

# THE FAMILY STORY

## SLATER'S RAID.

It was a cosmopolitan group that sat around the campfires of Slater's Horse. The troop numbered twenty men all told, drawn from every one of the Anglo-Saxon races of the planet. There were Americans, Englishmen, Canadians, Australians, and South Africans, and they had come from the ends of the earth to take part in such a row as promised to follow when Cuba Libre set up her flag against that of Spain. Their leader was a Virginian, there was not a Cuban or a Spaniard in the company, and the name of Slater's Troop was a name of terror to the government forces from Pinar del Rio to Sagua la Grande.

To see them thus encamped no one would have supposed that they were engaged in one of the most daring raids that had been adventured since the war opened in '95. The officers—there were but two—sat demagogically on the ground among their men; there was a tinkling of banjos, and a mingled sound of confused talking and of jovial, free-handed profanity. The shadows of the men loomed big on the background of tropical vegetation, where the red fire light flashed fitfully from time to time, and now the form of a tethered horse, and now the figure of a sentry leaning against a smooth coated palm.

It was no small affair that these men were engaged in—nothing less, in fact, than a raid on the "trocha" itself. It is not the policy of the Cuban leaders to risk a pitched battle, so to arouse the enthusiasm of the men, and at the same time keep the enemy on the alert, such expeditions are undertaken from time to time.

They have encamped some fifty miles from the Spanish lines and the attack was fixed for the next night. A dash across the country, a stealthy advance on the fortification, another dash, a sabre and revolver, and a triumphal retreat—this was the program that Slater's Horse proposed to itself.

Next morning they rode up and down the rolling hills in the early dawn for two hours, and then rested for the heat of the day in a cool and very secluded grove, where they would be screened from any wandering guerrillas. Late at night they saddled again and rode cautiously forward till they were not more than forty rods from the trocha itself. They could see the watchfires on the further side of the great redoubt, shining between the strands of the barbed wire fence stretched along the brink.

Between them and the trocha lay a dangerous obstacle, an ingenious device, composed of a number of wires drawn six inches apart and a foot above the ground. This formed a network over which it was impossible to ride, and as its width was uncertain, was dangerous to leap. Slater knew of this impediment, however, and had made his plans accordingly. Half a dozen then dismounted in silence, and taking each a pair of nippers from his saddle bags, crept forward into the darkness. The rest of the troop sat silently on horseback harkening to the sounds and voices from the Spanish camp, and to the occasional clicking noise right ahead where their comrades were cutting the hostile wires.

In the course of half an hour the men came back, and in whispers reported the way clear. The wires had been cut and dragged aside, so as to leave a road of sufficient width for the passage of the troop, even in the hurried retreat which must follow. The whole party then dismounted and led the horses stealthily forward, till almost at the very brink of the trocha. The Spaniards on the other side were clearly visible, while they themselves were hidden in deep shadows, and the rest scrambled into the ditch and up the other side.

So quietly was all this done that the whole performance passed unobserved till Slater sprang upon the parapet and began slashing at the wires with his machete. Then there was a shout and shot from the nearest Spaniard, followed by a miscellaneous rattle of rifles along the lines. The troops swarmed out, and saw a string of men hacking furiously at the wires with one hand and plying a revolver with the other. In the dim fire-light their numbers could not be ascertained.

At this amazing spectacle the soldiers fired a volley—that is, discharged their rifles in the general direction of the foe. When the smoke blew off, this operation seemed to have produced no effect on the invaders, who had now cut and torn the strands apart and were actually within the inclosure. They bore down in the line on the Spaniards, revolver in one hand, blade in the other. No soldier-marksman were they, but men whose lives had often and often hung upon a pistol shot, and now their enemies felt the effect. In ten seconds thirty of the gray uniforms were writhing on the sod, and the remainder beheld the machetes flashing in their faces. The Castellians are not without a proverb that teaches that discretion is the better part of valor; they drew back. Their shots seemed to have no effect on these madmen, whose pistols emitted a continuous stream of fire. The withdrawal became retreat—the retreat a panic. They crowded together and ran for the tents—a hundred men routed by seventeen. Slater did not pursue them further. The long

roll was sounding up and down the lines, and the firing would bring down a dozen regiments in five minutes. He had done all that was necessary, had cut up the enemy's lines with a small quarter of a company, and without loss, so that it was time to retreat as swiftly as he had made the attack.

