

A BLUE UMBRELLA

By AGNES G. BROGAN

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It was a blue silk umbrella, with a lovely white bracelet handle, and a Blue B engraved on the white knob. I have to be very careful in describing it, for this is part of the story.

Our new professor at college is always harping on "preparedness," and what a great advantage it is to success. Well, my thinking of carrying the blue umbrella that day when it looked like rain, wasn't any advantage to my success; but that begins the story.

Mother sent me down to Baillie's for some taffeta to match the dress she was going to wear to the reception that the faculty were giving for our noted professor; I hurried along, preferring to walk the short distance, and when I met Nan Paige on the way we stopped first, and had a soda. And Nan told me of the books this Professor Laidlaw had written on the deepest subjects, and how his picture had been in magazines, and everything, and I was just wild to see him. She said that he looked like anyone's favorite movie actor, and was an idol with the women wherever he went. But Nan said he was stern, too, and would not stand for nonsense or familiarity from his pupils, and we had better impress him with our dignified behavior.

Nan isn't very dignified herself, but I can be, on occasion. So as I walked the rest of the way alone to Baillie's, I decided that I would ask mother to let me wear the plain navy blue dress, which makes me look so old.

Aunt Betty is critical where men are concerned, and is always asking who they are, and what they have accomplished, until Janet is often provoked, regarding her own young men. Janet has plenty of beaux. And mother says that Aunt Betty might have married times over, if she had not been so particular. Aunt Betty is awfully pretty and jolly. But there I stood waiting for that taffeta to be wrapped up, and down came a shower, outside the street grew suddenly dark, and I was glad that I had brought my umbrella. I drew it with some difficulty from before a man who stood beside me at the counter, and stared reprovingly at him, when he failed to beg my pardon. And as I was hurrying down the aisle that man came after me. This time he did say "Beg pardon," but it was with the affront of claiming the umbrella, or trying to claim it, for I certainly did not give it up to him. "Beg pardon," he began, "you have taken my umbrella, under a mistaken impression, no doubt, that it is yours."

"Mistaken?" I asked disdainfully. "I certainly know my own blue silk umbrella. You will notice the letter B; my name begins with B." The man stood still and stared at me disconcertingly. "Notwithstanding the fact of your name beginning with B," he said, "the umbrella is mine."

A crowding female with two jostling boys at her side came between us just then, and I fairly laughed back at the impostor over their heads, then to save trouble and publicity, I ran out of the store, and down the street and on to a street car; and it was not until I had handed in my fare that I took time to realize how brazen that man had been. And he was a nice looking man too, with fine features that any physiognomist would say placed him above petty crime. When I took the taffeta into mother, Aunt Betty was there, and Janet, and they were all talking excitedly about the evening's guest of honor, whom Aunt Betty called "a young man of sterling character."

Nan had spoken more concerning his eyes. Which reminded me of what very nice eyes the thief had. For even if it's only an umbrella you are trying to steal, you're a thief. And by and by when I'd got on my second best dress, I started down the stairs. Aunt Betty was going to have one of her friends in to dinner. And then I stood stock-still on the stair. For she was talking to her friend in the hall that minute, and he was my umbrella man. Yes, really. And I couldn't help hearing him apologize to her for not bringing back an umbrella she'd loaned him, and which, he insisted, had been pulled right out from under his arm in a store. And all at once I felt chilly; for the reason that Janet had given me a blue silk

umbrella for Christmas was because I had so admired Aunt Betty's, and Aunt Betty Baisley's name, naturally, begins with a B.

So there I stood, mystified, yet beginning uncomfortably to see daylight. For it occurred to me that perhaps I had forgotten to take my umbrella with me to Baillie's store, which upon later investigation proved to be true. The two silk umbrellas with their white bracelets stood side by side in my clothespress. And when I came guiltily into the dining room, you may fancy my next humiliation. "Bab's," said Aunt Betty, "let me introduce you to Mr. Laidlaw, the new college professor."

Well, I don't know how I ever should have come out if it had not blessedly happened that Professor Laidlaw is to be one of our family. He's engaged to Aunt Betty. And he really was a good sport, and left me out of his explanations when he was able later to return Aunt Betty's property. But, as Nan says, it was all perfectly thrilling.

