The ISLE of the WINDS

By S. R. CROCKETT

With Pictures by G. A. SHIPLEY

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Synopsis of Previous Installments.

Sir James Stansfield of New Milns, in company with his grandson, young Philip, meets in an inn house his son Philip and his son's paramour, Janet Mark. They quarrel. Sir James goes home, taking along his grandson. That night he is murdered by his dissolute son and Janet Mark. They take his body outside and lay it upon an ice floe, in the effect to fasten the crime upon other shoulders. But the boy Philip has witnessed the crime. He tells his grandfather's chief tenant, Umphray Spurway, and Spurway succeeds in having the real murderer brought to justice. He is sentenced to be hanged, his woman accomplice to be transported. Mysteriously Philip Stansfield escapes the gallows, seeks out his wife, finds her in the company of Spurway, and tries to murder her, but does not quite succeed. She is taken away to Abercairn for cure, leaving her son, young Philip, in charge of Spurway and in the company of little Anna Mark, from whom he learns that in some ways girls are worth quite as much as boys.

Yet there came a time when I had a surprise sprung upon me. It was on the day when Umphray Spurway brought home his "winter beasts." These were rough and shaggy highland cattle from the great droves that, with an army of retainers, passed every year southward into England. They went south mostly about the end of harvest, whether the year were early or late. The lowland farmers bought them, fattened them on the aftermath of the hay and on the stubbles of the corn, presently turning them out on the moors till the snow came, and then killing, salting and setting them apart as "marts" for winter consumption.

Umphray Spurway bought many of these, for, being an Englishman, he loved flesh meat, and believed that his weaver folk worked better on it than on porridge three times a day.

So this buying of the "mart" cattle was a great event with us, and as my mother, though recovered of her wound and now lodging in her own hired house in Abercairn, was still weak, I remained (to my joy) at the Miln house. I had looked forward to the English droving as one great opportunity of proving my superiority to little Anna Mark. And to this day I can remember the shame, merging into a kind of reluctant admiration, mingled with hopelessness, with which I viewed her performances. For some months, indeed, she had made frequent absences from home during the afternoons, and this without giving any explanation of where she had been, though I pleaded hard to know.

Upon the great day we went out as soon as it was light, to choose and bring home our bunch of wild, rebellious highland cattle. It was to the "Tinklers' Slap" that we went, a wild place among the hills to the west, through which the drove road picked a perilous passage, and Umphray took with him a score of his weavers, armed. For he carried money, and the cattle dealers were quite as wild as the cattle they brought with them—at least, it was as well to err on the safe side.

We marched merrily and fast, yet not so fast but that Anna and I played about the company, running round and round like the collie dogs themselves, gripping, grappling and rolling over each other, just as they did, while Umphray watched us indulgently and yet carefully, lest I should hurt the girl.

So little did he know! He ought rather to have been careful that she did me no harm, for a greater little tiger cat never was.

And now I come to my surprise.

For as Umphray Spurway, with his hand on his pistol hilt, chose out and paid for each wild steer or fleck-mouthed bull, it was the duty of his party to meet the beast as it was scourged from the drove by the half-naked kerns of the hills who swarmed all around. Then, having put a distance between the chosen and his companions, the aim of us all was to head him away to the eastward, so that he might not double and rejoin the herd by speed of foot. This was usually accomplished by stones and goads, the men using goads and the light infantry pebbles.

It was wild work at times—indeed at most times.

For the Tinklers' Slap is a deep defile, which leads into the heart of the hills. High above the heather bends its black brows to look over. Bell heather and bent diversifies delicately the middle slopes. All the bottom is smooth and green, save where, in a tunnel of bracken and queen-of-the-meadow, a certain trickle of a streamlet gurgles and lisps in an emerant gloom.

But upon this noble morning of late September the Tinklers' Slap looked not thus, still and lovely, with only an eagle soaring above it, lost in the sky. Down it burged a vast horn-tossing herd of cattle, with their noses in the air. All red and black they were, like the ragged tartans of many of the drivers (for they were of the broken clans, and mostly MacGregors, though some of them called themselves Campbell, who were the worst of all).

This parti-colored tide flowed down the bottom of the glen like a river in full flood. Only in the little eddy of Hunter's Tryst, near the bottom, where Umphray Spurway waited, was there a sort of backwater. Into this the drovers swept a score or two of cattle at a time, some of which Umphray Spurway approved. At other times he would have none of them, but pointed out a beast in the throng as it surged thundering past. Whereat one of the men on little shaggy ponies would plunge, at danger of life and limb, into the tumult of the tide race, and guide the animal out, and so bring it, bellowing with rage and fear, to the appointed stance.

