

TEACHES SYSTEM TO "THE SYSTEM"

Mary Shapiro, the Remarkable Business Housekeeper of Wall Street.

ITS EFFICIENCY ENGINEER

She Tells Employers How to Minimize Their Office Expenses and Get Better Results—Some Unique Employments.

By RICHARD SPILLANE.

Wall street has something entirely new, a business housekeeper. She calls herself a visiting secretary, but visiting or business housekeeper more nearly defines her work. In the home of "The System" she is teaching system. She is a scientific office woman. When a firm or a corporation finds its office force does not work well, or that expenses are out of all proportion to the results achieved, she straightens things out. What the efficiency engineer who goes into a factory and, after careful study, reports to the manufacturer what must be done to check waste, she does for the banker, the broker, the lawyer and the mining man. No job is too big for her, and no job too small. She has been in Wall street long enough to know its needs and has had experience enough to know how to meet those needs.

The business housekeeper is Mary Z. Shapiro. She went to the street when she was a slip of a girl. She is less than thirty now, but she says it seems as if she has been in the financial district for ages. Most of the stenographers down town or up town are most happy when they have the least to do. They chatter and gossip and watch the clock rather than think of ways and means by which they may serve their employers or improve



"You Disorganize Your Office Force by Your Interference With Their Work."

their minds. Occasionally there is one that is different. Miss Shapiro was different. She was earnest, ambitious and eager to learn. She wanted to have her full share of the innocent pleasures of life, but downtown meant business to her. As she wanted to go ahead in the world she could not see wherein she would be doing justice to herself if she did not learn everything she could about business.

Learned Something Every Day.

What education she has got in the schools of New York. A good pupil can learn a lot in the schools of New York. There is a lot more that can be learned after leaving school. This girl stenographer learned something every day. She studied her employer's business, studied the methods by which things were done and retained all the knowledge she obtained. She was not content merely to transcribe the notes of her employer's letters. Whenever she could make herself useful at any other work, she was eager to do it. First of all, she wanted to be a first-class stenographer. The more difficult the dictation the better she liked it. Within two years she could write so fast stenographically and so accurately that she was the pride of the office.

It is all very well to be a first-class stenographer, but stenography has its limitations. She could not hope to get more than \$25 or \$30 a week, regardless of how expert she became. She wanted to fit herself for something better. She had an idea that if she became well grounded in business she could fit herself for some really good position. The New York university has a department of commerce, accounts and finance which is designed to equip students for the greatest usefulness in business. Miss Shapiro went to the university and entered this department. She studied com-

merce and accounts and finance with the deepest interest. She has a wonderfully acute mind. The study fascinated her. When she was graduated she had learned as much as her teachers could impart to her.

She wanted to be thorough so she was not content to work in only one branch of Wall street's business. She took various employments simply with the idea of getting experience and knowledge. She worked for a banker and she worked for a broker; then she worked for a lawyer, then she worked for a mining man.

Too Good for Clerks.

A clever young woman learns faster than a clever young man, and has a better grasp of detail. The men Miss Shapiro worked for were delighted with her services. They would have been happy to have retained her as a clerk. But she did not wish to remain a clerk. She had a finer mind than some of the men she worked for, and a better grasp of business. She thought she might aspire to some official position, like secretary or assistant secretary to a corporation. She knew she had executive ability, and with her skill at accounts and her fine grasp of correspondence and general business she knew she could give good service. Men who knew her capabilities praised her highly, and declared she was one of the brightest young women they ever had found in the business field.

Praise is very pleasant, but when there was a vacancy in a secretarial position, and Miss Shapiro applied for it, those who had the awarding of the position hemmed and hawed. They would like to give it to her, they acknowledged, but it never would do. They had to have a man, they said. To have a woman in an official position would be unconventional. Business is bound by convention. Some day it may be different, but that day is still distant.

Became Efficiency Engineer.

Miss Shapiro had hopes of attaining her ambition after a while, but as time went on and she saw no change, she began to think of other ways and means of improving her condition. She kept her eyes open all the while. She studied offices and she studied business. She saw a lot of waste and she

lect, or has been close to it too long to see it in the proper light. One big broker who employed Miss Shapiro acknowledged that his expenses were altogether too large, but he could not see for the life of him how he could reduce them. Miss Shapiro looked over his books and studied his case for a day. Then she startled him by an explanation so simple that he almost was ashamed of himself. The broker had offices large enough for a concern that did twice or three times the business. His lease was about to expire. She pointed out how, by a rearrangement, he would have plenty of room with half the space. She consolidated the work of some of the clerks, readjusted the whole establishment, and got her pay. One day of study on her part meant the saving of several thousands of dollars a year to that broker. Not only that, but it brought about a better constitution in the whole establishment. The broker thinks she is a wonder.

Sample of Her Work.

