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*Anti-Cruelty Society*

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Veterinary Opportunities With Animal Protective Societies

W. A. Young, D.V.M.*

WHEN I graduated from the Veterinary Division of Iowa State College in 1919, there was no thought in my mind that I would ever be connected with a humane society. The fragmentary information available to me at that time left the impression that such organizations were composed of extremists of one sort or another whose principle aim was to arrest somebody for failing to provide proper care for an animal.

The humane cause, or as we might call it, the field of animal protection, got its start in the United States back in the 1860's when Henry Bergh, a New York ship builder, decided it was time that something was done to conserve animal life. The two principal abuses bothering Mr. Bergh were the overloading and beating of street car horses, and the overloading and crippling of calves in carts between the stock yards and packing plants.

Today we have the National Live Stock Loss Prevention Board, working on the problems concerned with livestock losses. The present day approach in this activity is primarily from the commercial angle, and secondarily from the humanitarian angle.

Livestock Welfare

Authentic estimates indicate that 12 or more millions of dollars worth of meat is lost annually in the United States because of abusive handling of animals between the farm and market. We in anti-cruelty work are not only willing but glad to have the livestock industry conserve some of these losses and make greater profits, while at the same time we see a reduction in the kicking, beating and crippling incident to some of the market, transportation and slaughter industries. Humane societies' money is paying a considerable portion of the bill for this sort of work. Practically all of the active societies have one or more agents or special officers whose business is to investigate abusive treatment of animals. This field of endeavor reaches out to the pig that's beaten over the back with a hickory cane—the ex-race horse that is working with a sore shoulder on a peddler's wagon—the dog that is tied in the backyard without shelter in the wintertime, and probably beaten because he barks and disturbs the neighbors, as well the job of collecting the homeless, unwanted, surplus and diseased animals in our cities—mostly dogs and cats—and assuring them of new homes or a decent and humane death.

Clinics

Several of the larger societies operate either a clinic or hospital. My own society operates an out-patient clinic which handles from ten to twelve thousand patients annually. The basic rule of our clinic is to care for only those animals owned by people financially unable to employ a private veterinarian. We cooperate with the practitioner on many occasions wherein some of our equipment is useful to him, such as X-ray and special surgical equipment. Thus we utilize humanitarian and philanthropic funds to take a great many charity patients off the shoulders of the practitioner.

Through our educational department
we carry to the boys and girls in schools, and the public in general, practical and useful information on the raising, feeding, handling and housing of birds and animals, together with general information about our furred and feathered friends including farm livestock. Our educational efforts constantly stress the proper care of all animals and urge adequate veterinary attention for the sick or injured. This department of our society does much to advertise the veterinary profession.

**Financing**

The vast majority of anti-cruelty societies in this country are financed entirely outside of the tax dollar, and even outside of the community fund. This makes them stand entirely on their own merits and their success in maintaining an ever increasing program attests to the value of such organizations in the everyday life of our nation.

There are about 600 humane societies in the United States. Some of them deal only with child protective problems, some only with animal protective problems, and some with both. They are state chartered and operate under the laws and regulations of their own state. Most of them do excellent work, but like all businesses, professions or activities there are some who fail to carry on their activities in the best or most proper manner. I am glad to say, however, that there are very few anti-cruelty societies which would fall in this category.

**Donations**

The supporting moneys come generally from persons interested in seeing our nation live up to what might be called a square deal for birds and animals in the most civilized nation of the world. Donations from pennies up to rather large sums make the work possible. Bequests from estates enable us to construct buildings and make plans for future expansion. As a private corporation, non-profit, our minds are centered upon doing the job at hand and doing it well without the worry of profit, except that profit and satisfaction which comes from doing a job well.

The employment opportunities in the field of animal protection are somewhat varied. They cover the fields of kennelmen, ambulance drivers, special officers or investigators, livestock agents, humane educators, the usual office personnel, clinic or hospital veterinarians, and last, but not least, an executive officer or director.

**Veterinarian's Place**

The veterinarian is educated to professionally relieve the suffering of animals. The humanitarians endeavor to do the same thing through philanthropic channels; the veterinarian is professionally trained to do what the humanitarian's heart tells him is proper and right. Thus it is easy for me to understand why I am in my present position. I was born and raised on a farm, educated as a veterinarian, eventually became affiliated with humane work and ended up in my present position where I find much satisfaction in the good accomplished through the society's efforts for both man and beast.