It was strange to observe at the summit of the Slap, directly above us, the cattle appearing like a forest of branching horns, standing a moment to overlook the valley, with heads up and eyes dilated, and then urged by those behind, surging forward again, while the noise of their mighty roaring came to us in the little vale of the Hunter's Tryst like the triumphing of an angry sea that has broken bars and doors.

It was the first time I had seen the great English droving, and a fine sight it was for man or boy to see.

Anna Mark and I ran forward to be ready to receive the first "mart." Anna had been given a stout pointed "kent," or oaken staff, to use as a goad. With this and her native agility she completely outran me. But little I cared for that, for was not the stone-throwing at hand. As I ran I did not observe that Anna had a bag of pebbles fastened to her waist even as I had myself. She kept close to Saunders MacMillan, a big herd from the rough mountains whom Umphray employed to watch the sheep he pastured on the easterly hills, according to his agreement with Sir James, my grandfather, when he came first to the country.

The first beast is always the worst to put on the home road. For he has as yet no companions and he turns and twists, doubles and trebles, with feints and stratagems as well as straight charges, tail up and horns down. As ill-luck would have it, he came straight at me.

"Out of the way, boy!" cried Umphray Spurway, whose eyes were everywhere. But I wanted to distinguish myself and stood straight in the beast's way as he dodged to get back to the herd. The bull came head down and just as I was firing a round pebble at his forehead down I tripped over a stone. I felt hot breath blow upon me, and looked to be trampled to death. But though at the gallop he almost missed me, one cloot alone grazing the calf of my leg, and as it happened turning it many colors in a day or two.

There was now no one between the brute and the herd, and the highland kerns had already set up a triumphant yell at our stupidity.

But in the critical moment, there in front flickered little Anna Mark, a "kent" shortened in her hand. One blow across the nose. He swerved. A poke in the shoulder! He turned. Anna dropped the kent, and with her right hand she selected a stone from the wallet at her waist, and with a

THEN HE COUNTED SLOWLY, "ONE!"

sharp "clip" jerked it from her hip after the manner of shepherds. It flew straight and took the "mart" on the hip. Another and yet another, each as truly aimed, succeeded. The beast turned no more but with Anna behind it and Saunders MacMillan and half a dozen weavers in chase took a straight line through the little green hope of the Tryst for the vale of Moreham.

Then, indeed, there was a noise to speak about, and I, sitting up dazed and stupified, heard the highland men shouting to Umphray Spurway, "Who is the lassie?"

"The lassie," shouted another contemptuously, as he dressed the herd on the left flank. "Yon's nae lassie! Yon's a killie lad—a son o' Donald Oig's, I thinkin' by his lang legs!"

For little Anna Mark's high-kilted petticoats had misled him, and, indeed, not without some reason. For her hair was tied in a red kerchief after a manner that she had doubtless learned from her father, and for the rest she was dressed much like one of their limber he-slips who scampered and climbed and yelled alongside the drove.

This was a great blow to me, and it was an hour or two before I could make any headway to get over it.

It was not jealousy so much as that she had not told me what she was doing, but had gone secretly to that great lout Saunders MacMillan, as coarse and clampersome a lump as any of that name. And in Galloway that is saying no little.

"I wanted to surprise you—that is why I did not tell you," she said afterward, as she ran alongside when once the homeward column was in good going order and out of the disturbance caused by the routing of the herd.

I said nothing. I was not ready to make up.

"Of course," she said softly (for she could speak very gently when it liked her, which was not often), "I cannot throw as well as you, nor flourish my arm about over my head. It is not the same thing."

"You hit the beast and turned it, after it had knocked me over!" I replied, gloomily.

"But see," she cried, "I can miss as well!" she persisted.

"Let me see, then!" said I.

A bullock at this moment turned and tried a last bolt.

"Turn him—turn him, witch Wean!" cried Bowie Fleemister, the only Moreham man in the company, and a man who, having lassie bairns of his own, hated Anna Mark's favor with his employer.

Then the girl, with her eyes full on the charging bullock, "henched" a pebble, which indeed missed the animal, but by strange chance took Bowie Fleemister on the elbow joint!

"Ye hae broke my funny-bane, ye flichtersome wisp o' brimstane," he cried, dancing to and fro, and nursing his elbow in the palm of his other hand. "I'll hae ye discerned for a manifest witch, as your mither was afore ye!"

"You see, now!" said Anna, calmly, with her eyes cast down. "I can miss. I missed the bullock by as much as twenty yards!"

Yet somehow the instance was to me not wholly convincing.

Bowie Fleemister made his complaint to Umphray Spurway before the pain had wholly died out of his tingling finger tips.

