

could negotiate a positive agreement with some other nation to abide by the adjudication of an international arbitral court on every question that could not be settled by negotiation, no matter what was involved, a long step forward would be taken. These are bold and courageous words. If two of the greatest nations should thus make it clear that under no circumstances were they going to make war again, the effect of their example on the world must have beneficent consequences. In entering an agreement of this kind there would be risks, and you must be prepared for some sacrifice of national pride. I know that to produce such changes public opinion must reach high ideals—higher than some think possible—but men's minds are working in this direction, and history affords instances of reaching such an ideal point."

Following the debate Mr. Macdonald's motion was lost, and the army and navy appropriation proposed by the Ministry, was adopted by 276 to 56.

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#### Russian Ultimatum to China.

The reported peaceable understanding between Russia and China (p. 205) seems to be melting away. Dispatches of the 13th are to the effect that Russia has sent an ultimatum to China demanding a closer adherence to the provisions of the treaty of 1881, which is the subject matter of the present dispute (p. 181). The ultimatum embodies two points, the reopening of Russian consulates at the points specified in the treaty of 1881, and the establishment of free trade in certain products, including tea, in fulfillment of article 12 of the same treaty. To these has been added the demand that the Russians may place doctors and police in Chinese border towns for the purpose of quarantining the frontier against the plague. Russian troops were reported as within 100 miles of the Chinese frontier, toward which they were pressing as a reinforcement of the ultimatum.

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#### The "Friar Lands" of the Philippines.

In our account last week (p. 226) of the Congressional committee reports on the "friar lands" in the Philippines, based upon newspaper dispatches, the really important minority report did not appear. Seven Republicans and one Democrat signed the majority report, and three Republicans signed a minority report condemning the large disposition of public lands in the islands. The substance of those reports we gave. But there was a third report which the dispatches had overlooked. It was signed by five Democrats—W. A. Jones, Robert N. Page, Finis J. Garrett, M. R. Denver and Harvey Helm. This report, emphasizing the points developed by Jackson H. Balston in his brief, concludes as follows:

In our opinion it is most unfortunate that the bureau of public lands should have inaugurated a new policy in respect to the sale of the friar lands, and

that this new policy should have first been carried into effect in an agreement entered into with a prominent American, who holds the high and most important position of executive secretary. . . . It is difficult to believe that he would have been willing to lease "temporarily for a period not exceeding three years" so large a body of unimproved lands unless he had been given assurances of a very satisfactory nature that the law would be amended so as to permit him to purchase them. As a matter of fact it was so amended in a few weeks after his lease was executed. In conclusion, we wish to emphasize what has hereinbefore been said in respect to the policy which has of late obtained in the Philippine Islands in regard to the sale and other disposition of the vast public domain of those islands, whether these lands be known as public lands or friar lands. They are the property of the people of the Philippines, and should be administered and disposed of solely in their interest and for their benefit. They are thoroughly united in their opposition to the policy of exploitation to which the bureau of public lands seems to be so resolutely committed and which is being pursued with utter disregard of the opinions and wishes of those most interested. That the officials whose duty and responsibility it is to administer the public-land laws have, at least until recently, entertained doubts as to the legality of the policy pursued by them is evident from the fact that they have so frequently sought and obtained legal opinions with which to fortify their position. In our opinion these doubts should have been resolved in the interest of the citizens of the islands rather than in that of the aliens, whose purpose it was to exploit the islands.

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#### Seattle Municipal Election.

Closely following the recall election in Seattle (p. 201) has come the regular election for City Council (p. 207). For the three-year term Oliver T. Erickson (pp. 207, 242) was elected by 36,654, the largest vote ever cast in Seattle for any candidate. Joe Smith, whose name is familiar to our readers, and who was nominated at the primaries, polled 20,048, the highest vote for any defeated candidate, but only 862 less than the lowest candidate elected.

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A charter amendment providing for removal of chiefs of police by the council was carried by 23,337 to 5,394; and one providing for the initiative and referendum was carried by 17,514 to 5,747. A referendum authorizing municipal railway bonds to the amount of \$800,000, which, together with the election of 8 municipal ownership councilmen out of the 9, is regarded as an assurance of municipal ownership of the traction service in Seattle.

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#### Commission Government in Spokane.

The first election under commission government in Spokane (pp. 11, 62), a city of 125,000 popula-