A torch was thrust into the nearest cluster of tents, the Maxim guns within reach were tumbled into the ditch, and the little band went back as they had come, leaving the cut wires and the rows of dead to mark where they had passed. A minute more and they were mounted and thundering across the country again.

As they rode Slater said to the man nearest him, a graduate of Harvard: "We have singed the Spanish king's beard, eh?"

And the other replied: "Precisely." Then, after a mile or so: "They won't let this pass, do you think?"

"What do you mean? That they'll follow us?"

"Yes."

"Nonsense. Not a bit of it."

He was wrong, for there was at that moment rage and cursing in the Spanish camp. The officer in command at that point had laid a heavy wager that the rebels would never break the lines. Naturally, he was furious. That the majesty of the powers of Spain should be slighted, that the works should be broken, that his men should be slaughtered—this was bad enough in all conscience, but that he should lose his gold doubloons—this was unbearable. He fumed, and swore, and called to him a captain of guerrilla cavalry.

"Captain."

"Senior."

"You have a hundred men in your troop?"

"A hundred and fifty."



A RUSH OF MEN SWEEPING DOWN UPON THEM.

"Good. Pursue these accursed Americans. There are not more than thirty. Follow them to Santiago, if necessary, but catch them, dead or alive."

"Very well, General," replied the guerrilla, and retired to muster his men and to sound the "Boots and Saddles." A hundred to twenty would be long odds, even for Slater's Horse.

So it came about that when Slater's men drew rein, fifteen miles from the trocha, and sat silent, a clustered black spot on the moonlit road, they heard a low thunder come rolling up from the west—the thunder of pounding hoofs.

"By Jove!" said the Englishman, who was related to the eminent author.

"Not three miles away," asserted the Canadian, who had just come from the Egyptian Sudan.

"Forward, then," said Slater, and away they went, up and down the rolling hills whither the ill-made road led them. The country was too rough to allow of taking to the fields, where the Spaniards might be thrown off the trail, but it would be smoother in the course of a few leagues. All night they rode hard and sometimes the following thunder was loud and often faint, but never wholly died away. The guerrillas were well mounted, and Slater's horses were not fresh. The pearly dawn came up before them, and then the sun was trailing long shadows behind them as they galloped. It was 4 o'clock, and forty miles back to the trocha.

And now at last they seemed to have distanced their pursuers, for no rumble came out of the west. They fed their horses a few armfuls of the green tops of the sugar cane, refreshing and stimulating, and gave them a little water from a roadside brook, and rubbed them down as time would permit. That was not much, for before they had finished the sounds of pursuit again grew upon them.

"Forty miles farther and we will be in our own lines," remarked Slater. For three hours more the wiry little Cuban horses bore their riders swiftly, though the sun grew high and angry. They had struck off the highway, ridden through a field of cane, and were now galloping down a wide stretch of sloping prairie, dotted with cocoa palms. They scarcely expected that the enemy would fall to notice where the chase had left the road so they were not disappointed when the long crash of breaking stalks announced

that the guerrillas were riding down the field they had just passed through. The pursuit was gaining fast. In another minute there was a roar of shouts and cheers from behind, and turning, they saw the hill side crested with a long line of galloping, gray-coated men.

The peril was imminent, yet the staunch beasts had the material in them for a good ten-mile burst yet, and this would be more than enough to lead them into safety. Down the long slope the two bands swept, a full mile between them, and up another, when an astonishing sight met them as they topped the rise.

Away to the left in the following valley smoke was rising from a burning house. The yard before it was filled with Spanish soldiery. Two women stood bound in the midst. There seemed to be an altercation. A soldier began to reeve a rope over a convenient tree-bough.

All this flashed before the men's eyes in a moment. There was no hesitation, nor were there any orders given. Those of Slater's troop were accustomed to follow when Slater led, and they galloped at his heels as he spurred furiously down the hillside. The Spaniards by the house were suddenly aware of a mingled rattle of hoofs and pistol shots, and beheld a rush of men sweeping down upon them, brandishing weapons and volleying forth curses and bullets at once. A moment—and they were struck, crushed, ridden down. The sheer weight of Slater's headlong charge scattered them in every direction. At the same time the deadly machete and more deadly sixshooter were at work.

