

VI - 73 D - 56. "Agnes Smedley Terms Equality Goal of Chinese" -
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Agnes Smedley Terms Equality Goal of Chinese

Opening the Sixth Book and Author Luncheon Series

Book and Author Luncheon Also Hears Lient. Brown and Stewart Holbrook

China's future, the invasion of Sicily and the need for saving America's forests were the topics discussed yesterday as the sixth series of Book and Author Luncheons, sponsored jointly by the American Booksellers Association and the New York Herald Tribune, opened at the Astor.

The three speakers who addressed an audience of 1,700 guests were Agnes Smedley, author of "Battle Hymn of China"; Stewart Holbrook, author of "Burning an Empire," which was published yesterday, and Lieutenant John Mason Brown, U. S. N. R., whose book "To All Hands" will be published on Nov. 8.

Miss Smedley, who lived in China for twelve years and traveled extensively with Chinese armies and guerrilla units, described the needs and ultimate aims of China, as they were explained to her by soldiers and officials throughout China.

"Out of Asia will emerge a great new civilization, and it may depend on us what it will be," she declared. "They want freedom from all racial and color prejudice. They want freedom from white men, or the ambitions of yellow men. They don't want our yoke fastened on them again."

Soldier's Outline of Aims

Miss Smedley said a Chinese soldier told her: "After the war there are going to be no very rich nor very rich people in China. We are all going to be equal. There will be work for everybody and everybody will get an education free."

To this she added: "If you take that, plus the socialized medicine and industrial co-operatives China is developing, I think you see what she hopes to achieve."

The invasion of Sicily was described by Lieutenant Brown, who was a "battle announcer" on the flagship of the United States Atlantic Fleet Amphibious Force, which participated in the invasion. Lieutenant Brown is a former drama critic of "The New York World-Telegram."

Describing the action of enemy guns, planes and searchlights, Lieutenant Brown asserted that "the invasion of Sicily wasn't a pushover to those who were there." Eleven men were killed on his ship, he said, and he witnessed a direct hit on the destroyer Maddox near by. "Our moment of delivery came," he said, "when a flight of British Spitfires approached, sweeping the sky clear of Messerschmitts."



Herald Tribune—Rice
At the luncheon at the Astor yesterday, left to right, Agnes Smedley, author of "Battle Hymn of China"; Stewart Holbrook, author of "Burning an Empire"; Irita Van Doren, editor of the New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review, and Lieutenant John Mason Brown, U. S. N. R., author of "To All Hands"

Battle Exhilaration Explained

The exhilaration men feel under fire, Lieutenant Brown said, comes from "the simple and reassuring knowledge that we happen to be included within the parentheses of our times."

"My conviction is that, unless we share passionately in this present, we can never have the hope or the right to share in the better future which we hope will follow it," he said.

Lieutenant Brown's function on the ship was to keep the men informed of up-to-the-minute developments at sea, in the air and on shore by a series of news broadcasts over the ship's public-address system.

The importance of the Northwest forests to the war effort and the fight to protect them from fire were discussed by Mr. Holbrook, whose new book is a history of American forest fires. Mr. Holbrook is director of the anti-forest-fire program in the State of Washington.

One Japanese plane could have set all the Western woods afire, Mr. Holbrook said, discussing the three Japanese incendiary bomb-

ings last year. The low altitude of the bombing planes and the quick action of fire fighters accounted for the ineffectiveness of the fires, he reported.

Mrs. Irita Van Doren, editor of the New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review, presided at the luncheon. Guests at the speakers' table included Herschel Brickell, cultural relations officer of the American Embassy in Bogota, Colombia, and representatives of publishing houses.