

and violent treatment which has been accorded foreigners during the last three years of revolution in that country, beg to submit to the world and the American people the following brief statement of facts:

"The cold blooded and heartless assassination of William S. Benton, without any cause whatever other than the fact that he went to Juarez to protest against the confiscation of his property, 'Los Remedios' ranch, in northern Mexico, which had been repeatedly looted, is but another crime to be added to the hundreds that have already been committed against all foreigners living in Mexico who have been driven from their homes, their property destroyed.

Cite Outrages on Women.

"In many cases women have been outraged and foreigners murdered in cold blood, and for no other reason than on account of their nationality.

"We believe that the state department at Washington has persistently suppressed facts concerning the true conditions in Mexico and endeavored through inspired newspaper articles and by other means to mislead the American people and form public opinion for political purposes in support of a policy that is ruinous to all foreign interests in Mexico and to the Mexican people themselves.

"In support of this statement we would call attention to a recent article in the New York World which purported to be a semi-official interview coming from the secretary of state's office, and which stated that while a great many Americans had lost their lives in Mexico, not one had been murdered solely on account of his nationality. This statement we know to be absolutely false, and we believe there are reports on file in the state department from our own consuls to the contrary.

Recall Several Assassinations.

"We recall in the last few months such cases as the assassination of Mr. Burton at Santa Rosalia, Mr. Hayes and Mr. Thomas at Madera, and Mr. Brooks in northern Chihuahua, and in every one of these cases they were most brutally murdered for no other reason than that they were American citizens.

"Some months ago the state department officially declared in one of its messages to Mexico that it would hold the Mexican leaders personally responsible for outrages committed against American citizens.

"At the present moment our government is harboring Gen. Ynez Salazar, who has an unbroken record ever since he took the field in Mexico of outrages committed against our citizens; there are many citizens of this city who were cruelly and brutally treated by this man, many of whom have been held for ransom, and at least one, Mr. Fountain, who was shot by his order, and thus far he has been immune from all punishment by our government.

Point to Castillo Case.

"At the present moment Maximiliano Castillo, who for many months has been at the head of an outlaw band in northern Mexico, holds our citizens for ransom and perpetrating all kinds of outrages, whose band recently burned alive between fifty and sixty passengers in the Cumbre tunnel on the Northwestern railroad, is being given asylum and protection by our government.

"We submit these facts as evidence that our government is, through a weak and vacillating policy, encouraging these lawless leaders to commit all kinds of outrages against foreigners, and doing a great injustice to our own people that is resulting in a loss of hundreds of millions of dollars in capital, the murder of many of our citizens, the attacking of American women, and ruin of Mexico itself.

"The career of Francisco Villa, a man who has been an outlaw and murderer for many years, and who is now leading an arbitrary and despotic reign of terror over northern Mexico, is more cruel and barbarous in his methods than any tyrant in the world's history; it is a fact that he has treated with contempt the representatives of all nations and that he does not hesitate to put a man to death for the slightest cause and for incurring his displeasure in any way.

U. S. Action Is Demanded.

"We believe it a disgrace to our government and the American people to tolerate such a man, much less to give him moral support; therefore be it

Resolved, That this message be sent to the president of the United States, the British ambassador at Washington, to our United States senators with the request that it be read into the Congressional Record, and we appeal to them and to all our representatives in both branches of congress to adopt a resolution to compel the state department to transmit to congress its records pertaining to the outrages committed against Americans and foreigners in Mexico and to take such action as will give our people the protection guaranteed them under their constitutional rights and to maintain the honor and prestige of our country in the eyes of the world. We appeal to you to make known the facts to the American people and to see that our citizens who are living in Mexico and have invested their money there in good faith are given the protection that is justly due them."

Ex-Gov. Curry Seeks Information.

Earlier in the day ex-Gov. Curry called on Consul Edwards in Juarez.

"Mr. Consul," he said, "the people of El Paso and the foreign refugees from Mexico are in a feverish state because of the murder of William Benton. They have been unable to learn details of the crime and have asked me to seek information. Any light you can shed on the subject will be appreciated."

"I have telegraphed the secretary of state that Benton's death has been officially reported to me," the consul replied. "Other details I have forwarded to Washington by mail. Gen. Villa said he did not care to talk to the press or public of the case, but gave me the information for Mrs. Benton, the widow, and for the state department. They are at liberty to talk, but I promised the general I would remain silent."

Thinks Villa May Have Lied.