"Yon ill-set randy has broken my shuttl-airm wi' a stane," he said, truculently. "I'll never work mair! I want her banished out o' the country, like her mither. There will never be peace in the mill till she be gane."

"Oh, yes, there will," retorted Umphray Spurway, significantly, riding a little nearer to Bowie, who shrank away from him. Then bending a little from his horse and clenching his bare fist, the miln-master held it to Bowie's nostrils. "Yes," he added, "there will be peace in Umphray Spurway's mill as long as that hand wags at the end of this right arm!"

And Bowie Fleemister, the color of tow, shrank still further between his own shoulders.

CHAPTER XIII.

The New Dominie.

But there was a sweeter, winsomer side to little Anna Mark than this. Where she get it from I know not—from her Maker, I expect. Nor, though I have known her all the years that have come and gone since those days in Umphray Spurway's mill house, have I ever troubled my head on the subject.

Anna could not be called a very pretty child, perhaps. Her face was always browned by the sun, and till she was well into her teens an even tint of freckles was spread over her brow and cheeks, reaching well up on her brow and down behind her ears.

But no man could pass her on the road without turning to look. Most women also, if only to say "There is something not canny about that lassie-bairn!" But when Anna looked directly at you it seemed that you saw a spark of fire kindled far down in her eyes. And when she smiled, why, it was suddenly summer outside and a blue day. The herds on the hills would wait hours to have her company up the lonesome glens and out on the great flowes of heather. The grimy smiths in the "smiddy" in the villages, hammering at their horse "cackars," would drop rasp and pincers and run to the door at the words, "Here comes Anna!" And long after she was past they could be seen looking out after her, sheltering their eyes underneath grimy palms, as she tripped up the street with Umphray Spurway.

But mothers, jealous for their own children, would call them in ostentatiously, lest they should be englamored with the fascination of the witchbairn's spell. Every douce well-born lassie in Moreham and New Milns was forbidden to play with little Anna Mark, and also encouraged to call names after her to keep her mindful of her condition. Usually, however, they only tried this once. Then on the following day, their mothers would come in deputations to Umphray Spurway, praying him to send the little wildcat away.

But the Englishman, caring no more for women than for the idle clashes of the villages, drove them out of his presence without more ceremony than if his mill gates had been invaded by a tail-wagging, loud-clacking flock of geese from the common.

She had cast a glamor over him. That was evident. And the gossips took council together to rid him of this spell and themselves of a pest and possible rival of their own growing daughters.

I well remember the day of the prize-giving at Dominie Nathan Tawse's school.

I had begged so hard to be allowed to stay with Umphray, and the Englishman had used such arguments to my mother to make her consent, that I was allowed to bide through the week at the mill house. But on Saturdays Umphray himself took me down the water to my mother's house in the town of Abercairn, where I stayed till Monday, on which morning Caleb Clinkaberry convoyed me back half way to the place called hill o' the Cock, where William Bowman met us and relieved him of his charge.

When Umphray Spurway took me to my mother's he never stayed long, sitting only to drink a cup of tea, and make his compliments on how well she was looking, his eyes mostly upon the floor the while, uplifted to my mother only when she was ordering the tea bowls with her back to us or spooning the black China herb into the bottom of each.

I remember once saying to my mother, "Why does Umphray never look at you? Is he angry with you, or are you angry with him?"

Her cheek paled and then flushed again. I knew I was hurting her and yet I kept on.

"I do not know whether he is angry with me," she replied, "I am not angry with him!"

And immediately she sent me forth to play on the quay with the town lads of my own age. For she had a notion that I might grow maidenish by associating with little Anna Mark! How far this was from the truth I have already indicated in this history. I fought a good fight behind the butcher sheds with Allan Kemp, Mr. Smalltrash's 'prentice, and beat him by dodging blows as Anna Mark did mine, and then, in the nick of time, planting my left on the point of his chin, after a feint at his breast, a thing I had learned the trick of from her.

But when I was in Abercairn my mother thought that such ploys made me manly, and took no notice when I came home marked on Saturday night, though she did not let me wander far on the Sabbath days—except to visit at the minister's, Mr. Nicol Aitkin—with whose son Jock I have fought as many as seven rounds during service in the windowless corner by the side of the vestry, while his father was developing overhead his seventhly in the application of the "Gospel of Peace to the Christian Home."

So, unlike many Scottish bairns, I ever appreciated and enjoyed my Sabbath privileges—and specially where it was my lot to sit in the kirk.

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And now I come to that which sent me finally and without reprieve to the grammar school of Abercairn.