"Throw the women across your shoulders," roared Slater. They were jerked up in an instant by two brawny troopers. It was no time for ceremony.

"Now, hard ahead! And before the Spaniards had recovered from the shock their assailants were dashing past the outbuildings of the hacienda and had disappeared behind the sheds. At the same time the guerrillas swarmed in, and the soldiers also mounted and followed the chase.

Meanwhile, Slater's men had met unexpected obstacles. A high and strong wire fence stood firmly across their way; it was apparently designed to be horse-proof. There was no gate, and the ends were not in sight.

"Well, cut it then," shouted the leader, with a rattle of oaths, when its impregnability became apparent, "and a quick, too!" He drew his ma-

chete and slashed as furiously at these wires as he had done at those of the trocha.

In a minute or less an opening had been made, and the riders were through. When the Spaniards arrived at the same point their greater number and the narrowness of the gap caused a tremendous crush, which gave the insurgents a much-needed start. It was soon lost, however. The fresh horses of the Spanish reinforcement rapidly overhauled the little troop. And, to add to their difficulties, a deep ravine suddenly appeared ahead. To scramble in and out of it with sufficient rapidity would be impossible for the tired horses, two of which carried double loads. To have cast the women aside might have facilitated their escape, but no one seemed to dream of such an act, nor was there a word of regret for the delay which had caused them to be overtaken. Slater drew in his horse, and the others gathered round.

"Way closed," said the leader, sententiously. "Got to fight here or surrender."

"Or cut our way through," suggested the man from Harvard.

"The women," remarked Slater, and the other accepted the fact.

"If they were only mounted!" muttered a trooper.

The Spanish riders were now drawing in, and a volley of carbines ran before them. They had aimed high, with the result that three men of the troop toppled from their saddles. This left the number of mounts free.

"Can't you ride, Senora?" said Slater. Both replied in the affirmative.

"Then mount here, if you please. We must try to cut our way out . . . Are you afraid?"

"It is the privilege of a Cuban woman to fear nothing except capture by these!"

The man from Harvard was struck by her courage, but he could not stop to admire it. The women were helped astride the dead trooper's saddles—it was no time for false modesty—and the rest formed up around them. One of the women held out her hand toward Slater's holsters, but he pointed out the fact that there were pistols already in the holsters before them. They took these out and handled them with familiarity.

The Spaniards had paused a few hundred yards away, and were scrutinizing the men they had pursued. I do

not know why they did not rush down and overwhelm them by sheer weight. Possibly so much coolness made them suspect a ruse or ambush. At any rate they stood still a moment till they saw the band form in hollow square, with the women in the center, and charge down upon them.

Slater was leading. The guerrillas assayed to move forward to meet the attack, and when they came within fifty yards the pistols began to crackle on both sides. A charging horse stumbled heavily to the ground, throwing his rider headlong. An incessant volley poured from the deft revolvers of the assailants, and the Spaniards recoiled from the spot on which it was directed, where men and horses rolled together on the earth. A moment, and the little company, with the impetus of a bullet, had crashed into this shrinking spot and sunk right in for five horses' lengths. There was a shim-



HE WAS ALONE.

mer all about as the men swung the machetes above their heads and urged on the plunging horses. The Spaniards directly in front strove to get clear, to have more room for fighting, and the insurgents pushed forward to the furthest inch. It really seemed, for a little, that they would win through the Spanish ranks.

The guerrillas next the troop were exchanging desperate sword-strokes with their antagonists, while those farther out were pressing closer, and firing wildly into the swirl of fight with revolvers. Five of Slater's men had gone down beneath the blows that came from the front and rear alike. There were but twelve left, and these redoubled their efforts to break through the trap that held them fast. Slater rode in front, slashing to right and left with a huge machete. He cut down an opposing trooper, pistoled the horse as the rider fell, and spurred forward into the space thus provided. His men followed, and by sheer dint of blows managed to gain a few yards more. But the foe gathered close, and again two of the handful went down. The air was all a-quiver with steel blades about the fight, but now that the insurgents had got fairly in motion once more, they were slowly yet surely thrusting their way through the circling crowd. But they lost a man for every yard they won. Pistol bullets hummed through the melee, striking down friend and foe alike. One of the women was hit as she fired into the dense gray ranks; the other, either wounded or fainting, slid from her saddle, and both disappeared beneath the press.

