

The Light Blue Dress

By Richard Heckman

ILLUSTRATED BY C. C. BEALL

The story of a wonderful girl. She possessed the kind of steadfast faith that makes for miracles

AFTER school that day Mr. Munger, the principal, called Pauline into his office. Mr. Munger's hair had whitened and his shoulders had bent over the desk he sat behind now. He held up a clean sheet of paper on which was written: "Pauline Pratt, Grade 8. The Expansion of the West."

"Pauline," he said, "do you know what this is?"

"Yes, Mr. Munger," said Pauline. "It's my history test."

"Do you know what mark it has?" Mr. Munger asked.

Pauline shifted in her chair and said, "Must be nothing at all."

"Nothing at all," said Mr. Munger. "Now listen to this, Pauline." He picked

up a blue card, and Pauline could see it was her report card.

"Pauline Pratt, Grade 8," read Mr. Munger. "Department 90, Industry 90. But listen to this:

English	65
History	60
Mathematics	60
Science	65
Civics	75

"The five most important subjects in the eighth grade and only one has a bare passing mark." And he read what Miss Fanny had written on the card: "Remarks: These grades are too low for graduation!" Do you know that, Pauline?"

"Yes, Mr. Munger."

"Why weren't you prepared for your history test today?"

"Yesterday afternoon I had to help Mamma candle the eggs because Papa is plowing. I had to wash out Hope's and Truelove's dresses, and last night I had to iron them so they'd have something to wear today. Then I had to go up to bed with the girls, because Billieboy was cutting up in the hall."

Mr. Munger knew all about Hope and Truelove and Billieboy and the kitchen room. "Pauline," he said cautiously, "are you making a graduation dress?"

"Mamma cut it out and I'm sewing on it. I sew on it nights I'm too tired to read."

"Suppose you couldn't wear that dress to graduation . . . because you didn't graduate?"

Pauline couldn't think of that. "I've just got to graduate," she told Mr. Munger. "If I don't Billieboy won't do a thing I tell him, and Bubbie will run wild, and Hope and Truelove won't want to go to school—"

"You can't graduate with grades like these," said Mr. Munger. He stood up and shot his cuffs out of his worsted suit. "Suppose I told you there was just one way for you to graduate. What would you do then?"

"I'd do anything I could."

"We'll see," said Mr. Munger. He went to the door and opened it. "Won't you come in, Mrs. Towles?" he said into the hall. "I want you to meet Mrs. Towles, Pauline."

PAULINE had seen Mrs. Towles before, but never so close. She had seen her up on her hill, where Mrs. Towles lived in the biggest house in town. Mrs. Towles' husband had built it there because he had been kind of sickly, Pauline had heard. And a little while after they moved in he died, and the only time people saw Mrs. Towles was when she came down the hill in her limousine and went back up. Pauline guessed nobody else in the village had ever seen her just standing up like this, and it made her kind of afraid to turn around.

"Hello, Pauline," Mrs. Towles said, so friendly Pauline was surprised. Mrs. Towles wore an old skirt and scuffed shoes and wasn't dressed up at all except for her fur coat. Pauline had never seen anything so soft, even on the creatures in the woods.

"Hello, Mrs. Towles," said Pauline and when she felt Mrs. Towles' hand it was good and warm, not cold at all, as she had been sure it would be.

"Pauline," said Mr. Munger, "Mrs. Towles is going to take you for a little ride. Her car is outside now."

"I've got to candle eggs for Mamma, Mr. Munger," said Pauline.

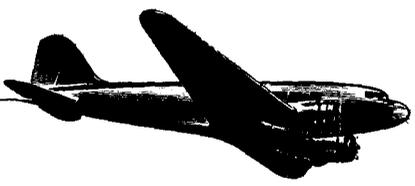
"Your mamma and papa know all about this, Pauline. They want you to go with Mrs. Towles today. You'll be on your own responsibility, and whatever you do, do it because you want to. But remember, graduation is the most important milestone in your young life, and you can't graduate unless your grades will pass you. Good day now."

(Continued on page 92)



All week long the children ran wilder and wilder. They made it harder than ever for Pauline to study. Even Truelove's hair seemed to run wild under the hairbrush

THIS IS OUR JOB...



THE 20 Airlines of the nation are contributing to the full limit of their experience and resources to help win the war.

This job is clearly divided into three parts:

First, we are under contract to the United States Armed Forces, to transport arms and ammunition, men and essential supplies to our military stations wherever they may be.

Second, we have for many months been helping to train combat pilots and ground personnel for

the U. S. Army and Navy, and performing other vital military and naval services.

Third, we are continuing operation as a common carrier air transport system with schedules serving the important war production centers.

"The whole-hearted fashion in which the air carriers have coöperated with the military services in furtherance of the war effort," states the Civil Aeronautics Board, *"has made it possible for them to continue operating under private management"*

THE 20 AIRLINES OF THE NATION

REPRESENTED BY THE AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION, 1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

All American Aviation, Inc.
American Airlines, Inc.
Braniff Airways, Inc.
Catalina Air Transport
Chicago & Southern Air Lines, Inc.

