"Stand Upon Your Feet and Play the Game" Is the Advice of This Successful Manager—Dependability Is the Biggest Asset a Manager Can Have, She Believes—Keep "Feminine Traits" Out of the Business Field—How She Has Utilized Her Early Training

By May Stanley

Some people start purposely in pursuit of a business career, others are pushed into it, and a few drift into it. In any category Mr. Barrere, now the managing editor of the American Conservatory, is one of the most successful of concert managers. But Miss Bamman hasn't done any drifting since she decided to be the connecting link between artist and audience. Quite the contrary. To-day she is that envied group of concert managers whose names are synonymous with achievement. There are very few women in this list and I was curious to know how Miss Bamman had "arrived" there.

"Why don't you ask her?" suggested the managing editor.

So I did.

I found her late one afternoon in her delightful offices on Thirty-ninth Street. If one takes on in indescribable way the attributes of their mistresses, they are piedes de neige of that sort—low cost restful and genuine.

"No, Mr. Barrere," Miss Bamman smiled, when the question was asked as to what affranched emancipation I appreciated, you see, the success that I have had has come by such simple means. I didn't work out any rules or lay down any lines of procedure—I just played the game the way that when I went to manage artists I resolved that if I couldn't do it right, I would do it wrong. I followed nine methods. I wouldn't win at all. You know a lot of women will go along splendidly without anything is clear sailing, but when it isn't—well, then they break up. So my motto was, my motto would say, the hardest thing in the world is to learn to do something without special consideration because she is a woman. When I make mistakes—and I've certainly made mine share them. I expect to stand up and take the result. If I can't, then I lose it—but I don't whine and I don't weep and I don't expect to do everything for the artist.

"I remember that one of the first things I did was to take a football guide belonging to my brother and dig out the lists of colleges all over the country. Then I wrote to the departments of music organization I ever heard of. It cost me one cent.

"Mr. Barrere a small fortune standing during that first year, but I got it back for him," she added, with a laugh.

"What do you demand in an artist, Miss Bamman?" I asked. "I mean, what qualifications must an artist possess to interest you in undertaking their management?"

"Distinction, first and foremost," was the prompt reply. "I will not manage an artist or organization in which I have not the most profound confidence. The first thing that the average artist says is this: I know you will want some money at the outset for managing me. How many thousands do you charge?"

"When I tell them that I do not charge anything—that my business is not for sale—are they astounded?"

I don't know. I do know that the National Musical Managers' Association and the Concert Managers' Association are giving us the opportunity of exposing the evil practices from which the average artist has suffered in the past. Fortunately the number is few, and if you are a sound manager, you are still unscrupulous managers who will take every dollar they can get from a would-be concert-giver, knowing at the same time that the man or woman doesn't stand a chance of making good. Publicity is the only thing that will remedy this evil, for the opportunity to give this much needed publicity we have the enterprise and clear vision of Milton Weil to thank. Through these associations—for the formation of which he is directly responsible—we can now air cases of managerial misrepresentation. Nothing in recent years has been devised that can so thoroughly check abuses of which a few managers have been guilty in the past.

"One of the secrets of success in managerial art is, I think, to the artistic individual. That is why it is so hard to lay down set rules, for the campaign that would be most effective with the Barrere Ensemble, for example, would be useless in directing the attention of the public to Lucy Gaye's qualifications. One must play music, give a speech or she studies a piece of music—yet with a difference, for by chance the manager look at the world through the artist's eyes.

"The successful artist is of necessity an egoist, self-centered. A passionate belief in oneself is vital to the interpretation of the music. I mean that when I decided to go in for a career in the musical world has suffered for years. "Every one of us knows of instances where young artists of exceptional talent have had their opportunities absolutely ruined by some bad manager, if you will. Lucy Gaye's qualifications, her background, one who constantly talked about the finished art of the person in question, who believed and, usually puts more into her work than a man does, so it pretty well balances. And after all, that's the way of life."

"But all things are not equal," she replied. "Naturally men resent encroachment upon their art, but they pride themselves on the fact that they have found the artistic state of mind. The person who deals with the people you deal with the audience. Quite the contrary. To-day is this: I know you will want some money at the outset for managing me. How many thousands do you charge?"

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"When I tell them that I do not charge anything—that my business is not for sale—are they astounded?"

"Yes, and the manager must not expect gratitude from the artist when he becomes a skilled surgeon? He does not. She's strayed into territory that he considers strictly masculine. On the other hand, there is a willingness to work harder than men, she believes.

Lines from Miss Bamman's "Note Book"

The hardest word for a woman to learn is to do without special consideration because she is a woman.

There is no one asset so valuable as "to get over" to the people you deal with the fact that you are solidly back of your promises and statements.

All one's early training can be utilized when one decides on a definite field of work.

Distinction is the greatest asset the artist possesses.

I am delighted when I find loyalty and gratitude in an artist, but I do not expect it.

The average stage husband or stage mother is the greatest drawback the young artist can have.

I have always tried to play the game like a man—because they have been at it a long time and they know the rules.

Qualifications She Demands in an Artist—"Stage Husband or Stage Mother Greatest Handicap to the Young Artist"—Manager should Avoid Acquiring the Artistic State of Mind—Successful Artist Must Be an Egoist, but Manager Should Learn Self Effacement

"All things being equal, do you think that your greatest handicap is working for the woman manager, Miss Bamman?"

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