JULIA HAD SAID SOMETHING

Sam Was Forced to Admit That His Better Half "Chatted About Dem Clothes."

Courtenay Dinwiddie, executive of the National Child Health council, told the following story at the meeting of the Monday evening club. It belongs to the great fund of family stories of which each home has its share.

His family had a colored woman of the name of Julia, who did the wash, according to Mr. Dinwiddie, her husband transporting the clothes to and from home. One night he started with a big bundle of freshly washed clothing. It had been raining and there were puddles along the street. The unfortunate man slipped, the bundle hit the street, opened up, and its contents went into a mud puddle. Needless to say, he couldn't deliver the wash, and he hated to take it back home. But he was forced to "face the music."

A week later the colored man showed up at the Dinwiddie home with the clothes spick and span. The family, of course, had found out what had delayed their wash and were prepared for Sam.

That worthy, however, did not say a word about his mishap.

"Sam," asked a member of the family, "didn't Julia have anything to say about the clothes when you had to take them back?"

Sam grinned. "Julia—she done chatted quite a while about dem clothes," he said.—Washington Star.

AVIATION NOT HIS OBJECT

Swede Had His Own Reason for Rejecting Offer of That Particular Brand of Liquor.

Stephen Hunter Love of Salt Lake City, prominent in the beet sugar industry of Utah and a member of the food administration during the war, was in Washington for the sugar hearings before the finance committee of the senate. Mr. Love has a great gift for story telling, and is particularly fond of Swedish stories, his imitation of the Scandinavian dialect being well-nigh perfect.

It seems that recently a picturesque old Swede employed in one of the sugar mills thought to himself that he would not mind having a little drink or two after a particularly hard day's work. So he hid himself to a boot-legalizer of his acquaintance.

"You got any that squirrel whisky, Yohn?" he asked.

"No, I haven't Sven," replied the liquor merchant, "but I can give you a little old crow. How 'bout that?"

Sven thought for a moment; then he shook his head.

"Say-da," he said, "Ay don't want to fly; Ay just want to hop a little."—Washington Post.

Unlucky Tom.
A real old-fashioned Yankee was telling a friend of the ill luck experienced by his son Thomas.

"Take the last case, as an example," he said. "Just as soon as he went to Boston to work, Tom fell in love. She lived in one of the suburbs, and directly Tom made up his mind he liked her, he went and bought a fifty-trip ticket to her place and—"

"Well, what happened?"

"What happened? Why, he was turned down at the second call and the ticket was left on his hands! If that isn't hard luck, please tell me what is!"—Milwaukee Sentinel.

Useful Fireplace.
At the Evanston (Ill.) headquarters of the Boy Scouts, a fireplace has been constructed for the study of geology and physiography, says Popular Mechanics Magazine. At the base are shown the different kinds of materials, in their relative positions, that make up the strata of the earth. At the top, many different specimens of ore are shown. Models of a lake bed, and of a river bed, are also built into the fireplace, which is ornamental as well as useful, and it is asserted that the fireplace is the only one of its kind in the country.

Bones of Whales Possibly Ten Thousand Years Old Recently Unearthed on English Farm.

The skeletons of two whales, dating back, it is supposed, 10,000 to 12,000 years, were found by two workmen on a farm near Peterborough, according to the Westminster Gazette. Some of the teeth and bones were submitted to Doctor Garrod of Alconbury hill, Huntingdonshire, and he, in company with two zoological experts, visited the farm and obtained all the bones, with the result that one of the whales has been set up.

The whales were lying side by side under the peat, and just embedded in the clay. On the whole the bones are in good condition, and those that have been taken out carefully are scarcely broken. Unfortunately, the skulls are damaged.

It is believed that many thousand years ago these whales, and perhaps others, swam up a creek when the wash came further inland, and got caught at the top of a spring tide in a place where they were unable to turn.

Another theory has been advanced, though it is rather far-fetched. Some years ago a prehistoric boat was dug up in the same field, and the suggestion has been made that the crew of the boat was hunting the whales at the particular period.

Transposing the Terms.
A western jury had been called upon to decide a dispute over the ownership of some cattle which the defendant had been accused of stealing. It soon became apparent to all that he was innocent, and the jury was out but a few minutes.

