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Hymn of China by E. A. Montague - The Observer,
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Into Battle

Warfare To-day. Edited by
Admiral Sir Reginald Bacon,
Major-General J. F. C. Fuller,
Air Marshal Sir Patrick Playfair.
(Odhams, 7s. 6d.)

We Fought Them In Gunboats.
By Lieut.-Commander Robert
Hichens. (Michael Joseph,
9s. 6d.)

Find, Fix, And Strike. By
Lieut.-Commander Terence Hors-
ley. (Eyre and Spottiswoode,
9s.)

The Merchant Navy At War.
By Capt. Frank H. Shaw.
(Stanley Paul, 12s. 6d.)

Battle Hymn Of China. By
Agnes Smedley. (Gollancz,
7s. 6d.)

By E. A. MONTAGUE

THE trouble about WARFARE TO-DAY is that it describes the warfare of nearly eighteen months ago, and that in the interval weapons have changed, combined operations and army-air co-operation have been developed out of all recognition, and the improvement of anti-tank defence has changed the tank from an assault weapon into a follow-up weapon. General Fuller continues to lay down the classic blitzkrieg theory; he notes that at El Alamein General Montgomery used his infantry to clear the way for his tanks, but when he wrote he evidently did not know that within a year of El Alamein the 17-pounder anti-tank gun, the Katusha, the Bazooka, the PIAT, the tank-busting plane, and the radio-controlled massed field-gun shoot were to make most big tank attacks sheer suicide unless preceded by infantry. But the book has much that is interesting in it, particularly the description of naval tactics, about which most of us know too little, and the diagrams and details of various weapons, from Sten guns to tanks.

Lieut.-Commander Hichens was killed before he could finish *WE FOUGHT THEM IN GUNBOATS*; it remains as a memorial to the greatest fighter in small ships that this war has produced. He loved the sea and he loved speed (he was an amateur racing motorist before the war), and he makes you feel the rapture (and at times the physical misery) of hunting E-boats at thirty knots through darkness and storm. There is some lovely descriptive writing in this book. *FIND, FIX, AND STRIKE* (the formula which sums up the duties of the Fleet Air Arm) is another series of stories of wild adventure at sea, and over it, told with ardour and freshness, Lieut.-Commander Horsley makes an impassioned and, so far as I am concerned, a completely convincing defence of the Swordfish, the old "string-bag," which has come in for so much abuse from those who have never flown it. Captain Shaw's stories of merchant navy heroism complete a fine trinity of books about the war at sea; Captain Shaw does not fail to stress with indignant vigour the background of neglect and shabby treatment against which the sometimes almost unbelievable valour of our merchant seamen shines the more brightly.

BATTLE HYMN OF CHINA is a book which ought to be read, though one may be tempted a good many times to throw it across the room. Miss Smedley is a remarkable woman; the daughter of a Colorado miner, she rebelled early against that environment, and linked herself with groups of Indian revolutionaries first in New York and then in Berlin. Finally, she came to China in 1928, and attached herself to the Chinese Red Armies, working for them and for the Chinese people with really heroic devotion till constant ill-health finally compelled her to leave China in 1941. An embittered rebel, with the intolerance and narrow outlook of her type and a political judgment which is simple to the point sometimes of ineptitude, she nevertheless has a profound knowledge and love of China, and her plain tale of Chinese struggles and sufferings does give one an understanding of that tremendous national agony which, to me at any rate, no other book has done.