A very rich and good man of Wall street sent for her. He could not understand why it was he never could get the service out of his clerks that other men seemed to get. He paid them well and showed every consideration for them, yet, somehow, they lagged in their duties. The man is very charitable. When appeals are made to him to aid he wants to be sure that what money he gives is well bestowed. His employees have a great affection for him and do their best to please him.

Miss Shapiro studied this office and then surprised the kindly gentleman by telling him that the trouble was with him.

"You send this clerk and that clerk out," she said, "to investigate cases of charity, and you disorganize your office force by your interference with their work."

Then she gave a list of the number of hours this clerk and that clerk had been absent. The number of hours the clerk had been absent did not measure the real extent of the interference in the office routine. Four hours' absence in one day sometimes meant the actual loss of the whole day's service of that particular worker, and incidentally it tied up the work of other clerks whose duties were dependent upon that particular person. Usually the person sent on the philanthropic errand had the direction of several other clerks and they were idle by reason of his absence.

The kindly gentleman frowned and said he did not see how to remedy the trouble. He knows now. Miss Shapiro has taken over a large part of the work connected with the charity cases.

A lawyer with a big office staff had been subjected to no end of embarrassment. He never seemed able to have things done to his satisfaction. He paid out a lot of money, but it was no use. It did not take Miss Shapiro long to find the answer. It was cheap help. The lawyer had a chronic objection to paying decent wages. He had a lot of incompetents, and paid more for them than he would for a smaller number of employees who would do his work in first class shape. It was not pleasant for him to be informed of the truth, but Miss Shapiro had been in lawyers' offices long enough to make him understand how far below the average his employees were in grade and he commissioned her to reorganize his force. He has a good office staff now. It costs less than the old one and he is getting excellent service. He is cured of the idea that what is cheap is profitable.

Elimination of Waste.

These cases are merely typical. Occasionally the trouble in an office is due to a well-intentioned but poorly-qualified managing clerk. Miss Shapiro studies each case just as a scientist studies a subject. The symptoms of disorder in an office are as apparent to her as the symptoms of an ailing person who comes before a physician for examination. Once the trouble is located, there is no difficulty in applying the remedy. One of her greatest values is in the elimination of waste. She knows pretty well what supplies an office should use, whether it be a bank, brokerage house, a lawyer's office or a mining engineer's. She knows, too, the costs of supplies. When she goes over the accounts it does not take her long to tell if too much money is being spent, and what would be a reasonable amount to expend.

The range of her work is remarkable. Some of her employments are unique. She has a sort of emergency clearing house. In some small establishments the whole office is thrown out of gear if the one stenographer or the one clerk employed is ill. Miss Shapiro is prepared on a moment's notice to supply a stenographer trained in legal work for a lawyer, or one trained in brokerage business to a broker, or one trained in mining affairs to a miner. It is the same, too, in regard to a clerk.

As the business housekeeper of Wall street it would seem that she would have plenty to do. But it is the busy person who always has time to do something additional. With all the calls she has upon her time in the financial district she, somehow, finds opportunity, not only to act as secretary of the Federation Settlement house, but to take part in the activities of that great institution.

Usually the highly capable business woman is sharp-featured, crabbish in manner and dowdy in dress. Miss Shapiro is feminine to her finger tips, wonderfully attractive in feature and, in addition, is one of the best dressed women down town.

New eyes are better than old. Sometimes a person is too close to an ob-

WIT and HUMOR



NOT QUALIFIED AS MUSICIAN

Sambo Declined Place on Band Because He Couldn't Even Carry a Tune on a Mouth Organ.

The conversation in the lobby of a Washington hotel the other night turned to charitable work, when Congressman William P. Borland of Missouri was reminded of an incident along that line.

Some time ago Sambo Smith was watching the development of a watermelon vine in his garden on the outskirts of a southern city, when the esteemed Washington Snow rambled down the road and became a part of the immediate scenery.

"Mistah Smith," began the esteemed Snow, trailing his way across the garden, "I hab come to see yo' on some 'ponhtant business."

"Yes, sah," agreeably answered Sambo. "What kin I do fo' yo', Mistah Snow?"

"We am gittin' up a mission band, Mistah Smith," impressively replied the other, "an' we would like yo' ter jine."

"Say, Mistah Snow," broadly smiled Sambo, "yo' make me laugh like great happiness! Yo' know berry well dat I kain't even carry a tune on a mauf organ."—Philadelphia Telegraph.

Dying, Egypt, Dying.

"Cleopatra, my Egyptian deity, why is the local train from Rome to Cairo like a poor baseball league?"

"Antony, my easy Mark, I confess I know not!"

"Ah, Cleo, the local train from Rome to Cairo is like a poor baseball league because, Cleo, because of its many short stops!"

Fanfare. Bus. Cleopatra reaches for favorite asp.—Harvard Lampoon.

