

Woman's Interests

Household Children Cooking Fashion

Mrs. Wilson Finds Real Happiness in Nursing President to Health

BY ZOE BECKLEY
N. E. A. Staff Correspondent
WASHINGTON — For a solid year the First Lady of the Land has shut up her beauty and her charm in the sickroom and private office of the president.

There have been anxious days; many of them; but Edith Wilson has been happy in her hard role of nurse and business woman—happier, some say, than ever before.

No Easy Place
Sentimental Susie, sighing to be the wife of an illustrious man, doesn't realize that it is a lot easier and more comfortable to be plain Mrs. William Jones of Blinksville. It is never a simple matter, being a president's wife.

As in Mrs. Wilson's case—unparalleled in White House history—the test may come without warning, bringing a burden of work and anxiety that only an exceptional woman can successfully carry. A woman, say, whose entire character finds expression in one well-marked channel—a love which is concentrated upon one object.

In Mrs. Wilson's case it is her husband. Ask anyone in Washington: "What interests has the president's wife?"

"The president," is the invariable answer.
"But what work appeals to her?"
"The president's," is the reply.
"Surely she has some pet ambition, some—"

"To make the president happy."
"Well, has she talents? Hobbies?"
"Yes. Her talents are reading aloud, playing golf, discussing human affairs, writing letters, analyzing reports and pardon pleas, hunting up good detective stories, supervising the household, motoring and movies—all with, for and because of the PRESIDENT."

Surprised Many
This devotion to the president took a form that caused many a seasoned politician a start of astonishment about a year ago.

They knew her for a charming woman, with gracious Virginia-born manners and a bright way of telling an anecdote or dinky story.

But that she should develop almost overnight the kind but stern competencies of a trained nurse, the tact



MRS. WILSON

of an experienced diplomat and the resourcefulness of a professional entertainer, made them sit up and take notice.

Senator Amazed
"I confess," Senator Carter Glass told me the other day, "I was amazed at the promptness with which Mrs.



ADVENTURES OF THE TWINS

by Olive Roberts Barton

MR. SCRIBBLE SCRATCH

The Fairy Queen thanked Tingaling and the twins for the rent money, very sweetly, then a worried little frown appeared upon her face. "Here's the money for everything," said she, pointing to the big pocket-book they had laid in her lap. "But where am I to get people to do things? It's time for the Meadow-Grove School to start, and my chief fairy schoolmaster, Scribble Scratch, can't find a soul to help him. He can't teach the sums, be the janitor, attendance officer, singing teacher, and everything else, all at once. Rubadub is tired out from his duties in Scrub-Up-Land, and here's Tingaling puffing like an engine pulling 40 coal cars, so I know HE can't help. Fat people can't teach school anyhow, some way. Did you ever see a fat schoolmaster or schoolma'am? No, indeed. Besides, fat people are so jolly they'd have the children playing 'riddles' and 'hid-yo' instead of doing their 'times tables' and 'divided by's.'"



"Please," said Nick timidly, "may we help Mr. Scribble Scratch?"
Nancy looked at Nick, and Nick looked at Nancy, and their good friend, the Magical Mushroom, looked at both of them.
"Go on," whispered the Mushroom encouragingly. "Why don't you ask her?"
"Please," said Nick then, timidly, "may we help Mr. Scribble Scratch? I can look up the trunks because I've got my Green Shoes to take me around."
"And I," put in Nancy eagerly, "can dust, and shine the windows, and help with the singing."
"And I," spoke up the Magical Mushroom quickly, "can teach them any language at all from Hottentot to Chinese."
"Tut," put in a new voice just then, "all we want is chipmunk chatter and groundhog grunting. And nothing harder than X.Y.Z.'s."
Everybody turned and beheld Mr. Scribble Scratch, the fairy schoolmaster.

Wilson renounced every other interest in life and from the moment of the president's illness applied herself to helping and sustaining him.
"She showed from the first a grasp of affairs that surprised us all. She never intruded, yet she was always there, ready and able to write a good letter, see an important caller, convey the president's views to this or that official.

Always Cheerful
"No matter how much serious work she did, she always kept her brightness and sense of humor, and the optimism that never failed her even when the president's condition was gravest. She had a hard task, too, to sense exactly the right proportion of work and diversion to allow him. His activity and conscientiousness made him restless, at times difficult. Yet Mrs. Wilson's common sense judgment always guided her aright."

Now that President Wilson is better and able to work three or four hours a day, Mrs. Wilson's nursing duties have merged into those of a trained personal secretary.

Tumulty's Praise
Joseph P. Tumulty, apparently far from feeling that his nose has been put out of joint by the First Lady's assumption of secretarial services, voices enthusiastic admiration. He says if he "knew how to write" he would like to "write a book about Mrs. Wilson" so that people would "know how wonderful she really is."

"—so versatile and dependable," is how Mr. Tumulty puts it. "She has no showy talents, yet she can do everything that really counts."

"She does things in a businesslike way, but always with tact. She knows how to meet people and entertain them. She's a splendid story teller and pianist. Yet she never loses dignity nor says an indiscreet thing."

"She is a woman who can keep a secret. There's just one secret she can't keep, and that is her love for the president. That is her whole life—her devotion to him."

Devoted Daughter
Being the president's wife certainly has not set Mrs. Wilson apart from her family, the Bollings, to whom she is devoted with the very second-best devotion of her heart. Every day, during the hour or two when the president is occupied with Dr. Grayson's electrical treatments and rest periods, Mrs. Wilson walks over to see her mother at the Powhatan hotel.
"She is the most loving and loyal woman I ever knew," says the former Miss Benham, now Mrs. Helm, who for years was Mrs. Wilson's personal secretary. "Working for her was never anything but pleasure—and I assure you the lot of a secretary to the president's wife can be far from a happy one!"

Her First Interest
"What interested her most," I asked, "when you were secretary?"
"Her husband," promptly replied Mrs. Helm, running true to form.
"She is a woman who asks nothing else of life than to devote it to the man she loves."
"Quiet and home appeal to her. She goes nowhere, holds no receptions, serves but an occasional cup of tea to

the cabinet ladies, has no entertainment but the White House phonograph and movies. Yet I believe she is happier in her life of seclusion and constant service than she ever was before."

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