My uncle John, the falcon-beaked Edinburgh lawyer, had for a little taken it sorely to heart, that his precious instrument being only of effect when, in case of my father's death, he had no control over me or over the estate. The latter, however, he managed in some sore to retain, as well as the power at the great house, by a well-devised system of subservience to the will of my grandmother, the old Lady Stansfield.

This, as he was not a man to squander, my uncle was permitted to retain by Umphray Spurway and John Bell, though they informed him that he must in no case consider himself as my curator bonis.

It happened that about this time, when I was shooting up into a great lump of a lad and Anna Mark growing ever lighter, straighter, winsomer, the old dominie of Moreham died one bitter March day. He was observed to lean long against the wall of his little school, but as that was his ordinary in the act of prayer, none took any notice till he had been more than an hour in that posture. Then one John Dallas, a smith, went and clapped him kindly on the shoulder to tell him that the bairns were waiting for their Scripture. But he found the old man dead on his feet, with his forehead against the cold whinstone of the gable end.

It became necessary to fill his place, and as Mr. John Stansfield was now so forward in matters of the kirk, and so great with my grandmother and Mr. Bell also, it chanced that the choosing of who should succeed the dead man was left in his hands. And late one night he brought one from Edinburgh to be the new dominie.

He was a man far beneath the country standard of height, and as he stood at the master's desk, a small, lean, swarthy man, his eyes very close together, and his hands corded and hairy on the backs, he looked quite unable to cope with the urchins of the ordinary classes, and when the folk remembered the burly plow lads and young fighting cocks of farmers' sons who would be there in the winter, they smiled with significance and said, "God help him."

But in the meanwhile he did well enough. Bernard Kingrose was his name, and he entered on all the offices and emoluments of the old dominie without opposition or comment. He had store of Latin that was without cavil, and to a "humanity man," as he was called, the folk of a Scottish parish would forgive almost anything. Mr. Bell had examined the new dominie, it was said, and found him wondrously well equipped. Now, this is what happened, as I had long after from Mr. John Bell himself, when he had risen to be regent of the college and a great man.

The minister had a physician's prescription, writ by a learned man whom he had known at the college of Edinburgh. It was made out in the English tongue, so that the unlearned could understand it; but of late Mr. Bell had found no benefit from using it. So he was sending it, with a letter, to one Samuel Paterson, in the Lawnmarket of Edinburgh, who was the main poticary and herb doctor in the city. With this paper in his hand, the minister one day entered the school of Mr. Ringrose, in a kind of maze.

"Dominie Ringrose, I have a sore trouble on me," he said. "I am even like St. Paul. The thorn in the flesh doth sore wound me. What think you of this prescription, which the learned Dr. Conradius of Upsala gave me?"

The new dominie took the paper in the shaking hand which made many think him weak (whenever the weather was moist and warm with a south or west wind his hands were wont to shake so that he could not hold a book to read it aright). At first this was set down to drink; but after, when it was seen what a temperate man was Mr. Bernard Ringrose, it was discovered to be an intermitting or tertian ague, gotten from his life in strange lands. So now his hand shook as he took the paper from Mr. Bell, very careless like, and glanced at it.

"You have not been able to have this made up to your mind, minister?" he said, very high and clear.

"No," said Mr. Bell; "seemingly the virtue is gone out of it. I am worse troubled than ever."

"These are vulgar names, sir," said the dominie, "and when such are used oftentimes commoner growths are foisted on the unwary. Permit me to write the prescription in the Latin tongue, with the proper signs and quantities, and you will find that the virtue will quickly return."

So he took a pen in hand and wrote rapidly, muttering to himself:

"Instead of tutsane I will write agnus castus; instead of house leek, a common misnomer, I will write singrene."

And so in a trice, with a quick dash of learned signs scattered athwart the paper, he handed the prescription back to the minister, who was so greatly impressed that if the dominie had told him to eat the paper it would have benefited him as greatly. At least, when the medicine was brought back from the apothecary in Edinburgh, Mr. Bell went everywhere telling of the great skill and prowess of the new dominie in the Latin tongue.

Likewise the people of Moreham need not have troubled about his ability to cope with any offenders in his school. It came speedily to a crisis. Allan Allison it was who refused one day to leave his place, and, being a great fellow of well nigh twenty years and a known fighter, told the master to come and take him out of the bench if he wished and was able. Whereat, without a waste of a word, the dominie made a spring, sudden and fierce as that of a cat after a bird. He used no entreaties. He made no apology. He simply flew at Allan Allison's throat, and the next moment Allan was lying on the floor with the dominie erect over him, his shod heel uplifted above the rebel's face and threatening to stamp the life out of him.

Verily, there was order in the school house of Moreham all the days of Bernard Ringrose, which, however, were not to be many.

