

The Free Press Short Story

"AIR APPEAL"

HARRY HARRISON KROLL

PERHAPS Elwood Dawson was as surprised as anyone when the two weeks on the "morning joy" hour at KDH demonstrated that he had microphone presence, and air appeal; but none could have been so delighted as he.

"Time is going to put you over, Dawson," said Lowe, announcer of the early morning programs. "What we had something here at KDH for you."

"Wish so, too," said Elwood, half wistfully.

"Maybe something will break for you, yet, Lowe soothed him. "You never can tell, but don't expect anything."

The break came quickly, and unexpectedly. The morning of the last broadcast, and just before entering the studio Elwood ran through his mail. His heart began to pound. He was so excited through the fifteen minutes that for once his voice cracked, and he realized that he had rather made a mess of his famous yodel number. "When the Mountains Turn From Blue to Gold."

"Good—that hit you, Dawson?" Love wanted to know.

"Take a look at this!" Elwood handed the announcer a letter.

Lowe read the communication, and whistled. "Well, so Station KBA has been listening in on you—that is a break."

"I'll say it is!" nodded Elwood proudly. "Look at that fifty a month they offer!"

"Pretty good, I'll say."

"For a fellow that never made more than a dollar a day on the farm, it's enough to turn his head—almost!"

Lowe tapped the letter thoughtfully. "Go ahead and see what they have for you, Dawson. But I'll have to give you the low down on KBA. It's one of those small town stations, with a very local appeal, just fifteen hundred watts. And I hear the Radio Commission has a weather eye on them, because of questionable advertising. They may be all right. But go ahead and see what they have. Watch them, that's all."

"I'll do that," agreed Elwood, but Lowe's warning sort of took the exhilaration out of him. He answered the letter that day, and waited impatiently, perhaps a bit worried, for the response. When it came, three days later, no word could have been more reassuring. The station manager said that Elwood would be used on a thirty-minute program every morning for a national advertiser, who had goods for rural distribution.

"Later," concluded the letter, "when you have proved yourself—as I am sure you will—we'll give you an advance over the fifty we offer in the beginning."

Elwood Dawson could not turn such a chance down. In fact, he could see no reason whatever for him to think of anything else. A week later he reached Middletown.

Morris Sullivan was most of the personnel of the station—manager, program overseer, advertising hustler, and part-time announcer.

"You're on Doc Claybank's half hour," Sullivan told Elwood. "I'll take you around and make you acquainted with the gentleman."

"But I thought you wrote me it was a national advertising program."

"Ah, Doc Claybank will be—before it's over. Come on."

The two young men walked across the public square, turned down a side street to an ancient brick building, over the door of which was a crude sign:

Wander Stomach Tablets.

They entered. "Hey, doc!" called Sullivan.

A cadaverous gentleman, in stained, shabby clothes, appeared through a door in the partition. The piece had faded, and Doctor Claybank seemed to harbor the same smells. His hair was crow-black, with streaks of gray. He looked odd, perhaps a trifle sinister, and wholly queer.

"Doc, shake hands with Elwood Dawson. Mr. Dawson, meet Doctor Claybank."

"Glad to meet ye! Glad to meet ye!" Doctor Claybank gave Elwood a flimsy handshake.

"Thought I'd bring your young artist around to let you two get acquainted," explained Morris Sullivan.

"Sure—sure! Mighty glad to meet ye, young man. Sit down!" The three sat in uncomfortable chairs. "Now, I'll tell you about Wander Stomach Tablets. I invented the secret formula myself. We have been listening to you over KDH. I told Sullivan, here, right off—'There's our man.' Now, if you make good—and I know you will—inside of a month we can make that fifty an even hundred. Eh, Sullivan?"

"Sure, Doc."

"You just hop right in now and give the customers the best ye got. We'll fill the pill orders!" He fingered. "You yodel, and we'll pill 'em! Eh, Sullivan?"

