

American flag, but to President Wilson's policy as developed from the very first. General Villa and General Carranza are joint leaders of the rebels, or, as they call themselves, the Constitutionalists, in Mexico. The excuse originally given by President Wilson for not recognising Huerta—and thus, indirectly, for countenancing and encouraging Villa and Carranza—was that Huerta was 'blood-stained.' Truly, this is to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. If Huerta is 'blood-stained,' much more so is the infamous Villa and his associates. It was under Villa's authority—if not by his own hand—that Mr. Benton, a British subject, who visited Villa to protest against the continual looting and destruction practised by the rebels, was done to death. Mr. Benton, who had been a very rich man, is said to have been almost ruined by the depredations of the rebel bandits. It was one of Villa's subordinates who perpetrated the diabolical act of sending a train containing many innocent passengers into a burning tunnel at El Cumbre, as the result of which at least ten Americans were burned to death. According to the American ex-Ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, the rebels are 'professional bandits who live to loot and loot to live and who have no more idea of constitutional government than a Zulu or a Hottentot.' Disquieting reports concerning the attitude of the rebel generals towards priests and nuns have been received in America. At least one community of nuns has been attacked. The New Orleans *Picayune* recently printed an interview with a priest who had fled from Victoria, the capital of Tamaulipas. According to this Carranza's soldiers have been perpetrating insufferable outrages. Archbishop José de la Guzman died of injuries inflicted upon him by the rebels. His aged aunt lies at the point of death from the same cause. Churches have been desecrated; priests beaten and held for ransom; nuns and orphans driven from convents. A convent of American nuns was raided, the inmates driven out, and the building burned. As we write, a late cable appears in the evening papers to the effect that 'the Zapatistas crucified the Bishop of Chalapa when he refused to give the rebels the church's funds. The soldiers nailed him to a cross, and left him to die a lingering death.' In the face of such a record, the President's patient and almost friendly attitude to the rebels is extremely difficult to understand.

(3) In his oft-repeated declaration that hostile action by America will be directed against one man, and not against the Mexican people, President Wilson is the victim of self-deception. A schoolboy could have told the ex-President of Princeton that one nation cannot declare war or carry out acts of hostility against the *de facto* ruler of another nation without having, at the same time, to reckon with that ruler's followers. In this matter the President's attitude is academic and impossible. (4) If it should unhappily come about that war is formally and finally declared against Mexico it is practically certain that all parties will unite to resist the invader. The cables have already made that sufficiently clear. Huerta has a seasoned army of at least 60,000; and if the Federals and Constitutionalists came to terms they could raise a fairly formidable force. Apart from that, the vast area and mountainous character of the country afford illimitable opportunities for guerilla warfare; and the struggle, once entered upon, would be prolonged indefinitely. The one hope lies in the South American mediation; and candor compels the acknowledgment that it is not a very satisfying hope.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

L.J.D.—You have judged the article you send us rather hardly. It is not meant as 'a slur on Catholics,' but chiefly as a determined attack on the present Bible-in-schools propaganda.

A.M.F.—The editor in question has said some unconventional things, but it is morally certain that he never wrote the comments attributed to him in the Melbourne cutting which you forward. As they have not appeared in any New Zealand paper we merely pigeon-hole them for the present.

Notes

French Disgust for Parliament

The Paris correspondent of the *Times* sends proofs of the general contempt which is arising throughout France for the politicians and their Parliament. He says he has been travelling all over that country, and 'everywhere I was struck by the public apathy towards the elections, and by the growing feeling of disgust for Parliament. . . . In the Parliamentary debates, interest has been idly sacrificed upon the altar of personal and party ambitions.' And so on. The murder of the editor of the *Figaro* has now added the sordidness of assassination to the heap of unsavoury garbage which lies in the courtyards of Parliamentary institutions. 'The result will be,' says the *Times*, 'that the French will almost ignore the coming election, and will leave it to the "politicians who will direct the combat in order to divide the spoils."' Judging by the cabled results, this prophecy has been fulfilled.

Mr. Lloyd George's Question and Answer

Mr. Lloyd George, answering Mr. John Galsworthy's recent complaints as to the apathy and inactivity of Parliament in regard to social problems, made a remarkable appeal and furnished an overpowering argument for the settlement of the Irish question. 'There was a great literary man the other day reproaching Parliament with doing nothing, wasting time,' he said. 'Well, there is one element of truth behind a great deal of exaggeration. I say it as one who has been in Parliament for twenty-four years. We have spent too much time on some things, and God knows we have spent too little time on others of greater moment. Why have we done it? A generation has passed away since 1885—a generation that expected deliverance from penury, misery, wretchedness, privation. They wait in vain. Why? The great leaders of the people on both sides—Gladstone, with his magic power; Chamberlain, with his great power and skill such as few men have acquired in this generation—I believe, with a real desire to lift the wretched; Balfour, Morley—great names—why was it that they did not open the door to this wretched throng—the door of hope?'

Mr. Lloyd George's answer is instructive: 'I will tell you why. Heart and brain were concentrated on this wretched Irish controversy. Let us settle it in order to get rid of it. Has another generation to pass away in wretchedness? Not if we can help it. Is England so poor that she cannot afford to feed, to shelter, and to clothe her own sons and daughters? Is Britain so mean that she will not share her wealth to do so? Is Britain so callous and hard-hearted that she is indifferent to the wretchedness of her own household? These are the questions which, above the din and clang of partisan and sectarian fury, I mean to continue to ask until the proud flag of Britain shall no longer be shamed by waving over squalid homes, and hungry children.'

The Hero of Panama

Colonel Goethals, the man who was responsible for the engineering and administrative work in connection with the cutting of the great canal, has already found his panegyrist. In England, he would doubtless have been made a peer of the realm, but that is not the American way. He has been presented, instead, with a Civic Forum medal; and at the presentation a poem, written for the occasion, was read by its author, Mr. Percy Mackaye. That it was worthy of the subject and of the occasion may be gathered from the following stanzas:

A man went down to Panama
Where many a man had died
To slit the sliding mountains
And lift the eternal tide:
A man stood up in Panama,
And the mountains stood aside.