For about this time the noise of terrible breakings of houses and bloody murders done upon their owners (it was said by smugglers) ran with a mighty bruit through all Scotland south of the Tay. Strong men went in fear, women shrieked at the cry of a bird, and bairns swarfed if left alone, just as in the days when Philip Stansfield was first lost in the woods.

CHAPTER IV.

The Eyes Behind the Gauze.

That which I am now going to tell happened at the November term, when Umphray Spurway, as was his wont, had given permission to most of his folk to go visit their friends where they would, and he himself had gone with a sufficient number to carry to the seaport of Abercairn all the tweeds and webs of broadcloth he had manufactured during the past six months. He departed on Monday with the first gray light. On Friday night he was to return with all his money, and one or two riding with him in company. The rest, with a month's wage burning a hole in their pockets, abode in the town itself or tailed off at various change houses along the way.

In the miln house abode only Will Bowman, little Anna Mark and myself. There was no weaving done all that day, and in the great sheds with the huge bolted doors and barricaded windows we three played at "tig" and "hi spy" and other games to while away the time. For when his master was absent Will Bowman was every whit as boyish and bairnly as we.

The twilight fell early, bringing a light, sifting snow with it, which, however, hardly whitened the roads. It was bitter cold notwithstanding, and in the miln house we built up the fires, and in the great weaving sheds also Will Bowman built up a pile of boughs and roots on the dogs of the fire grate, chiefly that we might see to play with pleasant crackle and dance of the licking flames. So we raced and shouted, little Anna the wildest and quickest of the three.

But Umphray Spurway delayed his coming so that it was pretty dark, or rather well into the gray dusk, when we heard the sound of wheels without and, as it were, the shuffling of feet, as of men moving a heavy weight.

Will Bowman ran out and a voice from the horse's head bade him open the doors of the mill, for here was a case of fine foreign yarns which Umphray Spurway had sent them from Abercairn to deliver.

"I open the doors at no man's bidding," said Will, "till I see my master's hand of write." Then the leader of the carriers thrust a paper under his nose.

"There, then," he said, "if you can read! I can't!"

"Well," said Will, after considering the paper, "wait till I get some of the weaver lads to help in with the case." And so at the word he ran to the back of the house door and blew three blasts upon the horn. Now, it chanced that some of the weavers had slept all day, and were only now arousing themselves to wash and make ready to go again to the change house. So a dozen or more came drowsily enough at the summons. Then the great doors were unclosed and the huge package brought in.

It had a foreign appearance, but nothing much out of the common in Umphray Spurway's mill, being done up in sacking with curious marks stamped upon it in tar or some sticky kind of ink. It was not particularly heavy, for four of the weavers carried it in between them.

"It can sit there till our master returns," said Will Bowman, eager to get rid of the intruders, for the road carters had no good name.

"Content!" said the chief of the Abercairn carriers, "then do you give us our discharge, a glass of spirits apiece, and let us be going, for we have far to travel tonight, while you bide safe by the fireside."

So Will bade the weavers wait till he had written a receipt specifying the marks upon the case. In the meanwhile he ordered Anna to supply a glass of raw country spirits to each of the men, which they took with a muttered salutation. They were tall men, and so soon as the weavers appeared they utterly refused to come within the lighted weaving shed, urging that they could not leave their horses. So Anna carried the spirits out upon the highway.

In a little Will Bowman heard the rattle of their horses' feet on the hard-beaten road, and looking out we saw the cart rumbling away into the frost-bitten air of night through a kind of cloud, which was the steam of the horses.

The weavers dispersed quickly, mostly to speak away to the change house at the hamlets of New Milns and Moreham, some of the younger to court their joes in byres and barn ends, one or two merely to go back again to sleep.

So we three were left alone in the great Miln house with the newly arrived packing case. It stood in the corner across the angle of the weaving shed with its plain broadside to the blinking fire. Will Bowman replenished the dogs with a new load of wood, and we went on with our game. But somehow the spirit seemed gone out of the hide-and-seek. For as we ran and hid, a dodging shadow, to our imaginations seemed to run beside us, overleaping the looms and evading the eye, as it were, by a bare inch when we looked over our shoulders. Once Anna, to deceive us, hid in the little dusky triangle behind the packing case.

We two were going about to find her, for I had already captured Will Bowman, when all of a sudden she gave a wild scream and came running to us, crying that the case was alive.

"Nonsense, little one," cried out Will, greatly amused. "Some yarn is alive enought when it comes here—both with 'high jumpers' and 'slowbellie.' But this is the finest Spanish wool, white as milk, fine as a wisp of silk and very expensive."