While Slater's horse thus melted apace, Slater rode in the front, and knew not how the others fared. He only knew that he was hewing his desperate way forward as a bushman hews his way through the tropical jungle. He had lost his hat and his hair was clotted and dripping with blood, but he took no heed of the wounds; all his effort was to reach the open space beyond. And at last, bleeding horse and man, he swayed into the clear ground and looked about for his men.

Not one had followed; he was alone. The women he had rescued were gone, too. He stared about as if dazed, while the Spaniards stood and wondered at the man who had done so mightily in the battle. The blood was pouring from a deep cut in the neck of his horse. The animal's knees began to totter, and presently it sank to the ground.

Slater fell with it. The troops rushed forward, but when they came to him he was dead, with the red blade still clinched in his fingers.

And the women for whom this score of men had recklessly thrown away their lives lay trampled and crushed beneath the hoofs of the guerrilla horse. But shall it therefore be said of Slater's troops that their sacrifice was made in vain?

"Mor'n You'll Keep."

Some years ago an old sign painter, who was very cross, very gruff, and a little deaf, was engaged to paint the Ten Commandments on some tablets in a church not five miles from Buffalo.

He worked two days at it, and at the end of the second day the pastor of the church came to see how the work progressed.

The old man stood by, smoking a short pipe, as the reverend gentleman ran his eyes over the tablets.

"Eh!" said the pastor, as his familiar eye detected something wrong in the working of the precepts; "why, you careless old man, you have left a part of one of the commandments entirely cut; don't you see?"

"No; no such thing," said the old man, putting on his spectacles; "no; nothing left out—where?"

"Why, there," persisted the pastor, "look at it in the Bible; you have left some of that commandment out."

"Well, what if I have?" said old Obstinacy, as he ran his eye complacently over his work; "what if I have? There's more there now than you'll keep!"

Another and a more correct artist was employed the next day.

A Good Thing.

A Lewiston (Me.) confectioner has applied for a patent on a process by which pasteboard boxes may be so treated that ice cream packed in them will remain solidly frozen for twenty-four hours.

## JUST TEN SCHOLARS

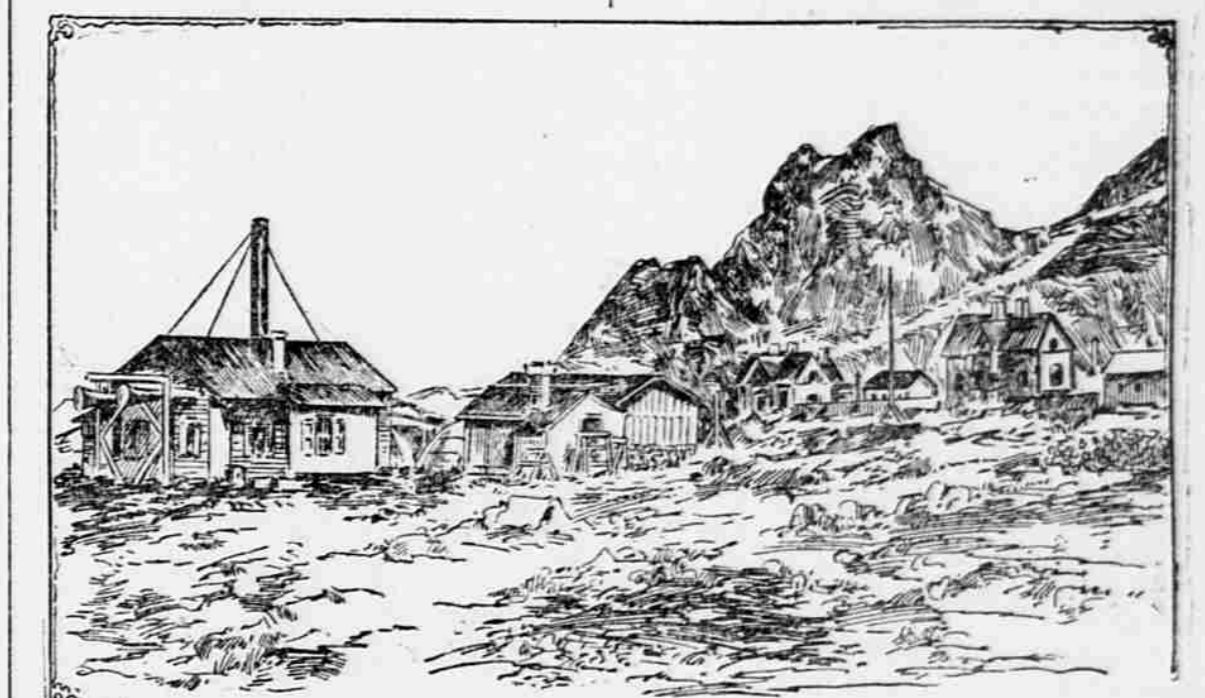
HAS THIS QUEER SCHOOL ON AN ISLAND.

