

The Free Press Short Story

GLOVED HANDS

By ALICE DYAR RUSSELL

MISS ARABELLA CRANE laid down the white gloves...

"Dumb, just dumb," commented Powell, his eyes roving restlessly over the rich interior of the store...

"Have her discharged, then, report her," said Powell, bored and unthinking...

"You take it too much to heart, doctor," the nurse said, her hands were running over the case cards...

"You didn't see that grandmother," the nurse told him calmly. "It took a screw-driver to get this."

"Why did I think it would be?" the not unfamiliar thought visited him that it was too easy for the great ones of the earth to get their own way...

"This was Thursday, and on every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, Powell Crane, M.D., specialist in eye, ear, nose, and throat diseases, gave his time between three and four to the service of the free dispensary...

"The young doctor looked up now from the inspection of the throat of a dark-eyed, thin, shabby little boy with the slight tightening of the lips that the nurse recognized as concern..."

"A very old woman—his grandmother, I think," replied the nurse. "The name was Cartwright. She didn't want to give any information about herself. Poor but proud—you know the kind."

While he listened, the doctor was swiftly and skilfully using an antibiotic spray. "That feels good, doesn't it? Smells nice, too," he commented. "Tell the grandmother to wait with the boy. I wish to see her later," he gave his order to the nurse and helped the little fellow, now smiling dubiously, out of the chair and turned him gently in the direction of the door.

It was a full hour afterward when Crane slipped off his white coat, put on a dark one, left the inner room where he examined and treated his patients, and

went into the waiting room. The chairs were all vacant. "Where is that little dark-eyed boy?" he asked the nurse who was bending over the desk. "The boy with his grandmother?"

"Oh, I am sorry, Doctor Cartwright. The grandmother took him away. Miss Rogers, who was here at the desk, said something that offended her. I am afraid she isn't always very tactful with the patients. She regards them as 'charity,' you know, and thinks 'charity' has no right to feelings!"

"Miss Rogers would be grading some other station in life if I had my snuff," Powell spoke with heat. "That boy had a very bad throat, diphtheritic, I think. I mean to get his grandmother's consent to have him enter the hospital for observation. He needs expert attention, antitoxin and food. Who does Miss Rogers think she is anyhow? This is not the first time she has alienated a patient, but it may prove the most serious!"

"Miss Rogers won't be with us much longer," said the nurse placatingly. "Did you know she is going to be married? We'll have to find some one to take her place. She leaves at the end of the week."

"Can't be too soon to please me," muttered Powell. "See here, you've got the address, haven't you? I'll look 'em up. Why, I didn't really do a thing for the boy—thought I would wait until I had won his confidence if I had to give him antitoxin. He was so terrified, poor little duffer."

"You didn't know what it meant to me," she breathed, her eyes seeking the floor, and then the form of her little brother and her grandmother sitting beside him watching them gravely.

"No, we didn't know. But Aunt Arabella is going to know. Somewhere under the layers she has a heart and I may as well make up my mind to assist her in finding it. I have a notion that the best place for 'Bobby' to convalesce will be in her house. Aunt Arabella and your grandmother must make friends. They are a lot alike, those two!"

"You were kind to come to-night," said the girl, tonelessly. "Bobby would have died without you." There was no warmth in her words, however. Powell felt dizzily in them.

"It was all in the day's work," he answered briefly, fussing with the clasp of his bag. With every moment that passed, he felt a stronger need to justify himself before this tall, proud girl.

"See here I don't believe you understand how sorry I am—what a cur I feel! I owe you a job—that's the size of it." A flash of inspiration came to him. "I think I know just the thing for you. How would you like to work in the dispensary?" The girl in the reception room who takes names, addresses, and so on, before passing the patients on to the nurses, is going to leave. It's a position that calls for a lot of tact and is added deliberately, "loving-kindness. You would have to like children and know how to handle them, as well as their grandmothers. From what I've seen of

can't get his breath!" Powell placed his bag on the table and opened it. "Will you move, please, and let me get at him?" he asked quietly. He spoke to the girl, but he kept his eyes on the grandmother. He felt as though he could not look at the girl again or shame would overwhelm him and render him useless. He had called her dumb. He had not taken the trouble to read the signs of tormenting anxiety behind the civil mask she presented to the world. He had abetted his luxury-surrounded aunt in depriving her, in the name of justice, of her position—and she the bread-winner of this poor household!

The girl sprang up from her kneeling position instantly. "Tell me how I can help, doctor!" she exclaimed, taking up alertness and competence with the words. "Granny, you must let him look at Bobby—do you hear, he thinks best," she told the old woman solemnly. "You must!"

Powell saw at once that there was but one thing to be done; only an emergency operation could save the child's life. Unless a passage were made to allow breathing, the boy would die from diphtheria within the hour. While the doctor worked, the girl stood at his side, steady, competent, intuitive, seeming to know before he spoke how she could best serve. Powell had never seen anyone braver or more deft.

When all was done, Powell turned to her. "You have given me almost a professional's help," he said. Deliberately, then, his eyes searching hers, he added, "I think you were wasted behind that glove counter, Miss Cartwright."