But Anna only clutched my arm and panted: "Philip, I heard something move within. I heard it."

"Tush!" said Will Bowman. "Let us go to supper. Forget it, Anna. You had been running too fast and you heard your own heart beating. So have I many a time."

"Nay, I heard that, too! I was not mistaken," she made answer earnestly. And so, to convince her, Will got a lantern, and, walking hand in hand, with little Anna in the midst, we approached the packing case, which, being set on end, towered above my head, though tall Will Bowman could see onto the top of it.

We examined the thing minutely, back and side and front. It was evidently of some light wood and well packed, for when tilted and let down violently on the floor the contents made no noise. Will Bowman tapped it all about with a hammer and found it all of wood on every side, with many bored air holes and in front a square of common yellowish gauze, wide-meshed and coarse, covered a larger hole. That was done, Will said, for ventilation, and was common in all their foreign consignments.

After all was carefully gone over Will bade us hold our breath and listen. We did so, but save for the stirrings within us and the crackling of the logs on the hearth all was silent, inanimate, dead.

"Well, are you content, little woman?" said Will, patting Anna on the head. But she went out with her face turned over her shoulder, looking back at the thing which had affrighted her.

In the house place of the private dwelling there was a sense of comfort and safety which even I felt strongly. It was good to be rid of the case in the dusky corner of the weaving room, yet I could not get little Anna's shriek out of my mind. It was so sudden and so unlike her.

"I thought I heard my father whisper," she explained more than once in an awed voice. "So I cried out!"

And, in spite of the foolishness of it, the saying stuck to me. We had supper, beef cold, cut thin, on wooden platters, wheaten bread and plenty of home-brewed ale. That is, Umphray only allowed us one mug apiece when he was at home, and to that we now confined ourselves. Only Will and I treated ourselves to a somewhat larger size in tankards.

So in a little the home-brewed gave me courage, and it came into my head that I was in good case to go alone into the weaving room, where the box stood—to show Anna that I cared nothing about the matter, and that I was as brave as any Will Bowman could be, though he had marched with Umphray Spurway's militia.

So I betook me alone into the great shed, and my spirit revived when I thought what Anna would think of me. The case stood in the corner, still and plain sheeted, like many another that had come to the mills of Umphray Spurway.

I threw some logs on the fire and stirred the others with my toe, so that a bright flame sprang up. More and more I threw on in sheer idleness till I could no longer bear the heat. Then I looked about for something to shield my face, but saw nothing on the mantel board, save some tallow dips and a little cracked handglass, before which the mill lasses were wont to order their snoods and part their hair at the hour of noon.

This, without thought, I took in hand and held between me and the fire. The pine branches burnt clear and high, and all the great shadowy place of beams and cross threads, carders and spindles glinted light. The flames danced on the floor and glittered upon the walls, losing themselves among the evasive shadows between the cross beams and the dusky roof.

I felt curiously at ease, and it was with a kind of exaltation that I bethought me of Will, in the lighted parlor, talking to Anna Mark. I was no more than a boy, as Will often said. Yet I was not afraid to sit there in the dusk, with that great ghostly case staring at my back out of the dusk.

Involuntarily I happened to look at the reflection of it in the hand mirror. My heart fluttered like a bird which has dreamed itself free brought suddenly up against the wires of a cage.

I saw in the strong firelight the leaping flames gleam red on a pair of eyes that watched me steadily through the thick, yellow gauze on the front of the packing case.

(To be continued.)

PIRACY NOT PROFITABLE.

No Cargoes of Gold Now Tempt the Cupidity of Mariners.

From the New York Sun.

A son of the old-time yachting captain, Jack White of Red Bank, picked up a Mexican silver dollar of 1834 on Sandy Hook the other day. Capt. Jack said it reminded him of many a dollar he had seen that had been picked up along the Jersey coast and on Long Island shores.

"Mexican silver dollars," he said, "were the money of the commercial world during all the early part of this century and you could find them whenever there were wrecks. Nowadays pirating would not pay, but in those days every ship had to carry a lot of money every time she went on a voyage. Nowadays a captain doesn't have to have anything but a bit of pocket money, and it is a fact that many a ship goes out on a voyage with hardly a dollar on board. If the captain needs anything he can either draw money at any port he enters or else find credit there.

"It was very different a generation ago. In those days a captain had to take out with him money enough to last him for the whole voyage and sometimes for emergencies besides. He often had big sums aboard also that were used in trading, or that represented a cargo sold.