"You said it!" laughed the announcer. "Couldn't you," he turned back to Elwood, "make up some kind of a signature song? Like this: 'Doc Claybank, humanity's friend. He asks only that you send— You go on from there— send for the old friendly doctor's book, which tells you all about how to end

your suffering! That's the main idea—you dope it up to suit yourself, I mean the words and music. But keep in the idea. Finish up with that yodel of yours. We've been listening to you. Boys around the drug store here have been eating you up. You got country-folks appeal, if you know what I mean!" They rose "Mighty glad you came," Elwood and Morris Sullivan went back to the studios.

Elwood went on the air the next morning. He was excited, in spite of himself. On his first two songs his voice cracked badly. He settled down, nevertheless, and finished the program with all his old-time beauty of voice, and clarity of yodel. When he left the studio and went down on the street, he ran into Doctor Claybank at the drug store.

Claybank made a wry face. "Boy, those first two songs sounded like an old sow with her snout caught in a steel trap! But the finish was great!" He slapped Elwood on the back. "You got everything, boy!"

"Thank!" said the young artist.

By the end of the week, the program was going over with a bang. Saturday's mail brought a heavy response, a hundred letters and cards.

He had a good amount of leisure time on his hands which he used to read books on advertising. The subject fascinated him. Being of an inquiring turn of mind, he started a little investigation by mailing cards to the customers who sent Doctor Claybank orders. He learned, too—small towns are always willing to gossip and display their choicest urban skeletons—that Doctor Claybank had been read out of the state medical association for malpractice. That did not sound particularly good. Elwood did not allow the matter to trouble him.

By the end of the second week, when Doctor Claybank went to the post office with a bushel basket for his mail, Elwood had the supreme thrill of knowing it was his voice that made this possible. He helped the shabby, sniggering doctor carry the mail around to the gloomy brick building. There they sat in the office and sorted the mail.

"Bob," confessed Claybank, "this is what I call a racket! Know what?"

"What, doctor?" inquired Elwood politely.

"It cost me about a dollar a bushel to make them tablets!"

"That all?" gasped the astonished yodeler.

"And they fetch me fifty cents for two dozen. Nothing but baking soda and a little mint!"

"But—but—" Elwood gulped, when Sullivan makes his announcement, he says that the choicest and finest ingredients, from all parts of the earth, go into these stomach tablets."

"Hah! So it is. Don't the mint come from some place, and the soda from some other place?"

"But what about the ethics of it?" Elwood propounded the question.

"Rats!" snorted Claybank.

Young Dawson left, a bit dazed by the whole business. He rather felt ashamed being a party to so frank a fraud as this openly-confessed racket. For the time being his conscience was soothed by the raise to a hundred for the third week, and the certainty that his contract would be for a year. When he had signed, Morris Sullivan had made it clear that in case Elwood failed in his voice appeal, the contract would be terminated.

By now the first thrill had subsided, and he could reason with a degree of clarity. He went to Sullivan. "I just don't much like, Mr. Sullivan, being a party to this racketeering with soda-mint pills, like Doc Claybank's putting out!"

"Hah, you don't eh? That's none of your concern, Dawson."

"It is some of my concern, too!" declared Elwood hotly. "If I have air appeal—and you say I have, and I guess it's no breach of modesty to admit it from my fan mail—I'm just selling myself to a piece of crooked work!"

"Hey, what's bit you?"

"Nothing, except that Doc Claybank is a crook, out of standing with his profession, and I'm a crook with him! Let me quit!"

"Now," growled Morris Sullivan. "Nothing doing! Remember, you're tied up on a contract—and what about the ethics of your signature, eh?"

"Elwood went to old Doc Claybank. "Look here, doc, I'm sorry to come to you with a complaint like this, but I can't go on with this sort of thing!"

"Hey?" Old Claybank peered at him with evil, narrow eyes.

"I'll tell you why. My dad four or five years ago, had a serious disease, and he got to pranking around with pills. Well, he just got worse and worse and if he hadn't come to his senses in time, and submitted to a serious operation, he'd have died."

"What's that got to do with me, and my business, and your programs?"

"Just this: There may be many folks out there who have beginning cancers, and things like that. They are being taken in with this crooked advertising, and they may lose so much time they'll die. Well, if they do, it'll be a party to the crime!"