A flood of scarlet swept the girl's face from brow to chin; her mouth trembled pitifully. "But I've lost my job. I was discharged to-day. How did you know?"

The girl did not recognize him. In her inner stress she had been blind and as dumb that morning to everything around her. Powell was tempted to take refuge in her ignorance, but he scorned to act the coward. "Know? Who should know better?" he asked drily. "I was the poor sap with that handsome old lady who asked for white gloves she did not at all need. If you must know the worst," he went on ruefully, "it was I who suggested to her that she get you discharged!"

He saw her hand go to her throat, saw the girl struggle to master herself. "I deserved to lose my job—I wasn't thinking of what I did," she owned bravely at last. "It was no good at all anyway. I detested selling gloves; but—but—her lips quivered and she could not go on."

"But we well-fed ones needn't have been quite so cruel—that is?" he helped her out.

"You didn't know what it meant to me," she breathed, her eyes seeking the floor, and then the form of her little brother and her grandmother sitting beside him watching them gravely.

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you, I think you'd be fine." Do you want it? "Want it?" cried the girl, her hands clasping themselves longingly. "Oh, it's exactly what I do want!"

"Well then, I'll see that you get it. And I'll see, too, that things go right, sort of keep an eye on you." Powell spoke in an offhand manner, but his heart bounded with joy.

Directly and indirectly, salt plays an important part in the agricultural industry. For example, apart from personal use, it is fairly well known that about a million and a half pounds of salt are used annually in Canadian poultry and live stock feeds and over five million pounds in Canadian fruit and vegetable preparations every year, but the application of salt in making roads of the kind particularly beneficial to farmers is not so familiar.

The use of salt in roadmaking is a Canadian idea which is being widely adopted in other countries, as the result of experiments originating in the province of Nova Scotia.

Following the experiments in Nova Scotia, laboratory work was carried out by the National Research Council of Canada and by McGill University, and subsequently the matter was taken up by the United States. During the past three years, considerable mileage of salt-established roads have been laid in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, as well as in the United States.

These roads which are essentially of the low-cost, secondary highway type, states A. Y. Gill, of the National Research Council, consist of a clay bond in admixture with coarse minerals so proportioned and graded as to give maximum density under the compressive effect of traffic. The properties of the clay are improved by admixture of certain chemicals, notably calcium chloride and salt. Calcium chloride has been in use for many years as a dust layer. Its use in integrally mixed established roads is a comparatively new development and the use of salt still more recent.

Investigators claim that the salt has two major effects. It retards the evaporation of moisture when the road is first laid, and the growth of salt crystals as the road eventually dries out tends to diminish shrinkage and cracking of the clay bond. The latter is an important feature as the elimination of shrinkage tends to prevent ravelling of the mineral aggregates under power traffic.

Hotel clerk (to new arrival): "How did you get in?" New arrival: "I just blew in from Montana with a bunch of cattle." Hotel clerk: "Where are the rest of them?" New arrival: "Down at the stockyards. I ain't as particular as they are."

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USE OF ELECTRICITY GROWING Cheap electricity, developed principally from abundant waterpower, is steadily revolutionizing conditions in homes and factories throughout Canada. Electric power is cheaper in some parts of Canada than elsewhere in North America.

About three-quarters of all homes in Canada are wired for electricity. The use of electricity brings several additional comforts and conveniences to the home, such as lighting, electric cooking, electric refrigerators, water heaters, washing machines, humidifiers, clocks and other devices that can be operated by turning a switch and at a cost that is merely nominal. For home use, sales of electric vacuum cleaners during 1935 were valued at \$2,413,543, electric refrigerators over \$3,000,000, and electric stoves, washing machines, ironers, toasters, hand irons, etc., ran into several million dollars.

In the manufacturing field an even greater advance in recent years has been made in electrification. During the eleven years from 1923 to 1934 the use of electric motors in Canadian factories increased by 153.1 per cent., compared with an increase of 86.1 per cent. in internal combustion engines, 46.7 per cent. in steam engines, and 1.8 per cent. in water wheels. The manufacturing industries of Canada in 1934 were 78.5 per cent. electrified and 75.1 per cent. of the power used in the mining industry was supplied by electric motors.

Canada is richly endowed with water-power resources and has made marked progress in their development. Since the beginning of the present century water-power development installations have grown from 173,323 horsepower at the end of 1935. Canada's recorded waterpower resources will permit a turbine installation of about 13,700,000 horse-power, of which only slightly over 18 per cent. is being utilized.

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The King and His Pipe



An unconventional pose of his majesty, King Edward VIII, in a close-up made during the monarch's current vacation on the Bay of Martinique. Sweater-shirt open at the throat and pipe clutched between teeth, Edward looks more like the "half-fellow-well met" Prince of Wales than he was, instead of the austere ruler of Great Britain that he is. (Central Press Canadian Photo)



LADY HAMILTON, THE WOMAN WHO CHANGED THE DESTINY OF EUROPE, WAS IMPRISONED FOR DEBT. THE LADY SECURED SUPPLIES FOR LORD NELSON, WHO DEFEATED NAPOLEON'S FLEET'S THERAPY SAVING EUROPE FROM FURTHER RAVAGES BY THE FRENCH.

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