"Judge," replied the foreman to the usual question from the court, "we find the plaintiff guilty."

"This court is trying the defendant, not the plaintiff," interposed the judge. There was a hasty consultation in the jury box, at the close of which the foreman rose again.

"Judge," he declared, "we find the defendant not guilty. Howsoever, judge, it 'pears like to us we been trying the wrong man."

Sixty Years a Golf Player.
Deputy Surgeon General Cooper of Norwood Park, England, who is ninety-three years old, has been playing golf for more than 60 years. The venerable medico, who is still working to correct a slice, played his first round on the historic St. Andrews course "way back in 1858."—The Argonaut.

Reform.
"When you entered politics you announced yourself as a reformer."

"I am still a reformer," protested Senator Sorghum. "But I am obliged to be discreet, owing to differences of opinion as to which particular style of reform is entitled to precedence in public attention."

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FOUND MANY PEDAL DEFECTS

Investigators Discovered Bad Condition of Affairs Among New York School Children.

The board of health of New York city has recently made a special study of the feet of the children in one of the public schools with a view to obtaining some idea of the prevalence of pedal defects among young boys and girls.

The examinations, made by orthopedic surgeons, appeared to show that such defects are much commoner than has been supposed. The number of children examined was 356. Seven per cent of the boys and 6 per cent of the girls were found to have deformed toes. Six per cent of the boys and 13 per cent of the girls had "flat foot." Forty-seven per cent of the boys and 74 per cent of the girls had "weak feet." Ten per cent of the boys and 17 per cent of the girls had ingrowing toenails. The feet of 39 per cent of the boys and 26 per cent of the girls revealed corns or other excrescences. Twenty-one per cent of the boys and 2 per cent of the girls walked with their toes turned in.

Most of these troubles were of a character admitting of correction and cure, with proper treatment. If neglected, said the surgeons, some of them might cripple and impair the efficiency of the children affected.

The surgeons recommended that all growing children be examined for such defects and that those affected be watched and treated, in order that later in life they may be "foot-sound."—Philadelphia Ledger.

New York Imports of Gems.
The diamonds and pearls entering this port annually would be worth literally about 30 cents to every person in the United States. The value of the cut and uncut gems entering last October was \$3,440,710. In addition to the real thing imitation gems to the value of \$42,723 entered during the same month.

Notorious Prison.
Belem prison, Mexico City, formerly known as one of the plague spots of Mexico, has been renovated and made into a model house of detention by the Mexican government. Schools for the teaching of manual training and the rudiments of education are maintained for the women, and schools for similar training for the men will be installed shortly. Shower baths and fountains have been installed and the meals are wholesome and sufficient. Heretofore, Belem had been notorious for its unhygienic condition and the worst fate imaginable to be meted out to a criminal was a sentence to this prison.—Dearborn Independent.

Easily Settled.
"Last week Cholly was in a dilemma—in love with two girls."
"The matter was easily settled."
"Eh?"
"Neither would have him."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Love is the highest motive, but faith is the greatest asset that love holds.

Ask Dad—He Knows!

It was little Ethel's first visit to the post exchange. Her father, a marine corps captain, had dropped in to buy some necessary articles and had taken along his five-year-old daughter for company.

The businesslike private drew a pencil from behind his ear, jotted down the sum total of the captain's purchases, wrapped up the articles in a parcel, gave the captain his change, and proceeded to straighten up his temporarily disordered stock.

Little Ethel watched the brisk movements of the post exchange clerk with the keenest interest, but said nothing until her father was ready to leave. Then she clutched at his coat sleeve and asked, just loud enough for the embarrassed private to hear:

"Say, daddy, is he a merchant marine?"—The Leatherneck.

Wheat History Was Made.

Among the ceremonies to celebrate Armistice day in France was the inauguration of the first of the commemorative boundary stones which the Touring club of France is going to place at the points on all roads of France where they cross the lines of the battle front of 1918.

These stones are in the form of a four-sided truncated pyramid with a poilu's helmet, on top, crowned with laurels. On the side are grenades from which more laurels spring, and the principal side, facing the road, bears the inscription, in French, "Here the invader was driven back, 1918." This first commemorative stone was inaugurated at Chateau Thierry, by a representative of the ministry of war, in the presence of the military attaches of all allied countries.

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