

If the aggressions of Japan continue as they have in the past, it is certain that war will eventually break out in the Orient, and it will probably spread to the western world. If public opinion is properly informed and mobilized, Japanese aggression can be peacefully checked before war becomes inevitable, and Japanese liberalism can be helped into power. But Mr. Sullivan does not attempt to awaken public opinion to the real task ahead of it. It is his idea that "The Great Adventure" is over and the millennium has come. Instead of summoning the Moral Force of the world to a new and more vigorous crusade, he pats it on the back, tells it that the Conference did things "on a vastly larger scale" than the Romans of old (p. 264), and then tucks it away to sleep.

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*A Short History of the British Commonwealth.* By RAMSAY MUIR. Volume I. The Islands and the First Empire (to 1763). New York, The World Book Company, 1922.—xvi, 824 pp.

This is the most recent effort to trace, in comparatively brief compass, the historical growth, from the earliest times to the present day, of the British Isles into a great World Power, including within its far-flung area several associated but self-governing Dominions. In a very appreciative introduction Professor Muzzey states that: "no one till now has reviewed the whole course of English History as a development of a self-governing community within the island, expanding into a community of self-governing states in a federated commonwealth." Doubtless the author has featured this aspect of the subject in his title and at intervals in his presentation of the subject; but the view which he expounds has prevailed for some years. Moreover, while some bits of fresh information are provided, while accepted ideas are not infrequently brought into bolder relief than hitherto by paragraphs of effective phrasing, and while contemporary European events are woven into the narrative with unusual skill, we have, in the main, a retelling of the familiar story—and in a fashion not wholly free from criticism. For example, the apparent omission of any use of the studies by McIlwain and Pollard leaves the reader with a somewhat old-fashioned view of medieval parliaments; indeed, the treatment of the institutions of this period, especially on the legal side, leaves something to be desired, and, to go further into the general field, a few stock statements are accepted that are now believed to rest upon insecure foundations. Professor

Muir has a keen eye for essentials, he has a nice sense of proportion and is decidedly successful in excluding irrelevant details; on the other hand, he has a proneness to a fault—not uncommon among writers brought up on the history of their own country—of introducing incidents which he does not adequately describe or explain, thus leaving the legitimate curiosity of the reader unsatisfied. The style is clear and flowing; but, for the fastidious, is marred at intervals by the repetition of a word or the selection of a variant of the same word within a sentence or two—a possible indication of haste in composition. Among the chapters most to be commended are the two on “Changing Social Conditions” in the fourteenth century, and “The Social Organization of the British Commonwealth” in the middle of the eighteenth century, both of which are exceedingly well balanced and informing. At the ends of chapters fairly well chosen bibliographical lists are given; but they are decidedly too scanty except for the uninitiated; apparently an atlas is in preparation to accompany the text, and a chronological index, or list of dates and events, occupying ten pages in double columns should prove very helpful; unfortunately, however, there is no sign of any genealogical tables. Taking everything into consideration, so far as one can judge from the first volume, this should prove an excellent work for those who wish to learn, without too extensive reading, about the strivings and achievements of the British people.

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*The Influence of the Sea on the Political History of Japan.*

By VICE-ADMIRAL G. A. BALLARD, C.B. New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, 1921.—vii, 311 pp.

Ever since the appearance of Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power in History* various writers have called attention to the importance of naval power in this or that region, or its bearing upon the solution of some international problem. Admiral Ballard in the volume under review tells the interesting story of Japan's phenomenal rise to power through the mastery of the sea in eastern Asia.

During the two hundred years of seclusion which preceded Perry's visit, Japan forbade her subjects to go abroad, allowed no foreigners to land in her territories, and prohibited the building or use by her people of any sea-going junks. The sea was her sufficient defense for that time. But when Perry's great black warships, moving under steam-power, came into Yokohama Bay, Japanese statesmen