

I-ISLANI

Seven Reading Lists For Troops On Isolated Duty

THANKS to the Army Library Service, most soldiers in New Zealand camps who really want to read have, or can secure, access to a wide range of books. But all cannot. And in any case, those who have books enjoy talking about the books they would like to have, and arguing about those read by other people.

We have, therefore, asked a small group of bookish people to draw up a list of 20 books suitable for an isolated group of servicemen or servicewomen who will get no other books for six months. Two are Professors of English, two Lecturers, one a Naval Officer, one a Librarian, and one a Sergeant in a training camp. In each case, a few notes have been added by way of explanation. It is not exactly what one of our contributors calls "that Desert-Island-Library game," but it is a game of the same kind. Here are the answers:

of English, Canterbury University College):

YES, Mr. Editor, I know that Desert-Island-Library game. I first met it many years ago, not as a game, but as a form of torment devised by examiners. Nowadays I keep it by me as a very serviceable piece of defence mechanism, to be used while my outward ear is engaged by Dr. X's remarks on Reconstruction After the War, or Professor Y's lecture on Food Values, or the tea-table confidences of Mrs. Z. But so far it has been my own list for myself. That is easy enough; one gets to know one's own limitations and prejudices. And there is always in reserve the consolation that the Desert Island is purely hypothetical.

The task you have imposed is much harder than that .- to make a list for other people, of whose tastes and frontal attitude (high, middle or low) or cultural index-is that what one calls it nowadays?-one knows nothing. Of course it can't be done. But you have left me no room for explanations and excuses. So here goes! I assume that the list I am presenting is for an average adult male group, who have no books at all at the moment.

- 1. The Bible.
- 2. Shakespeare. Shaw (one volume edition of plays, com-plets to date of publication).
- 4. The Oxford Book of English Verse. 5. Fielding: "Tom Jones."

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 6. Jane Austen (one volume edition, complete).
 7. "Pickwick Pepers."
 8. Great Short Stories of the World.
 9. H. G. Wells: A Quartet of Comedies.
 10. Tolstoy: "War and Peace."
 11. The Odyssey (Butcher and Lang).
 12: Boswell's Johnson.
 13. Chesterton (the Everyman Volume).
 14. Trevelyan: "Garibaldi" (3 volumes in one).
 15. John Camther: "Inside Asia."
 16. J. B. S. Haldane: "Science and Everyday.
 Life."
- 14is."
 17. "Mathematics for the Million" (Hogben).
 18.4. jumpler book on Astronomy.
 19. Page e Shilling Cyclopedia.
 20. A book of Crossword Puzzles.

- PROFESSOR F. SINCLAIRE (Chair DR. J. C. BEAGLEHOLE (Lecturer 19. "While Rome Burns" (Alexander Woolfin History, Victoria University College):
 - A— 1. The Bible.
 - 2. Shakespeare
 - 3. Oxford Book of English Verse.
 - Boswell's Johnson.
 - B—.

 5. Shaw's Prefaces or Plays (collected editions),

 6. H. R. Crossman: "Plato To-day."

 7. Laski: "Liberty in the Modern State."

 8. Bertrand Russell: "Sceptical Essays."

 9. Huxley & Haddon: "We Europeans."

 - C— 10. Joyce: "Ulysses." 11. T. S. Eliot; "Collected Poems."

 - Joyce: "Ulysses.
 T. S. Eliot: "Collected Poems."
 T. E. Lawrence: "Seven Pillars of Wisdom."
 "Faber Book of Modern Verse."
 Dos Passos: "U.S.A."
 Wodehouse: "Jeeves" (or other) Omnibus.
 Saroyan: "Lady Here Is My Hat."
 Congreve's "Comedies."

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 18. Michael Fielding: "Parenthood."
 19. Morison and Commager: "Growth of the American Republic."
 20. Tawney: "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism."

DON'T put in group A purely as a concession to convention. If they are India paper editions, they will be found extremely useful in a shortage of cigarette papers. They are also very good reading matter, as most people have found by personal experience who have been driven to look into them through the absence of other printed matter.