Colonial Airlines, Inc.
Continental Air Lines, Inc.
Delta Air Lines
Eastern Air Lines, Inc.
Hawaiian Airlines, Ltd.

Inland Air Lines, Inc.
Mid-Continent Airlines, Inc.
National Airlines, Inc.
Northeast Airlines, Inc.
Northwest Airlines, Inc.

Pan American Airways System
Pennsylvania-Central Airlines Corp.
Transcontinental & Western Air, Inc.
United Air Lines Transport Corp.
Western Air Lines, Inc.

And in Canada: Canadian Airways, Ltd. • Trans-Canada Air Lines • Yukon Southern Air Transport, Ltd.

We Will Make It

By Quentin Reynolds

Night and day our huge steel industry roars along toward attainment of production figures that would have stunned its most optimistic leaders only a year or so ago. It's a genuine American industrial miracle

A GREAT many people in Washington, in London and in Moscow are greatly concerned over a small strip of land in northern Finland called Petsamo. It may well be that this bit of barren land on which you couldn't raise a decent crop of weeds may be the means by which the Axis powers can prolong the war. Although neither potatoes, radishes nor sunflowers can be grown in this land, just beneath the surface there is ore which produces what the scientists call *Ni*, a metallic element with a specific gravity of 8.85 and a melting point of 1,452 degrees Centigrade—a little thing which you and I call nickel.

Fighting a war without nickel is like playing poker without chips or, for that matter, without cards. You need nickel to produce many alloy steels, and you can't build battleships, tanks, armored cars and airplanes, nor can you make guns, shells or machine tools without alloy steel. Back in 1938, word seeped through the world of science that large

quantities of nickel-bearing ore had been discovered in Finland. There were many who nodded wisely the following year and said that the Russian-Finnish tea party was the immediate outgrowth of that discovery. Those who made a business of analyzing and interpreting international imbroglios ventured the opinion that Stalin was after that nickel because he knew that eventually Germany was going to march into Finland to grab the nice shiny stuff. But this is all in the field of speculation.

So, incidentally, is the story of what happened to the nickel in that section of northern Finland. No word has come from either Germany or Finland as to the richness of the yield in the ore found there. But it is no secret that Germany is still producing plenty of tanks, some battleships and ever so many guns and shells. It seems reasonable to assume that much of the nickel used to produce Germany's alloy steel came from that hidden spot in Finland.

It is no secret, either, that there is a shortage of nickel in this country, although the shortage is not nearly as desperate as it is in Germany, even assuming that the Finnish ore was loaded with the romantic substance. Tonight, after you've read the baseball scores, put out the cat and brushed your teeth, you might take an hour off and invent something to take the place of nickel. The United States Treasury Department will gladly back up a whole flock of trucks to your door tomorrow and unload more money than you ever saw—all for you. It is like that with nickel now.

Let the man down the street find a substitute for rubber. You find something with all the properties of nickel and you'll never have to worry about where your next dish of cereal is coming from. Efficient and high-pressure work by the various departments presided over by Messrs. Nelson, Knudsen et al., in co-operation with private industry, has worked wonders in the transportation of nickel-bearing ore, the production of alloy steel and the eventual transformation of this steel into the implements of war, but not even these herculean efforts have increased the amount of nickel available for war use to the amount desired.

Nickel's a Precious Metal

About 85 per cent of the world's supply of nickel comes from Canada and we get nearly all of that. We used to get some from New Caledonia, but a cursory glance at the map will tell you that there is very little commuting done between the U. S. and New Caledonia this season. Nickel is so precious that in the last war Germany sent the submarine *Deutschland* over here just to pick up a cargo of it. Even so small a ship as a submarine could carry enough nickel to win a major naval battle. There is steel—and there is alloy steel. By adding only five per cent nickel, plus a few other spices to ordinary steel and mixing well, you get an amazing hard, tough alloy steel which will not rust or corrode and which will stand more heat than you ever saw in your life. Nickel

In the photograph above, an incandescent river of molten pig iron is flowing from a big blast furnace to molds beneath the floor. Thousands of tons of ore have been reduced, with the aid of coke and limestone, to what you see here. The heat required to do this is so great that the furnace must be cooled out after repeated charges to repair its burned-out lining. This is a job that has always previously required 90 days. But under the stress of war-production requirements this one was relined in 28 days

is the elusive glamor girl in the story of big steel.

One of the mysteries of the war is how the Axis powers are fighting it almost without nickel. Have they found a substitute for it or have they done as our steel people have done? Before the war the requirements for alloy steel were very high. There had to be a certain percentage of nickel, tungsten, chromium, molybdenum and cobalt present. Smart young metallurgists working for the government discovered recently that hard, tough steel suitable for ship armament or for tanks could be produced with less nickel—in some