesses general knowledge of an encyclopaedic order-a condition in itself phenomenal-an absolute judgment is out of the question. The only course open to the general reader is to furn devil's advocate, to toil assiduously in search of errors and omissions; an occupation which in the face of the self-evident excellences of this new production contrives to be both thankless and

For if the subceeding eleven volumes of this work can maintain the standards of simplicity and succinctness set in the first-and the judicious balance of text and illustration which "Mankind" dis-plays on all but two of its 496 pages (there are in all 407 diagrams and illustrations, and only one opening unillusthe Junior Encyclopaedia will be a major work with which the Oxford Press, no less than the editors, may be well pleased.

Designed primarily as a basic work of reference for school libraries, it differs in form and plan from the orthodox encyclopaedia in that each volume deals with a group of related subjects (the first covers evolution, the ancient world. races and nations, religions, mythology,

and folk-lore) and by reason of this homogeneity of subject-matter is to a certain degree complete in itself, A fairly exhaustive system of footnotes and cross - references. however, integrates the 12 volumes.

With the material organised in this manner, of course, it is impossible to know whether subjects omitted from Volume One are or are not adequately dealt with in one or other of the remaining 11 books. Under "O," for ex-

ample, there is but one entry---Orthodox Eastern Church-and six crossreferences. Two of the latter refer to Odysseus and Osiris, but Odin and Oedipus are not mentioned (though both have a place in mythology, and Odin is in fact dealt with fairly fully under "Norse Myths"). Nor are there

any references to Oddfellows, or Oracles. or Orangemen, or Ostracism. No doubt these subjects are adequately dealt with somewhere. The Oddfellows may have their place among "Clubs and Societies" in Volume Nine ("Recreations and Crafts"), and perhaps, the Orangemen may be there too (they are not numbered among the Irish of Volume One), but a simple cross-reference at least would help the schoolboy who seeks further information on a half-understood term, to say nothing of the large body of general readers who are certain to be attracted by the general comprehensibility and uncommon good sense of the new encyclopaedia.

Omissions, of course, must be made in the selection and organisation of information in anything like manageable form, and the editors, while claiming to be reasonably comprehensive, do not suggest that the work is exhaustive, any more than general encyclopaedias usually are. At the same time, to find British Israelism covered in rather more than a column and a half, and Christian Science spread over a page and a half, when Easter rates only an incidental reference under the heading "Christian Year," suggests a slight degree of disequilibrium at one point. Pacifism, as a head-word or cross-reference, does not appear, nor is there any reference to it as Conscientious Objection or Non-Violence. The Oxford Movement of last century rates a one-line entry by way of reference to the Church of England, and Cardinal Newman (in Volume Five), but the Oxford Group (or Buchmanism) rates no entry at all.

Native races are described and referenced fairly fully, but in their particular rather than their general terminology-Ashantis are listed, but not Afridis; Kurds, but not Kaffirs; Zulus, but not Zouaves. These, however, are minor matters. Of more moment to some readers may be the absence of bibliographical references. As the editors point out in their preface, young people. once their interest is aroused, will often pursue a subject to remarkable lengths

so long as its development is logical and the treatment avoids dullness. No general encyclopaedia can cover all the frontiers of knowledge, but it can at least signpost the roads. Perhaps in a future edition of the Junior Encyclopaedia the editors will consider doing this, and thereby place us even more in their debt.

Binding, paper and typography in the first volume are all of the high quality which one expects from the Oxford

Press, and a special word should be said for the work of the illustrations editor, Helen Mary Petter. The photographs and diagrams admirably complement the text, reproduction of half-tone illustrations is good, and the eight full-page colour plates set the volume off splendidly.

