

MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES.

Readers of Mr. STEPHEN BONSAI'S dispatches from Mexico City to THE TIMES have for some days known what is now openly admitted in Washington, that the situation in Mexico has become so serious and critical that it is an occasion of grave concern to our Government and to the people of this country. The Government of President DIAZ has given every evidence of its desire to protect the lives and property of foreigners, but it can no longer conceal its inability to guarantee their protection. It is only too plain that the Mexican Government has reached a stage of weakness where it would no longer be able to protect even itself against an assault upon the capital of any considerable body of insurrectionists under capable leaders. Of course, foreigners have little to expect of a Government which cannot defend itself.

It is not altogether a question of the issue of the peace negotiations. Should they succeed or should they fail, the causes of anxiety would not be removed. No partisan chieftain ever made a fairer offer to an established Government than that made by MADERO through his peace commissioners. If President DIAZ will retire and if Vice President CORRAL will resign, then MADERO himself will renounce his provisional Presidency, the Minister of Foreign Relations, Mr. DE LA BARRA, to become acting President, and order a general election according to the Constitution. Should this offer be accepted, it would give rise to the hope, if not to the expectation, that peace would follow. But would the countless leaders of bands and groups of insurrectionists, all over the republic, accept the settlement proposed by MADERO as satisfactory to themselves and to their followers? Many of these bands are little better than brigands. They are not disciplined, and it is not evident that they are actuated by any common political ambition. The retirement of DIAZ is one point upon which they all seem to be agreed. It does not appear that they have been consulted about the choice of DE LA BARRA as acting President. The substitution of DE LA BARRA for DIAZ, with MADERO deposed and the insurrection still going on under some other chief, or under many chiefs, would hardly remove the causes of our anxiety.

That we have cause to view with much concern all these developments in the Mexican situation was made evident on Wednesday by Mr. BONSAI'S report of the demand of Dr. RHOMBERG, the German Chargé d'Affaires, that the Mexican Government afford protection to a number of German subjects who, with some Americans, had fallen into the power of the insurrectionists at Cuernavaca. The Government at once sent a small force to the relief of the imperiled Germans and Americans, but it appears to have failed in its purpose. This at once raises the question, to whom are Germany and other foreign Powers to look for the protection of their nationals in Mexico. The question is not academic, it is not one for leisurely consideration. In the Mexican capital and at other places in the republic foreigners are in a state of great alarm. The conditions are described to be "intolerable." The answer to the question as to the source from which protection must come was plainly suggested in President TAFT'S address at the Peace Conference in Baltimore on Wednesday, when he said that the people of this country have no desire for territorial aggrandizement, that they would not permit their Government to take any territory if it would, "or to interfere except to aid those foreign Governments and foreign people to maintain peace and order within their borders."

It would be only through the collapse of authority in Mexico through the failure of all Government, only under the urgent necessity of affording protection to foreigners, that the President would ask Congress for the authority to intervene by sending troops into Mexican territory. Much as our people are by tradition opposed to policies of adventure, and certainly, as the President says, to all policies of aggrandizement, there is probably no American who would not very much prefer that we should undertake this service of protection than that we should leave it to be performed by a European Power in

behalf of its endangered citizens or subjects.

The duty is plain enough, should the occasion arise. The fervent hope of the American Government and of the American people is that it may not arise. There is a grain of encouragement in the language of Mr. LIMANTOUR'S letter of instructions to Judge CARBAJAL, the peace commissioner on behalf of President DIAZ. That letter recognizes FRANCISCO MADERO as the "chief of the revolution." If MADERO has such authority as to be recognized as the veritable chief of the revolution, the prospects of peace through the negotiations are manifestly better than they would be did the decision rest with a dozen or a score of chiefs. There is encouragement, too, in the statement that some of the rebel chiefs have joined in a letter to MADERO declaring that they would not support the negotiations unless the retirement of DIAZ were made an indispensable condition for peace. That would imply that, DIAZ out of the way, they will assent to the terms of settlement made by MADERO. That would be the best way out so far as now appears, certainly the best for us. A settlement that should really bring peace would put an end to the dangers that now threaten foreigners in Mexico, for it would put an end to what is practically a condition of anarchy all over the republic.