"It was not uncommon in those days for a ship to start out with a full cargo, bound for some foreign port, where the captain would have to hunt his own market. If the cargo wouldn't sell well there he had power to go to any other port to hunt a profitable market. Then when he had sold out he was expected to buy new cargo, either for a home port, or, perhaps, some other port of the world. It was not unusual for a captain to handle half a dozen cargoes on a long trading voyage and come home in ballast with a big box of silver dollars to help keep his ship up to the wind. Even the little vessels carried a lot of money aboard.

"I guess that dollar was wrecked there fifty years or so ago, and it has been drifting around in the sands ever since."

Not a Pugilist.

From the Chicago Post.

"That man McCoy's no pugilist."

"What?"

"I say he's no pugilist."

"What is he, then?"

"He's a fighter. Why, he'd just as soon fight as talk."

Under Certain Circumstances.

From the Philadelphia North American.

"Do you think a young man should marry on a small income?"

"Oh, I can see no objection to it, if he has reached an understanding with her father."

New Year's Morning.

From the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"Thatsh all ri', offshur. But what I wanter know is—what century am I in, nineteen or twenty?"

"I dunno nothin' about cinturies, but yez can take your choice of cells. Both nineteen an' twinty is empty."

AMERICA'S EXHIBIT

We Will Be Well Represented at the Paris Exposition.

GOOD WORK OF OUR COMMISSION

But There is Trouble Brewing in the Palace of Fine Arts.

NOT NEAR ENOUGH ROOM

Special Correspondence of The Evening Star.

PARIS, January 4, 1900.

If the United States doesn't secure everything worth having at the Paris exposition, it will not be from any backwardness in making requests. As it is, you already have a lion's share of the good things. Some time ago, however, a culminating point was reached, and France was compelled to draw the line and cry, "Halt! ask no more of us. We have nothing further to dispose of," thus shattering an iridescent dream of the American commissioners. The beautiful vision was a mental picture of a pier landing on the River Seine in front of the American national building, with express boats flying the American flag plying between that landing and the Pont National, opposite the Louvre, where they would connect with a line of street cars of American build leading direct to the Vincennes annex of the exposition, thus establishing an all-American route from one section of the fair to the other.

Where Stars and Stripes Wave.

But all of the projects of the American commission are not built of the substance that dreams are made of. In the tall white house close by the French administration building of the Paris exposition, from several windows of which for eighteen months past the American flag has been waving, almost under the shadow of the Eiffel tower, are the offices where the United States transacts business with her sister republic and arranges the details for the

F. W. Peck.
Commissioner General.

various displays. It has been the good fortune of the writer to meet on several occasions in the American headquarters, Commissioner General Peck, Assistant Commissioner General B. D. Woodward, Major Brackett, secretary general of the commission, and various members of Mr. Peck's staff, every one of whom is keenly alive to the responsibility that rests on his shoulders, and is doing his uttermost to encourage exhibits worthy to represent the progress of art, science, agriculture and manufactures in the United States.

"We have a real interest," said Assistant Commissioner General Woodward, who, in the absence of Mr. Peck in the United States, has been carrying on the Paris business of the commission, "in displaying to the eyes of the world the very best of our products in the domains of art, science and manufacture. We are striving to show the most remarkable objects we have throughout the length and breadth of our land. We shall also illustrate in retrospective form the development which a century has wrought in our arts and industries.

What Congress Did.

"The government of the United States appropriated originally $550,000 when the total allotment of space for our displays was 150,000 square feet. When the French administration gave us practically double this amount of room Congress gallantly increased the appropriation to meet the situation, and provision was made for the erection of our national building on the banks of the Seine. American citizens can now come to Paris and view with legitimate pride the graceful structure rising with dome-like effect almost 200 feet above the river. They will be at home here, for the French authorities have turned over to the United States as a conquest of peace, to hold throughout the exposition, the land on which is erected the United States National building, the apex of which is crowned by our national eagle with outstretched wings. Indoors the American will be at home with his friends, his newspapers, his guides, his facilities for stenography and typewriting, his post office, his money exchange, his bureau of public comfort and even his ice water. He may consult his "ticker," where from 4 to 6 each afternoon he can receive direct from the New York and Chicago stock markets the latest quotations of the busy forenoon hours at home.

"Congress voted furthermore appropria-

Mr. B. D. Woodward.
Assistant Commissioner General.

tions to build four annexes, viz: Agriculture, Forestries, Liberal Arts and Navigation buildings. In the last named a branch of our United States weather service bureau will be in full operation.

"Our efforts have been constantly seconded by our government. The large transport vessel Dixie has been placed by the Secretary of the Navy at the disposal of the United States commission for the shipment of government and collective exhibits to France. Our various states have come to the front in making special appropriations; California, for a continuous exhibit of fresh fruit throughout the exposition period; Iowa and Illinois, to demonstrate the value of corn as a food product; New York, to illustrate more adequately our educational system; Colorado, to display a pyramid of solid gold worth one million of dollars as the record of the output of the mines within that state in a given time, particularly those of Cripple Creek.