Asked as to his care of the phrase, "officially reported dead," and if he personally thought the official report by Villa might have been deliberately misleading, the consul said that inasmuch as the rebels have been sending Chihuahua prisoners to Juarez, and Juarez prisoners to Chihuahua, he had had a faint hope that Villa might for his own reasons have lied to him.

This morning the consul watched the train that had Villa, his staff, and about twenty others on board, hoping to catch sight of Benton, but he saw no one but Mexicans.

Benton disappeared on Tuesday, and there is no disposition outside the American consulate if it still exists there to doubt the authenticity of Villa's report to the consul.

Villa Says Benton Is Dead.

Mr. Edwards made his first inquiry of Villa yesterday afternoon upon receipt of instructions from Secretary Bryan, who made the request at the instance of the British ambassador at Washington, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice.

Mr. Edwards, "Villa is reported as saying Mr. Benton is dead. You are an official of the American government and I give you this as officially your due. I have made details to other inquirers, as this is not a matter for the public. It is for the information of the widow and of the state department."

What else passed between them Mr. Edwards would not state, and Mrs. Benton was unable to.

The consul telegraphed the bare announcement to Washington last night and the news reached El Paso through an Associated Press bulletin when Secretary Bryan made the information public today.

It is regarded as characteristic of the situation and of the ability of the rebel officials, with their discipline and ability to keep

Rebel Whose Act in Killing a Briton May Bring Intervention in Mexico.



PHOTO BY APICAL PRESS AGENT GEN. PANCHO VILLA

hidden their secret acts, that the news should have reached here from the outside.

Friends of Benton and newspaper men made the most diligent search and inquiries without obtaining a definite clew. That Benton and Villa had quarreled was learned, and there were many versions of the quarrel, but all official utterances were misleading, as they were intended to be. It was thought that Villa, who had known Benton for years, would not dare to kill him, but might be trying solitary confinement as a corrective to Benton's well known disposition to speak his mind frankly without regard to consequences.

Edwards waited until after his last hope flickered away with the departure of the train this morning before informing Mrs. Benton that her husband was dead.

She is a Mexican woman, and while educated, understands the English language imperfectly. The consul spoke in his own tongue and the result was he had some difficulty in making his tragic story clear to the widow.

Wanted to Save Some Cattle.

Benton's cousin said tonight that, aside from intending to protest against Mexican depredations, Benton had intended, in calling on Villa, to ask permission to bring to the United States 400 head of cattle.

It appears that Charles Qualey, a New Yorker, told Benton what would be the probable procedure in his call on Villa.

"Villa probably will grant your request, but he'll give you a lecture, and you must not resent the lecture. If you do you may get into trouble," Qualey said.

"If he lectures me I'll lecture back," Benton replied. "I have never made a political move in Mexico and if he accuses me of it I have some accusations of my own to make."

Benton made the call and his friends never saw him alive afterward. They say Benton was unarmed.

The many persons who knew him well in Chihuahua and along the border, including his cousin and widow, assert that he never owned a revolver and did not have one upon him when he went to Juarez. However, Villa on Wednesday night, talking to a reporter, asserted that he had Benton's six shooter.

"What do you think of a man who would come here and threaten me?" the rebel general exclaimed. A Mexican bystander replied:

"He ought to be shot."

This was twenty-four hours after the execution or murder had taken place.

Villa Kept Details Secret.

Villa didn't tell the American consul that Benton was court-martialed, but official Juarez was busy today with assertions to that effect. Names of those who sat as a court were given out for publication, and it was stated that the Jefeatura that Benton's last request was that his property be turned over to his widow.

Edwards last night asked Villa for the body to be brought to this side of the river, but the request was curtly denied.

"Then, as a favor to me and to the widow, will you have the grave marked?" asked the consul.

"This Villa promised. So far as Americans know, however, the grave is unmarked even by the little cross of mesquite wood which almost any passing Mexican will place on a grave which he finds without this symbol of salvation.

Story of Court Martial.

The court martial story is that Benton was tried on a charge of conspiracy against the rebel government and with "provoking and insulting Gen. Villa"; that Maj. Rodriguez presided, Adolfo Aguirre Venardes acted as legal adviser to the court, and Maj. Manuel Gloria as prosecutor. Benton is believed to have been held incommunicado the while.

News that the government at Washington had ordered an investigation was received by the refugees with indifference. "What chance? They were too much excited to take a calm view of the situation.

Benton of Good Scotch Family.

Benton came of an excellent Scotch family. His maternal grandfather, Col. Hay, is said to have participated as an officer in the famous charge of the light brigade at Balaklava. Two cousins are in the British army. One, Capt. Norman Benton, is with the engineer corps at Eastbourne, England. The other, Lieut. Ivan Benton, is an artillery officer at present on leave in Switzerland.