Group B is for discussion; group C for relaxation (or inspiration); group D for information. I have included a number of long books on the assumption that some people at least will have time for

DR. HELEN SIMPSON (who chooses especially for Service women):

- 1. "The Return of the Native" (Thomas Hardy).
 2:"Joseph and His Brethren" (H. W. Free-
- man).
 3. "Bredon and Sons" (Neil Bell).
- 4. "Pride and Prejudice" (Jane Austen). 5. "Evenfield" (Rachel Perguson).

- 6. "Wuthering Heights" (Emily Bronte).
 7. "My Brother Jonathan" (Francis Brett "My B Young).
- 8. "The Unforgotten Prisoner" (R. C. Hutch-
- nson). 9. "Three Comrades" (Erich Maria Remarque). 10. "Little Man, What Now?" (Hans Fallada).
- 11. "Under Moscow Skies" (Maurice Hindus).
 12. "The Family" (Nina Fedorova).
- 13. "The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism" (G. B. Shaw). 14. "Tory M.P." (Simon Haxey).
- 15. "A Tramp Abroad" (Mark Twain). 16. "Native Son" (Richard Wright). 17. "Mr. Beamish" (Hugh Richmond).
- 18. "Pilgrims of the Wild" (Grey Owl).
- 20. Oxford Book of English Verse.

I AM asked to explain why I choose "these books and no others." With the first part of the request it is comparatively easy to comply - with the second so difficult that except with regard to one book I refuse to make the attempt. That one book, omitted from my list, is the Bible; my reason is that if it is unsafe to assume that it is already in the servicewoman's baggage it is useless to recommend it. If I had space I might explain why, if I had included it, I should probably have considered it unnecessary to add any other books. I haven't space. I won't.

For the books I have chosen-let me freely admit that the names of many were written down more or less at random and without much thought. And having admitted that. I hasten to add that, upon taking thought, I found no reason to alter the list, tinged as it istinged but I hope not tainted-with personal predilection and prejudice. For what does our postulated servicewoman want? Relaxation? instruction? amusement? delight? She will find all here, often in a single work. The books are not in order of merit; but they are grouped roughly according to a plan which will be obvious to anyone who has read them. Impossible to comment on all: so I end with a warning-the last two are not to be swallowed whole, they are to be kent handy and dipped into at intervals over the six months.

PROFESSOR 1, A. GORDON (Chair of English, Victoria University College):

THIS is an old game and a good onebut not many New Zealanders imagined that the "desert island" would

become a reality. First, then, my conditions. I include only properly bound books, no pocket editions, no Penguins, no digests. This is a boxload to be sent to a group in an isolated post. It is not the contents of the individual's haver-

First, the two conventional "musts," the Bible and Shakespeare. Do we include them? I think yes. But let the Bible be a decently-printed Cambridge edition, and for the Shakespeare I demand not the unreadable complete one-volume edition, but one of the several volumes which contain only a dozen of his most popular plays.

Next, fiction: I choose five great novels, all of them on the long side, Tom Jones and Pickwick Papers, since we are English, The Fortunes of Richard Mahoney, since we are Australasians, and War and Peace with For Whom the Bell Tolls, since we are not in this affair alone. Two great volumes of exploration come next, Scott's Last Expedition and a climbing book, possibly one of the Everest expeditions, but my own preference is for Shipton's Nanda Devi. Poetry will occupy two volumes, The Golden Treasury for those who want to rememher what they once knew, and for the more adventurous Untermever's Contentporary British and American Poetry. A volume of short stories for the odd moments-and who better than Guy de Maupassant? For a "bedside" book a complete Rabelais. We will be arguing often on our own country and its politics, so in goes the latest New Zealand Year Book. We will be talking about the future and a good start is Colin Clark's The Economics of 1960. We will be quietly remembering the land we have left . . . I pick Guthrie-Smith's Tutira as the best remembrancer. We will get tired of purely male company, so a volume of nudes, one of John Everard's for preference. That leaves space in the box for three more. I've been pretty mean with the drama, so we'll put in the onevolume Shaw. Then we'll need a volume of good maps, preferably one with a bias towards the Pacific with plenty of maps of the smaller islands (and, of course ours particularly), that is if such a volume exists. It-should. And finally we will find ourselves with a new interest in the Pacific, so we'll need a book on the peoples and problems of the area. I can't decide which of two volumes (both by New Zealanders) to include, but it'll be

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