In the Other Buildings.

"Although the United States National building will be pre-eminently the home of the American at the exposition, he will not find here the entire American exhibit. The French classification comprises eighteen groups, for which eighteen buildings have been erected. Our exhibits will be found in the various sections reserved for the United States in these palaces. Our railroad rolling stock, including seventeen mighty American locomotives, bicycles and automobiles, together with a vast workshop for tool machinery, artesian well and oil well appliances, many of our agricultural implements, and the exhibits of the United States life saving station will be displayed in the exposition annex at Vincennes, where the athletic sports, Olympian games and races will be held.

"When I tell you that on this 4th of July, 1900, we shall unveil a monument in the city of Paris to Gen. Lafayette, as a feature of the participation of the United States in the Paris exposition, the money for which was contributed by the children of our public schools and by Congress, who appropriated 50,000 souvenir dollars, to be known as the 'Lafayette dollar,' I shall have given you a general outline of the scope of our exhibition."

Major Brackett.
Secretary United States Commission.
(Photograph by Prince.)

One of the notable features of the exposition will be the California fruit display in the Horticultural Palace. The United States navigation and weather bureau is a curious building, with the main roof arranged like the deck of a ship, and a smaller roof above resembling a ship's bridge, with a tall semaphore mast towering above both. The walls will be decorated with anchors and objects in common to seafaring localities.

The Printers' Mecca.

French journalists will be deeply interested in the United States publishers' building, where the newspaper and printing establishments will install their bulky exhibits. The interior of this building will resemble a large gallery, made up of enormous domes supported by ornamental pillars. This curious architecture is due to the fact that the ground assigned for this building was studded with trees. "Build your annex here," they said, "but don't touch the trees, otherwise you will entangle us in a lawsuit with the gardening department of the municipality of Paris, and we shall never hear the end of it." So the trees were incased and made to represent pillars or columns, and by the introduction of domes a decorative effect was obtained. This may not be classical architecture, but no doubt it is eminently practical. Mr. A. S. Capehart is director and Mr. Charles H. Simms assistant director of this building. One of the notable features will be the production of one of the great American Sunday papers, all the processes being shown.

American forestry will be represented at the exposition by a log cabin 100 feet long and thirty-two feet wide.

Art Dissension Inevitable.

There is trouble brewing in the Palace of Fine Arts. Although the number of American artists has increased enormously during the past decade, the wall space assigned to your country is even less than in the Paris exposition of 1889. Mr. John E. Cauldwell, who represents the United States in art matters, says that only 550 running

Mr. Charles Richards Dodge,
Director of Agriculture, United States Commission.

feet of wall space will be available for American oil paintings, water colors, pastels, miniatures, architectural drawings, illustrations and engravings, so we shall not see more than 250 oil paintings by American artists, and all these will not come from the United States, for a great number of American artists residing in Paris and other European cities are desirous of exhibiting. Such eminent artists as Messrs. Melchers, Harrison, Weeks, Sprague, Pearce, Ertz, Stuart, John Alexander, etc., will be represented by their works in the American section. Juries and hanging committees will have a most difficult task. It is to be hoped that only the very highest achievements of American artists will find a place on the walls, so that your exhibit may make up in quality what it lacks in extent.

Wonderful Wooden People.

One of the exposition novelties will be the Guillaume marionettes, which will give ten or twelve performances daily in an artistic little theater erected by the brothers Guillaume. These men are famous in Paris—Albert as a designer and caricaturist and Henri as an architect. They have put their talents together to evolve something novel for the exposition. The marionettes, or puppets, are not the trivial dolls one is accustomed to see in shows of this kind, but tall figures, articulated by a new process which enables them to move in all directions—to sit down, get up and make all the natural gestures with head and hands. These miniature men and women are dressed according to the latest fashion. Each puppet is maneuvered by a specialist, a different reader attending to each actor, so that the words may be spoken in different tones from behind or below the stage. The first tableau represents a salon of a Parisienne receiving callers at a "5 o'clock" or afternoon reception. The fair women (in wood) are all attired in handsome gowns and move about with consummate ease. The dialogue will be changed from day to day and will deal with topics which can be treated in the lighter vein. The scandals of the boulevards, rumors from abroad, new novels, the current plays and pictures will all be mentioned. The dwarfs will be very free in their criticisms, and as the marionettes cannot well be sued for slander aggrieved parties will have difficulty in getting satisfaction.

Frederic Mayer