

CHAPTER III.

THE OFFICE MANAGER.

Whether the staff consists of two persons or thirty-two persons, some one man should be made responsible for the office system, and organization, and for the introduction of reforms when and where needed. He may or may not be a member of the partnership. Possibly a bookkeeper or clerk or senior student is the best man for the position. It makes no difference whether he is called managing partner, or managing solicitor, or managing clerk or office manager, nor whether he has other duties or not. The essential point is to have such a man, and in no case should the duties of managing solicitor be divided among several in order to obviate the necessity for such a man.

The managing solicitor should be in charge generally of all matters concerned with the running of the office, its organization, its methods, its maintenance. There are a hundred things for him to do: the rental of premises, the employment of stenographers, and office clerks, the regulation of their hours and methods of work, the purchase of typewriters, the purchase of typewriting and stationery supplies, the filing system, the library, arrangement of desks and private offices, the purchase of new legal publications and subscriptions to periodicals, the printing contracts that the firm must make for clients, the insertion of the firm's card or name in law lists and other publications, and other methods of keeping the name before the public, the systematic collection of the firm's accounts, the accounting system, including possibly an audit, banking arrangements, taxes, insurance, arrangements with agents, and correspondents, the system of distribution of mail and dozens of other matters.

He must be intent on increasing the business of the firm, not only by gathering in new business, but by maintaining and retaining the existing relations with clients and correspondents. His work must not be interfered with by others. If the member of the firm finds a desirable student wishing to enter the office, it is a matter about which the managing solicitor should know, for he may have made arrangements for existing vacancies, and the new-comer's employment may be unnecessary.