MEXICO CITY FEARS TROUBLE.

Mexico City, Feb. 20.—The execution of William S. Benton, a British subject, by the constitutionalists in Juarez has revived the fear among the government supporters that the United States will be forced by Great Britain to take some action that easily might become intervention.

Although since revolutionary conditions assumed serious proportions three years ago there have been killed in various parts of

GREAT BRITAIN MAY TAKE A HAND

Slaying of W. S. Benton Expected to Bring Demand for U. S. Action.

AWAIT REPLY ON REPORT.

Feared Murder Will Stir Up Bad Feeling in England and Other European Nations.

[BY A STAFF CORRESPONDENT.]

Washington, D. C., Feb. 20.—[Special.]—A new and most serious aspect has been placed upon the Mexican situation by the death of William S. Benton, a subject of Great Britain.

After a cabinet meeting today Secretary Bryan said a thorough investigation of the death of Benton had been ordered.

The incident is regarded as of the highest importance internationally because of the traditional policy of Great Britain in leaving nothing undone to compel respect for its subjects abroad and of seeking the punishment of those responsible for the death or injury of its citizens.

Because of what seem to be the unusually flagrant features of the Benton killing it is believed here that it puts squarely upon Great Britain the burden of doing what it is going to do about conditions in Mexico.

The United States government will have, of course, the keenest interest in whatever course the British government decides upon when it has been informed of the killing of Benton.

Spring-Rice Asks Investigation.

Official notice of the death of Benton was received by Secretary Bryan today in dispatches from Consul Edwards at Juarez. This notice came in response to a request from the British ambassador, Sir Cecil Arthur Spring-Rice, that Secretary Bryan make an investigation as to the whereabouts of Benton.

As soon as Edwards' dispatch was received the British ambassador was informed. He indicated he could do nothing further until he had communicated with his government and received instructions.

The hasty departure of Villa for the south immediately after it became known Benton was dead is regarded here as a fact giving the case a more ugly appearance. Dispatches from the border are regarded as indicating that Villa has fled to escape the storm of protest arising from the death of Benton.

Villa's flight to the south will make it difficult even for the British authorities to present any peaceful demands to him, much less to back them up with armed force.

Does Not Recognize Villa.

Great Britain recognizes the Huerta government, and the whole case of Chihuahua have been for so long a time in the hands of the rebels that Huerta does not even claim to exercise any jurisdiction over that territory. Great Britain does not recognize Villa even to the extent that the United States government does, nor does it recognize Carranza, and therefore cannot find any authority by which to present a demand for the punishment of Villa or his subordinates.

That the death of Benton may be made the occasion of demands upon the United States to take some action in Mexico, is regarded as quite probable. It is not seen, however, just what action the United States government can take now that Benton is dead.

Never Responsible for Foreigners.

The Wilson administration has never assumed the slightest responsibility for the safety of foreigners in Mexico, and is therefore in a position to reply to Great Britain that this government can do nothing in the Benton case. All that the state department has done with regard to the safety of foreigners in Mexico has been to use its good offices, requesting the rebel leaders to give all foreigners equal protection and to observe the rules of civilized warfare.

Secretary Bryan can also point to the fact that he has last summer summoned all Americans out of Mexico, thus putting the citizens of this government on notice that they remained in Mexico at their own risk.

No Meeting with Mexicans.

White House officials said tonight the report current in Mexico City that President Wilson had arranged to meet representatives of Mexican revolutionary factions was "absolutely untrue."

According to the constitutionalists' agency here none of the men named in the report is now in Washington.

Secretary Bryan announced that arrangements had been made for Sir Lionel Carden, the British minister to Mexico, to see President Wilson at the White House on March 2. The exact purpose of the meeting has not been revealed, but it is natural to expect that Mexican affairs will be discussed.

LONDON PAPERS AWAIT DETAILS.

LONDON, Feb. 20.—The foreign office last night had no information concerning the execution at Juarez of William S. Benton. The

news arrived in London at a late hour, when all the government offices had closed for the day, and no official opinion could be obtained.

The newspapers are withholding comment on the affair, probably waiting for more information. But all of them this morning give the greatest prominence in their news columns to the execution, which it is believed is certain to arouse strong feeling in England.

The Daily Mail, in connection with the execution of Benton, prints a sketch of Villa's career of "villainies."

BRITISH CHARGE AT VERA CRUZ.

Vera Cruz, Mexico, Feb. 20.—T. B. Hohler, the British secretary of legation here, who will act as chargé d'affaires during the absence of Sir Lionel Carden at Madrid, arrived today on the Ward liner Mexico and left tonight for the capital.

