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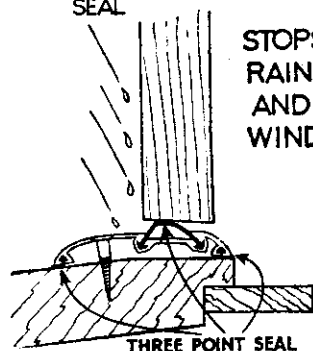
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DON'T PUT UP WITH DRAUGHTY DOORS

BOOKS

(continued from previous page)

naval traditions established by Captains Cook and Scott.

Science was as hard a task-master as exploration. The voyages by sea, and in spite of pack ice, the sledge journeys, the air drops (during which one aircraft crashed), the seismic experiments, the trouble with dogs and mechanised "Weasels," the survey and geological work; each episode is a story in itself. The illustrations in colour and monochrome are as thrilling as the text.

Perhaps the greatest feat achieved by the expedition was to establish a station "Northice" on the ice-sheet of Greenland, where three men lived, virtually buried under the snow for the long winter months. No part of this long and detailed book fails to excite admiration and interest. "If man is an explorer," wrote Commander Simpson, "the greatest quest of all is the search for his Creator. . . In the infinite snows which stretch beneath the midnight sun, in the starlit silence of the polar night, in the ever-crowded warmth within the thronging base hut, he may discover things he never knew about himself, his fellow men and his God." With this acceptance of the values of Arctic life, Commander Simpson reveals the strength that enabled him to plan, to endure and to achieve.

—John Pascoe

CRICKET IN A GLOW

PAVILIONED IN SPLENDOUR, by A. A. Thomson; Museum Press, English price 15/-.

THE first thing to notice about this delightful book is its dazzling title, which places it among the perfectly titled in any category. For cricket can be literally "pavilioned in splendour," and to complete the great line of the hymn, it is constantly "girded with praise." A. A. Thomson has written of cricket in this double spirit. He is a complete enthusiast who brings to his praise of the game exceptional knowledge and a style which, though too exuberant at times, is lively, friendly, witty and warm.

The book is a history of cricket seen through selected games and the records and personalities of players. Here are test series re-lived; notable county games, including upsets; methods of captains; cricket festivals; and many of those "characters" in whom cricket pre-eminently abounds. The salty humour of some is accompanied by the religious feeling of Albert Knight, who, after catching Trumper in the "deep," dropped on his knee for a moment in a prayer of thankfulness. Of a test innings by the same Knight, the author remarks that it "was worth its weight in devotional literature." The tribute to George Hirst, "To One I Loved the Best," is beautiful as well as technically impressive.

New Zealanders should particularly note the stress laid on fielding. The South Africans have shown what really great fielding—individual brilliance merged into team combination—can do for a side. Thomson says that of several ways of looking at cricket, "first, and probably best, it is a game to be played for enjoyment." Might we not cut out "probably"? —A.M.

CRITICAL APPROACHES

PREDILECTIONS, by Marianne Moore; Faber and Faber, English price 18/-. **THE METAPHYSICALS AND MILTON**, by E. M. W. Tillyard; Chatto and Windus, English price 10/6.

THE keynote of Marianne Moore's work in verse or prose is precision. Her book must surely be the only book

ever printed by Faber and Faber to be prefaced by precisely 20 "changes from the printed text." Just as her poems are inspired sampler work, so in these critical appreciations of poets, essayists, a novelist and a ballet dancer, one has the impression of a botanist with a magnifying glass, to whom each and every detail of plant or weed is of equal significance. It never occurs to her to doubt a poem's credentials. To Wallace Stevens, that mandarin of American letters who, by subtlety and urbanity, has conquered a thousand critical strongholds with poems essentially dull and trivial, she pays special homage. Her own genuine humility is a stumbling-block. She herself has a gift for the pungent phrase, as when she writes of Ezra Pound—"To cite passages is to pull one quill from a porcupine." Auden she understands; Eliot she loves for his purity of diction—but what shall we say of this note on E. E. Cummings?—" . . . for poetry is a flowering, and its truth is 'a cry of a whole of a soul,' not dogma; it is a positivism that is joy, that we have in bird songs and should have in ourselves. . . ." Putting off her armour of precision, she invites us to share an emotional mud-bath quite foreign to mature criticism.

Dr Tillyard suggests that Milton " . . . is more like Jonson and Marvell than he is like Donne or Crashaw." He also opines that "Milton is more reflective than Shelley," that he "believed human life on earth was sinful," and that he "was very much a person." Dr Tillyard has written another of those comparative essays in literary criticism, developed from lectures, which leave the mind stale and the imagination dulled. In comparison with Dr Tillyard, Marianne Moore is very much a critic.

—James K. Baxter

AN ISLAND KINGDOM

CRUSOES OF SUNDAY ISLAND, by Elsie K. Morton; G. Bell and Sons, 15/-.

MISS MORTON has written the fascinating story of a family who lived for many years on Sunday (Raoul) Island in the Kermadecs. It is a story of hardship, misfortune, and adventure, as told to the author by the second daughter of the "hero," Thomas Bell, who, with his wife and six children, landed on the island in 1878. Bell had fought in the Maori wars, married in Napier, tried sheep-farming, flax-milling, and hotel-keeping (finally in Apia), before settling on Sunday Island, where for over 30 years he struggled with the romantic notion of making an island kingdom for himself.

The book centres on the two eldest children, from one of whom (surviving in Auckland) Miss Morton derived most of the story. Both girls, and only 11 and nine years old when they landed on the island, they were called on to work as men to help their indomitable father establish a home. They cut raupo and nikau for building huts, dug ground for kumaras, chased, killed and skinned wild goats. Four more children, born on the island, grew up there after the older children had left to settle in New Zealand.

The book will appeal to young people, but older readers may be disappointed that Miss Morton has cast the story in the particular form she has chosen.

—L.J.W.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THE PAST IN PIECES, by P. E.

Cleator; Allen and Unwin, English price 21/-. An appraisement of the three main geographical-chronological divisions of the historic period—Oriental, Mediterranean and Pre-Columbian America. Generously illustrated in half-tone.

N.Z. LISTENER, SEPTEMBER 20, 1957.

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