"Claybank flew into a towering rage. "You're an idiot! How dare ye throw

RAW MILK IS DANGEROUS

Arm Chair Science sends forth an article to the effect that raw milk is NOT poison. The article would have been of greater value if it had contained some science and less armchair. It might have been written (possibly it was), by a one-cow dairyman intent on the peddling of milk from his tuberculous cow; more likely it was written at the instigation of certified milk producers who are apt to advertise and sell their product.

The article is full of mis-statements. It is a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end. Some Minister of Agriculture is said to have stated, "The human race existed long before pasteurization was heard of." Yes, and the human race will probably continue to exist long after the cynical and ignorant Minister of Agriculture is dead and forgotten.

What is the pitch of this article? It is that while pasteurization destroys dangerous germs, it also kills off harmless and useful germs and at the same time destroys some nutritious constituents. The lactic acid germs are said to be killed and in consequence milk cannot sour and decompose while undesirable germs multiply very quickly.

Rosnan, in his Preventive Medicine, referring to lactic acid fermentation, says: "It is sometimes alleged that pasteurization does not destroy natural signal-souring. Milk pasteurized at the temperature recommended (142-148 degrees F.), sours as a result of lactic acid fermentation just as raw milk does, although somewhat more slowly. Nature has no danger signal for infected milk. Milk may be teeming with typhoid bacilli and other disease micro-organisms without its taste, odor, or appearance being changed."

The nutritious value of milk is not changed by pasteurization. There have been hundreds of experiments involving the use of pasteurized and raw milk for children at all ages, for calves, pigs, and other animals, both in the United States and England. In every single case the children and animals thrived about equally well on raw and pasteurized milk with the scale, if at all tipped, to the side of the pasteurized article. It was found, however, in some of these experiments that animals fed on raw milk developed tuberculosis. No tuberculosis resulted in either animals or children using pasteurized milk.

Certainly clean milk is wanted. So is peace among nations. But all milkers are not clean and devoid of disease and all cows are not free from tuberculosis. Pasteurization is designed to prevent the effect of disease and dirt from reaching the user of milk. Its use is analogous to the custom of filtering and chlorinating of questionable water supplies and like the latter is a process accepted by science as a solution of the problem of dirty and infected milk.

The claim that heat influences the availability of calcium is generally denied by scientists. Billed milk with a heat much greater than that of pasteurization is extensively used on the continent of Europe and elsewhere with no ill effects. Many studies, notably that of the U.S. Public Health Service (1932 Report) indicate that the growth-promoting property of milk is not injured by heat.

What will undoubtedly appeal to mothers and fathers of families is the established fact that communities where the milk is pasteurized are free from cases of bovine tuberculosis and undulant fever and that many other diseases have had their malign influence materially reduced by the general use of milk scientifically pasteurized.

The Province of Ontario, Canada, has set a good example to the rest of the world and to armchair advocates of the use of raw milk in making pasteurization compulsory. The legislators of Ontario, the majority of them farmers and

HOME FATALITIES MOST FREQUENT IN WINTER

The Statistical Bulletin, a life insurance publication published in New York says that more persons are fatally injured in accidents in and about the home during the winter months than at any other season.

The fall of home accidents comes with the cooler weather of October and continues to rise until the peak is reached in December or January. One reason for this is that the home population is greater in winter and consequently more are exposed to home hazards. In addition there are special home hazards in the winter months especially those associated with heating apparatus.

Destruction of homes by fire is a common winter occurrence. About one-third of the deaths of persons from burns and suffocation in house fires occur during the months of December and January. The heating plant in many homes is defective. There are leaky chimneys and overheated smoke pipes. The very young and the very old are frequent victims because of their inability to save themselves in emergencies.

Deaths from burns, too, are very prevalent in winter. Almost one-half of such deaths take place during the four months from December until the end of March. Coal stoves, grates and gas stoves play an important part in this mortality all the year round, but particularly in the cold months. More women than men are victims of fatal burns because of their household activities and because of the flowing clothes they wear. Starting fires with coal oil and gasoline are common incidents. Children are the principal victims of burns and scalds for the reason that enforced indoor play during cold weather exposes children to the risk of fire and scalding water.

