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Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD COURT. By Denna Frank Fleming. Doubleday
Doran, New York, N. Y. 1945.

This book bears a somewhat misleading title. As Fleming explains in his Preface, the "story is told here in close relation to the Senate's catastrophic obstruction to the League of Nations Covenant. . . . What the Senate did to the World Court was the aftermath of main event." The theme of the book is the "great obstructive power" of the Senate, and Fleming outlines "four ways to end the veto of our treaties by one-sixteenth of the Congress." The "story" of the Senate's action in the postwar (I) period gives us little new information, but leaves out all account of its failure to consider the Guarantee Pact, proposed by the French, and accepted by President Wilson. Fleming makes some point of the "fact" that "peoples of the world" were greatly distressed when "we walked out on them at a crucial turning point in world history and left them to sink or swim in the sea of international anarchy." But he does not tell us about the low estimate important foreigners placed upon the ability of the League of Nations System to preserve world peace. We Americans are easily prone to overemphasize the efficacy of gadgets, laws, and organizations. Our movies never take us beyond arrival at the altar in their treatment of Holy Matrimony. Fleming appears to believe that if we had joined the League and adhered to the P. C. I. J. statute the peace of the world would have rested secure. He should ponder the Japanese, German and Italian resignations from the League of Nations, and the expulsion of Russia from membership in 1939. The Senate of the United States can scarcely be blamed for these moves. One can more easily endorse Fleming's regret that we did not "join" the League and adhere to the P. C. I. J. statute than to overlap hard facts to reach conclusions as to the villany of the Senate, on the one hand, and to accept the gadget theory as to the maintenance of peace on the other. Let us hope that in the "continuation of the author's studies of the handling of treaties for peace by the United States Senate" he will range more widely for the data connected with the complete picture.

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