Not Worth Mentioning.

Snooker (fiercely)—Your fowls have been over the wall and scratched my garden.

Chanks (coolly)—Well, there's nothing extraordinary in that. It's their nature to scratch. Now, if your garden were to come over the wall and scratch my fowls, it would be extraordinary, and something worth communicating.—Pearson's Weekly.

What Next?

The following, overheard on the subway, is offered to our readers without prejudice:

"The women are now importuning President Wilson to establish a woman's independence day. Great Caesar! Are they never satisfied? They already have 365 such days."—New York Post.

Financial Finesse.

"Has Burroughs paid you that \$5 he owes you?"

"Yes; and say, that fellow is a born financier."

"What do you mean?"

"He paid the \$5 in the morning and established confidence to such a degree that he borrowed ten that afternoon."

WORKS BOTH WAYS.



Wiggs—Courtesy helps business.

Wiggs—Yes, and good business makes a man feel a heap more polite, too.

How It Happened.

"How did the accident happen?" asked the sympathetic friend.

"Well, I'll tell you," replied the man on crutches. "The automobile was going pretty fast and all of a sudden we struck a wet place on the asphalt and there was a noise and the doctor said:

"He'll be able to be around in about four weeks."

No Consistency.

"I don't understand George," said the bride.

"How so?"

"He told me to sweeten his coffee with a smile, which I did. And then he went and put in two lumps of sugar, anyhow."

HOW HOPP LOST HIS MONEY

Thrills and Joys Experienced by Amateur Stock Gambler Are Related by Railroad Man.

Stuart C. Leake, the railroad man, who spends much of his time traveling between Richmond, Va., and New York, has all sorts of friends and acquaintances. One of these is a man named Hopp.

"Hopp," said Leake, one day in Philadelphia, "what have you been doing with yourself?"

"The biggest thing I've done," explained Hopp, "was to experience the joys of stock gambling. Take it from me, I'm some gambler in stocks."

Leake asked him to tell the merry story.

"I had saved up \$1,000," Hopp narrated, "and I decided to take a shot at the market. I picked out the stock on which I knew I could make a lot of money. I decided to buy, and I took ten shares."

"Over in the corner of the bucket shop was a telegraph operator, and I could hear the instrument saying, 'Hopp's got a thousand! Hopp's got a thousand!'" That sounded good to me. It was an omen of victory. Pretty soon a cold shiver ran down my spine, and then ran up again. The instrument began to say, 'Take it away from Hopp! Take it away from Hopp! Take it away from Hopp!'" Talk about thrills and excitement! I was beginning with 'em right away.

"To make a long story short—do you get me?—that stock dropped eleven points in about fifty minutes. They took it away from Hopp."—Popular Magazine.

MUST BE.



First Passenger—Beg pardon, but my name is Baggs.

Second Passenger—Baggs! Baggs! I once knew a man named Sax. Any relation of yours?

Cracking a Joke.

A popular suburbanite, who is also a ready wit, told some children in the neighborhood that as there were English walnuts on his place, he was going to invite them to his Nutty Castle, where he would furnish the expense of entertainment.

"If your house is named Nutty Castle," said one of the children, "what are you called?"

"Oh, I am the doughnut," answered the entertainer.

Promoting Cheer.

"Did you get any encouragement from the eminent official on whom you called?"

"Yes, sir," replied the spokesman of the delegation; "he was right encouraging. He called attention to the fact that it's a pleasant day today, and he said he wouldn't be surprised if it was just as pleasant tomorrow."

Handicapped.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," said the sheriff. "Trying to hold up a train in the hope of getting a few hundred dollars."

"I know it!" said the train robber. "But I had to work fast. I didn't have time to get hold of the directors and make them help me to hold up the stockholders."

Costume.

"I've bought a silk hat and a frock coat," said the man who has decided to run for office, "but somehow I don't look like a regular statesman."

"Let me look at you," exclaimed his wife. "I thought so! Men don't know how to dress themselves. Rub that hat the wrong way and put on a lay-down collar and a black bow tie."

Fitness.

"Do you think the natives of the Philippines are capable of establishing a government?"

"To a certain extent. You put a bolo in the hands of a healthy Moro and turn him loose on an unarmed community and the way he'll turn in and govern will surprise you."

Dividing Up the Day.

"A man should have eight hours for recreation and then take the remainder of the day for work and sleep."

"Perhaps. It depends on the kind of work you select. Sometimes a man goes after his recreation so violently that he gets too nervous to work or sleep."

A Quandary.

"A great many of the people out our way think that you ought to come out and say something," said the adviser.

"Yes," replied Senator Sorghum; "and if I do say something just as many people will say that I ought to have kept still."

Greeting the Doc.

"Roman gladiators used to address the emperor thus: 'We who are about to die salute you!'"

"I feel like using the singular number of that salutation every time I climb into a