Request for a Teacher Comes to the San Francisco School Board from the Strangest School District in All America.

Out in the Pacific.

A few weeks ago a little, modest petition, on paper as white as the wing of a seabird or the wandering foam, drifted in before the San Francisco Board of School Directors. In brief, its message was, "Send us a school-teacher for our little children, and we will pay the salary and furnish board." The pathos in this little petition could not be understood without knowledge of the environments of the petitioners and of the children for whose welfare they are solicitous.

Surrounded by the deep Pacific Ocean lies the South Farallon Island, the largest of the Farallon group. Its shores rise abruptly and form an eternal barrier of stone against the waves which thunder against adamantine ramparts. Devoid nearly of vegetation, and swept ceaselessly by the winds from north, south and west, it is like a stern and frowning outpost established for the safety of the white-winged and majestic ships that sweep by it proudly in sunshine and creep timorously past when the fog, wraithlike, hovers over or settles down and hides its buried and threatening rocks under a mantle more dreadful than night. Cut off from the California mainland by a broad belt of heaving sea, its nearest western neighbors are the Hawaiian Islands, 800 leagues distant. Here the tempests of winter wreak their full force, and old Neptune, with the trumpets of the storm winds, calls the billows to the charge.



THE STRANGE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND ALL THERE IS OF IT.

High upon a peak, 300 feet above the level of the all-encircling ocean, is superimposed a tall lighthouse, whose eye of fire, like a cyclone, glares angrily through the thickness and blackness of night upon watery wastes that, looking to the north, west and south, seem shoreless. To the east and southeast, upon a clear night, other cyclones leer at the sea and at the ships which sail or which trail long banners of smoke athwart the sky line. In the fog these kin monitors of like isolation are not seen by the dwellers on the South Farallon. No, the whole world seems whelmed in a universe of impenetrable vapor, and while the sturdy men who tend the light and keep the siren going are busied at their lonely posts their families, their little children, beleaguered by all the sea, sleep far away from city joys and diversions and companionships. Through the darkness, above the sound of the breaking waves, booms the fog siren, answered by its blasts fall upon the ears of the beleaguered listeners with the regularity of the tolling of a bell that might be rung by implacable fate, doling out life in periods.

There are eight rosy little children on the South Farallon and two older ones. They are there because their parents are earning a living for themselves and their families in the government service maintaining the light and the siren. It was in their behalf that their parents have asked for a teacher. Ten children are all the pupils there are in this strangest "school district" in all the earth. They have one room fitted up for school purposes in which there are little desks, benches and blackboards and a supply of schoolbooks, a globe, which represents the round earth of which they occupy so small a portion, and that time-honored institution, the teacher's desk. From the windows of the schoolroom and hard by is the engine-house and siren-house, one furnishing the voice which comes from the other, punctuating the wash of the waters and the voices of the children and their teacher—when they have one. During a certain season of about three months' duration hundreds of thousands of sea birds, in great flights, circle about the schoolhouse, with their discordant cries, and settle upon the barren rocks, where they make their nests.

As the children study their thoughts are led to wander by the occasional sight of a passing ocean steamer laden with many passengers who seem to be free to come and go, and the steamer and its freedom stimulates their imagination before and after it sinks into oblivion below the far horizon line where the sky and ocean meet. As they bend over their tasks they know that there will no parades, processions, circuses, theaters, concerts or crowds to divert them later in the day. They occupy a world of their own, educational and workaday, into which outsiders very seldom intrude. Weeks may pass without a daily newspaper coming to them. Tugboats visit them very seldom, if ever. There are about four great days in the year when excitement runs high among the little schoolchildren.