One thing that I feel has been in error, or at least an oversight, on the part of the veterinary profession is that so few veterinarians have affiliated themselves with humane societies, and particularly in the executive part. They are fitted for this sort of work by their training and education, and with a little effort on their part could acquire the needed finish on the executive side of their training. There is much satisfaction to me as a veterinarian in my work, and I am enabled to do what's best for the animal and the owner regardless of cost or circumstances. I am not obliged to burden myself with a great overhead in a hospital establishment, while at the same time my compensation is quite satisfactory, particularly so when I compare it to the recently published schedule of salaries for professors, deans, etc., at Iowa State. Some of these men I am confident could have done better financially in animal protective work.

**Opportunity**

In any chosen field of endeavor one must always think of at least two principal points. First, with the compensation enable me to live a comfortable, normal life and provide for my family? Second,
will my efforts do good for others; bring satisfaction to myself and the feeling to me at the end of having done a good job? In behalf of those of us working in anti-cruelty work, I can assure you that the answer to both these questions will be YES.

My hope for the future is that more veterinarians will investigate the opportunities of making a comfortable livelihood while serving your fellowmen and the animal kingdom offered by the animal protective societies throughout our great country.

Campaign for Veterinarians

A still greater nation-wide public relations campaign on behalf of the veterinary profession for 1946 has been announced by Associated Serum Producers.

This group of companies, which has been carrying on this campaign of public education, has just voted the largest appropriation in its history for the expanded coast-to-coast program. The two main objectives in 1946 will be to make people more conscious of animal health problems, and to show animal owners the wisdom of relying on the veterinarian for dependable diagnosis and treatment.

The expanded campaign this year will include national magazines, farm publications, newspapers, and radio stations “blanketing” every section of the country. The magazine and farm paper campaign, reaching more than six million readers per month, will highlight the series of educational advertisements entitled “What the Veterinary Profession Means to Mankind,” featuring major accomplishments of the veterinary profession both in public health and animal health. The 22 magazines and farm publications to carry this campaign in 1946 include: Country Gentleman, Successful Farming, American Kennel Gazette, Progressive Farmer, Southern Agriculturalist, Hoard’s Dairyman, Chicago Drovers Journal, Omaha Journal Stockman, Kansas City Drovers Telegram, St. Louis Livestock Reporter, Western Livestock Journal, Prairie Farmer, Wisconsin Agriculturalist, The Farmer, Wallace’s Farmer, Nebraska Farmer, Michigan Farmer, Pennsylvania Farmer, Ohio Farmer, National 4-H News, and Better Farming Methods.

The newspaper campaign will be two-fold—a series of illustrated articles and cartoons dealing with animal health problems and veterinary service to 2,600 newspapers, and regular news releases on timely animal health subjects throughout the year to 3,500 newspapers.

In radio, the Associated Serum Producers will also carry on a two-fold campaign on behalf of the profession. One phase will include livestock health news items throughout the year to 690 radio stations, coast-to-coast. Another phase will be an intensive spot announcement campaign in the spring, warning swine producers of the dangers of hog cholera and pointing out the advantage of having the veterinarian do the vaccinating. In addition, a special farm paper campaign in major hog-raising states will also feature this hog cholera theme.

“We feel that the need for public education on the value of modern veterinary service is greater than ever before,” a spokesman for Associated Serum Producers said this week in announcing the 1946 program. “There are many interests now seeking to undermine the veterinarian and his practice, and some are actually attempting to mislead the public in this respect. It will take concerted action to meet this challenge—and for this reason, we have planned the largest and most intensive campaign of public education that our resources will permit. We hope and believe that the benefits of the program will make themselves felt in every community where veterinarians are in practice.”

Virtually all the material in the campaign will be issued over the name of the Associated Serum Producers’ educational bureau, the American Foundation for Animal Health.

The leaves of the hickory, for some strange reason, gather and store the rare-earth elements of the cerium and yttrium families. The role of these elements in the plant is unknown.