

BOOK REVIEW

A Formidable Commission. By the WARDROOM OFFICERS H.M.S. *Formidable*. Sealey Service & Co., Ltd., London, 157 pp., illustrated. 12s. 6d. net.

Although this book is dedicated to all who served or sailed in *Formidable's* second commission, it has a wider appeal and is commended to all by Vice-Admiral Sir Philip Vian in his foreword.

This is the true story of a gallant ship and her gallant "band of brothers." Engineer Officers can take particular pride in her record of 122,000 miles and 4,234 deck landings. Here, in vivid manner, are adventures grave and gay, from early days of working up, to operations off Norway, raids on *Tirpitz* and the air war against Japan.

This story is a fine example of literary team-work by the Wardroom Officers who merit high praise for a book which is human, humorous, and gifted with the British virtue of understatement.

The quality of the photographs and the arrangement of the subject-matter sets a standard seldom equalled in post-war books.

There is grim realism in the description of Kamikaze suicide planes which hit the ship, but these and other moments of tense strain are relieved by the humour of signals which passed. In contrast are the bright lights of Sydney and the missions which follow the Japanese collapse.

Formidable's second commission adds lustre to her name in naval history, but she will not be forgotten by the "Aussies" and Indians who, returning home, found in her the friendly faces, comforts and kindness which none had known for three years of Japanese prisons.

This is a book worth reading and worth buying, if for no better reason than that all profits will go to the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children.

D.F.C.