1951

Notes From the Book of Experience

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Recommended Citation

Wilson, Mrs. F. B. (1951) "Notes From the Book of Experience," Iowa State University Veterinarian: Vol. 13 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.

Available at: https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/iowastate_veterinarian/vol13/iss1/2
Notes From the Book of Experience

Mrs. F. B. Wilson*

REALIZING that you, the reader, might not be interested in a biography, I talked to a number of wives of successful practicing veterinarians and I am editing their contributions in my desire to give you, as wives and prospective wives, a few helpful hints.

In each interview I simply asked one question, "What would you say if you were asked to write a short article for the Iowa State College Veterinarian?" The conversation rolled on from that moment.

Some statements were of the negative variety. Do not marry a veterinarian if you are afraid to stay alone.

This reminded me that we had no more than set up housekeeping, in fact it was during the very first week, when my husband was called to care for an animal many miles away, going part way by car and completing the trip on horseback. He would necessarily have to remain until the patient recovered. He was gone three days.

We were then living in a western state in the heart of the Rockies, in a long narrow valley where neither the road or telephone systems were very extensive. But I was raised in the West where anything can happen, so I was not nervous and decided not to worry. Not long after, an understanding veterinarian in the county seat town gave me a small house dog which became so devoted to me that the slightest outside disturbance was given his complete attention. This gave me a feeling of security and the only time I was ever in danger from an intruder, this pet gave me the warning I needed.

If you are an introvert, or of a suspicious nature or demand much personal attention, you would be miserable, one wife reminds us. Those characteristics I would not have thought of, being of a trusting disposition. I can always gainfully occupy my time.

One wife reminded me that you might have to listen to bad language, swearing or worse, if you are to have the office at your home; which is sometimes necessary and practical. Personally, I think this often depends upon the community. Anytime I have been in the office, located in the business district, every client has been very courteous.

Another suggested that Sunday would be a big day for work if you allowed it to be such. Nothing but emergency cases were cared for on Sunday and our clients soon learned to respect our stand.

On the other hand many positive viewpoints were gleaned from our talks.

Begin early to take a vacation once a year. It is fatal to over work and you soon lose a sense of appreciation for any other work or of the beauty in your surroundings. This makes a trip away from home a requisite. A vacation well planned brings pleasure and is educational.

While I am none of these, the advice to

*Editor's note: Dr. and Mrs. Wilson live at Guthrie Center, Iowa. Mrs. Wilson is retired president of the Iowa Women's Veterinary Medical Association.
wives is that you should be good book-keepers, proficient in general office work, and as cooks you should be able to snatch a complete meal from the stove at a moment's notice.

For my part, I do know that getting the meal only when you find the husband actually present is the most economical method and it is sensible not to care what time of day or night it is served.

All homes must have telephones handy, in at least two locations and connected to the office. If the family expects to be outdoors part of the time an extra bell is an asset.

In answering a client's call you must know his name, whether or not your husband is in that vicinity at the time, when he will be in and when the present caller may reasonably expect an answer. Find out the trouble and keep an accurate list of calls with time notation, even though you may have to ask several questions.

There may be tragic instances, such as a widow with children, whose dairy herd was her only support, losing the cows one by one through poisoning, while waiting for a near-by doctor whose office girl said he would be right out. She knew it would be at least three hours before he would be available, because of the work he was doing.

Or, bordering on the humorous, I recall a man telling me he had waited hours for four days in our office to see the doctor. Finally he came to the house with his story and in exasperation, I informed him that my husband did not earn his living in a swivel chair. If he would use the telephone I would give him an appointment. He was our best telephone using client from that time!

And last but not least important, I know of two instances where practitioners have given up lucrative practices because their wives have not had the proper sense of values. You may have an idea that you do not want to live in a certain place but if your husband sees a future there, better remain. In participating in the life of the average community you will be busy enough to forget the call of the will-o-the-wisp, letting time prove the wisdom of his choice.

The real pleasure in writing this has been the fond recollections brought to mind and I sincerely wish for all of you in this work a measure of the satisfaction we have had in serving our community and in living congenial social lives with our town and country friends.

Litter is important in the poultry house. A layer from four to six in. deep should be used on the floor to aid in controlling the moisture in the house. The kind of litter used is not so important as long as it will absorb moisture.

Total membership of the American Brahman Breeders Association now amounts to 1,270, representing 43 states and 23 foreign countries, according to Harry Gayden, executive secretary of the association. Fla. Cattlemen, Aug., 1950.

Registered Herefords sold through the auction ring so far this year have returned their owners more than 10 million dollars; an over-all average of 520 dollars per head. Amer. Hereford Jour. 8/15/50.

Research with Cortisone, one of the newest, most powerful of the “wonder” drugs, will begin soon at Michigan State College's school of veterinary medicine. It is believed to be the first veterinary school in the nation to work with the drug.

Anaplasmosis of cattle is reported to exist in 27 states. The annual loss from it is estimated to be $4,000,000 and to have exceeded $500,000 in Oklahoma last year.