Sign of the Times.

The students in a Scotch university have the power of impeaching a professor before the university court, and of forcing his dismissal if they can prove that he has neglected his duty to the institution. A curious case of this sort has just been brought to public notice. "Aberdeen undergraduates," says the London correspondent of the New York Times, "have just succeeded in the dismissal of the professor of Biblical criticism on the quaint ground that he is too orthodox, and hence failed to initiate them into the higher forms of modern criticism. That such a complaint should be regarded as valid in Aberdeen, of all places on earth, strikes Englishmen as a remarkable sign of the times."

Once every quarter the United States Government, through the lighthouse-tending-steamers, comes plowing its way proudly to the island with a load of supplies. Then there is a holiday, for the children come in contact with the wonders of that outer world in a faint way, which is ordinarily only a mysterious but magnificent and huge something, replete with the joys and terrors of real life, the visible outer boundary of which is only a shore line, piled with breakers and whitened with foam.

A teacher is wanted in this queer school district. There have been several off there. The last two were young ladies who taught awhile and then sought once more the more numerous attractions of the shore. A gentleman taught there for awhile and he found his little charges attentive, bright and easily interested. Here is a chance, says the San Francisco Call, for anyone who can appreciate the ever abiding majesty of the ocean and who covets a quiet place in which to read and reflect.

Sympathy.

In what way motive flavors acts at the same time that it induces them is beyond the power of metaphysician to reveal. But that it does flavor them, we well know. There is a subtle chemistry that works silently but forcefully between mind and mind whose laws have not yet been discovered by some of the elements that enter into this magic play of forces are easily palpable. One of these elements in motive that plays back and forth between teacher and pupil in the business of education is sympathy—that keen and loving appreciation of difficulty and of need on the part of one that awakes latent good and stimulates slumbering activity in another. Where learning and logic and shrewdness stand strengthless, the look of sympathy can touch the heart and move the will. Who would teach the child must reach him, and would reach him must feel with childhood. He must



THE STRANGE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND ALL THERE IS OF IT.

know its sources of joy, its hills of difficulty, its miry paths—he must have the boy alive inside of him. Who has so far withdrawn from his own childhood and satisfaction in its enjoyments that the boy or girl within has long ago been solemnly buried has lost the key-flower that admits to the treasure house of youth.—Midland Schools.

The Bishop Is Right.

Said Bishop Spaulding before the N. E. A.: "I have noticed that we are proud of our school buildings. I do not care about that. I want to know what kind of life is fostered there. I say that many of these factory-like structures thwart the cause of education. I say the little country schoolhouse, discolored, and not larger than a dry goods box, is a better place for education than the barracks of our city school life. The nearer we get to nature the closer we get to truth. City life is decadent, and it would die out if it were not constantly augmented from the country. I tell you how to educate city children is a serious problem. We wear out the teachers and make a herd rather than an aggregation of individuals." And again: "We shall never get the best schools until we get the best talent, and we shall never get the best talent until we can offer better inducements. It is wise to turn our attention to the professional improvement of the teachers. But let us also work for better inducements and more independence." And the Bishop is right.—Popular Educator.

A Day When All Goes Wrong.

Do you ever have a day in school when everything goes wrong? When the children do everything they should not do and leave undone everything they ought to do? When by 4 o'clock you feel as if your nerves were bare and the evening's work seems like a mountain before you? We all have such days. Let me tell you how to avoid a recurrence of such an experience on the morrow. First temporize with your conscience and let part of that mountain of evening work go. Be sure to go to bed early that night if you never do again. In the morning put on your prettiest gown and do your hair up the most becoming way, and I promise you that instead of the day of war you are expecting you will find your pupils like little angels.—A. B. C., in School Education.

Sign of the Times.

The students in a Scotch university have the power of impeaching a professor before the university court, and of forcing his dismissal if they can prove that he has neglected his duty to the institution. A curious case of this sort has just been brought to public notice. "Aberdeen undergraduates," says the London correspondent of the New York Times, "have just succeeded in the dismissal of the professor of Biblical criticism on the quaint ground that he is too orthodox, and hence failed to initiate them into the higher forms of modern criticism. That such a complaint should be regarded as valid in Aberdeen, of all places on earth, strikes Englishmen as a remarkable sign of the times."