More than one-half the deaths from inhalation of illuminating and other poisonous gases in the home occur during the months from December to March. The greater use of gas heating appliances and closed windows combine to make the hazard worse in winter. Illuminating gas, which contains carbon monoxide, causes a majority of these fatalities. Sometimes the escape of gas is from a detached flexible pipe, a leaky pipe or the putting out of light gas by a gust of wind, by water boiling over or other means. Stove or furnace pipes become disconnected, or the drafts are set so low that gases escape through the house.

Motor drivers are apprehensive as they

run their motors in unheated home garages where windows and doors are closed. More than 50% of these accidents occur during the four months of cold weather.

Smothering of children is commoner in these months. Usually these accidents are among infants who, for warmth, are taken into their parents' bed.

Among the great variety of fatal accidents about the home, falling is the chief one, all the year around. There are many more of these accidents during the winter months because of ice and snow and additional hours of darkness,

which increase the hazard of badly-lighted stairways and rooms.

External vigilance is the price of safety. —By John W. S. McCullough, M.D., D. P.H.

NOW, WHAT WOULD SHEET

"Mamma," said her little six-year-old daughter, "please button my dress."

"You will have to do it yourself, dear," was the reply. "Mother's too busy."

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed the little girl. "I don't know what I'd do without my-s-self."

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Advertisement for HAMCO heaters. Text: "Plenty warm... thanks to HAMCO! There's healthful heat in steady abundance when the furnace or heater is fueled with Hamco Coke. So clean and lasts so long! Easy to bank the fire with at night—quick to pick up in the morning. A pleasure to handle—so light on the shovel—leaves much less ash than other hard fuels. Today's best heating bargain!—order from your local Hamco dealer." Includes image of a woman sitting by a heater and a sign: "Ask your dealer about the new HAMCO Automatic DRAFT CONTROL and HAMCO HOT WATER HEATER. Two great money saving conveniences." Logo: "HAMCO COKE".

J. B. MACKENZIE & SON RITCHIE & AGAR HAMCO—NOW THE LOWEST PRICE IN YEARS



Oranges 2 New Navels Nice Size Dozen for 25c

Grapefruit Tangerines Marsh Seedless 9 Delicious Flavor Medium, Large 25c Delicious Sweet Thin Skin Nice Size per dozen 10c

Carrots Parsnips 5 CORELESS lbs. for 9c 4 Delicious lbs. for 9c

Cherries 2 Delicious Mild Flavor—Large Fruit Special Price No. 2 Tins for 25c

MUSHROOMS AND OUR FIRST GRADE BUTTER

CARROLL'S LIMITED

Advertisement for CARROLL'S BETTER FOODS. Large list of products and prices: BISCUITS PARTY CREAM SHORTBREAD SANDWICHES 2 Pounds 27c; ALLSORTS Pound 19c; BLUEBERRIES No. 2 Tin 8c; CUSTARD 1-lb. Tin 23c; BUTTER 2 Lbs. 25c; PRUNES EXTRA SPECIAL VALUE 2 Pounds 15c; SYRUP OLD COLONY PURE MAPLE 16-oz. Bl. 23c; OATS FRESH ROLLED 4 Lbs. 15c; CODFISH 1-lb. Pkg. 15c; PEAS 3 17-oz. Tins 25c; MACARONI Pound 5c; SPAGHETTI 16-oz. Tin 15c; STARCH 1-lb. Pkg. 10c; SYRUP 5-lb. Tin 37c; COFFEE 1-lb. Bag 21c; TEA 1-lb. Bag 41c; SOAP 3 Cakes 9c; SOAP Cake 7c; SOAP 10 Bars 21c; SOAP 3 for 25c.

Free Delivery STORE OPEN WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON MILL STREET PHONE 158

You just hop right in now and give the customers the best ye got. We'll fill the pill orders!" He fingered. "You yodel, and we'll pill 'em! Eh, Sullivan?" "You said it!" laughed the announcer. "Couldn't you," he turned back to Elwood, "make up some kind of a signature song? Like this: 'Doc Claybank, humanity's friend. He asks only that you send— You go on from there— send for the old friendly doctor's book, which tells you all about how to end