GEN. DIAZ REACHES NEW YORK.

New York, Feb. 20.—Gen. Felix Diaz, one of the heads of the revolt in which the government of Francisco I. Madero was overthrown, but who recently was forced to flee Mexico, reached here tonight from Havana on board the steamer Morro Castle. The general arrived at quarantine at too late an hour to admit of it being passed by the health officers tonight.

TAMPICO IN BAD SHAPE.

Port Arthur, Tex., Feb. 20.—The water supply of Tampico, Mexico, has been cut off since Feb. 13, and the city practically is in a state of siege, according to reports brought here today by persons on daily steamers. It is reported that sanitary conditions are not good, and, with no water, the city is threatened with pestilence.

TELL OF SPANIARDS' DEATHS.

MADRID, Feb. 20.—Stories of the shooting to death of seventy-five Spaniards and the brutal slaying of hundreds of others by Mexican rebels at Torreón are published at length in most of the newspapers of Madrid and the provinces today. The incidents were narrated by passengers on board the Spanish steamer Antonio Lopez, which sailed from Vera Cruz on Jan. 27, and has arrived at Cadiz.

CITY MARKET'S PRICES EMBARRASS THE GROCERS.

Representatives Complain That Housewives Object to Their Prices Because of Low Charge to Poor.

Grocers are protesting that the prices charged at the municipal cost market have resulted in unjust complaints at their prices. The city's market sells only to those with cards from the county agent's office. Only \$17 was taken in yesterday because of the time necessary to investigate customers. Several were refused.

Simon Westerfield of the National Retail Grocers' association and Albert M. Merritt of the Wholesale Grocers' association told George Stott and Douglas J. Cleary, managers of the municipal market, that grocers are complaining.

Mr. Westerfield said the quality of the provisions sold at the municipal market is low, and that they are sold at prices only slightly higher by the grocers, but that housewives protest to their grocers, thinking they should get retail quality of goods at the low prices.

"The average retail grocer is making about 20 per cent profit on his goods," he said, "and out of this he has to pay his expenses, such as rent, light, heat, taxes, help, and delivery. The bacon that the county is selling can be bought in the average store at 22 cents a pound in chunks and about 23 cents when it is sliced, while the county is selling it at 17 cents."

"We make a very small profit on sugar, and are selling it at 5 cents a pound, while the county is charging 4 cents. Similar conditions apply to other goods."

MYSTERY IN OAK PARK DEATH.

Mrs. J. E. Hammond Found Asphyxiated by Gas—Believed to Be Suicide.

Mrs. J. E. Hammond of 165 North Lombard avenue, Oak Park, was found asphyxiated by gas in her home yesterday. Though details are wrapped in mystery, it is reported that Mrs. Hammond committed suicide. A reporter called up the home and a man who said he was Mr. Hammond answered.

"It happened a little after 3 o'clock," he said. "I can truthfully say it was not an accident. I don't wish to discuss it." The phone was hung up.

The Oak Park police at 10 o'clock declared they had no report they cared to give out. Dr. H. G. Vaughn of Lake street and Richmond avenue, Oak Park, refused any information. An inquest will be held at 10 o'clock this morning.

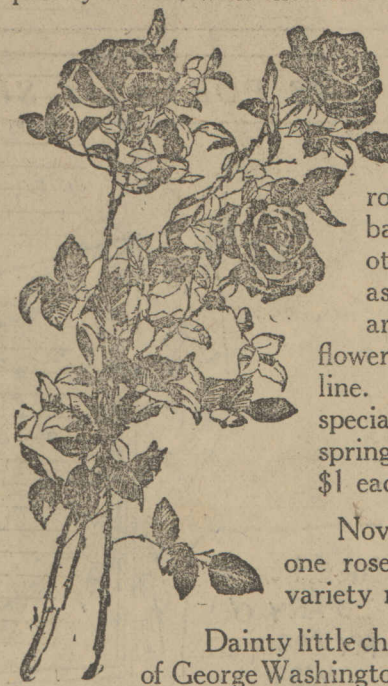
BHARATI, HINDU MYSTIC, DIES.

Well Known Philosopher Succumbs at Calcutta—Lectured in U. S. in 1911—Has Los Angeles Following.

PARIS, Feb. 20.—News reached here today of the death in Calcutta, India, of Baba Bharati, well known as a Hindu mystic and philosopher. He was 55 years old. Baba Bharati lectured in the United States in 1911. He is said to have had a large following in Los Angeles.

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