

BUSINESS EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

Graham Bruce

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BUSINESS EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For more than sixty years the program of studies planned by the Department of Education in the Province of British Columbia has made some provision for business education. Only during recent years, however, has this part of the program been accorded real prominence, such prominence in fact that today a large portion of the secondary school pupils in the Province find it possible to engage in a study of some one or more subjects which definitely belong in the business education field.

This study, "Business Education in British Columbia," has been undertaken for specific reasons. The ultimate purpose is to suggest a program better suited to present-day needs within the Province. Such a purpose implies at least a brief consideration of the development of business education in British Columbia, for certain shortcomings of the present curriculum are direct outgrowths of earlier practices.

This purpose implies also a careful analysis of the business education curriculum put into operation in the Province in September, 1937. This new curriculum, planned at a time when the entire public school program was under

revision, was intended to correct weaknesses of the former program, weaknesses arising out of the inclusion of unsuitable subject matter and of disproportionate emphasis on certain subjects. Now that the 1937 curriculum has been in effect for a period of three years, there has been an opportunity for teachers to observe its advantages and to arrive at conclusions regarding its success in achieving the two main objectives of business education, that of supplying general business understandings and that of providing vocational knowledge and skills.

An analysis of the curriculum must of necessity deal with subject matter as well as with the program of "constant" and optional courses and their arrangement. It must consider whether courses function effectively, whether proper grade-placement and sequence have been attained, and whether the finished product is a satisfactory one. It will involve, therefore, not only a study of the business education program in the light of the most recent findings of educators in this field, but also a consideration of the adequacy of the training given to secondary school pupils who have left school to engage in some form of vocational activity.

A thoroughly suitable curriculum of business education for the Province should be based on the findings of an occupational survey together with a comprehensive job study. Although no job survey has been possible within the limits

of this report, yet on the basis of a detailed investigation of a large number of cases of graduates and withdrawals from the secondary school business course, the writer ventures to suggest a number of readjustments in the present system.

It is intended also to deal briefly with the teacher problem in the business education field. Only since 1921 has the Province of British Columbia conducted training classes for teachers of business subjects. The first program of training was based on an immediate need for teachers to cope with the rapidly growing number of pupils electing commercial courses. Changes have been made, and the requirements for certification today are much broader than those set up under the first plan. Nevertheless even the present scheme may be open to some criticism and an effort will be made to point to possible improvements.

CHAPTER II

BUSINESS EDUCATION--ITS MEANING AND ITS PLACE
IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAM

Since the inception of a school system in British Columbia, the program of studies has continuously made some provision for training in business subjects. During the earliest years the elementary schools assumed responsibility for a limited amount of commercial work. When a secondary school system was established in the Province, commercial training was gradually shifted to this higher level. While early offerings were few, the program in recent years has been widely expanded. What major changes have been effected? What are the present offerings? How effectively do the present offerings meet the needs of the secondary school pupils? These are questions worthy of consideration, the last suggesting a problem requiring special attention. Before proceeding with a study of any of these problems some thought should be given to the meaning of the term "business education" and, in a general way, to the major objectives it strives to attain in the school program.

One can hardly make a critical analysis of a business education program or develop a useful philosophy of business education, or even define the term "business education" effectively, without determining what interpretation is to be placed on the word "business." Such being the case,

let us look first at the dictionary definition. Webster defines "business" as: "That which busies, or engages time, attention, or labor as a serious principal concern or interest. Specif. (a) Constant employment; regular occupation; work. (b) Any particular occupation or employment habitually engaged in especially for livelihood or gain. (c) A particular subject of labor or attention; a temporary or special occupation or concern." Dr. Annandale's definition is in part as follows: "A matter or affair that engages a person's time, care, and attention; that which one does for a livelihood; occupation; employment."

Next let us consider the economist's interpretation of "business." Here we are at a disadvantage since there is a tendency for the writer in the field of economics to take the meaning of the term for granted. He is concerned largely with problems relating to production, consumption, exchange and management, and he is likely to enter into his treatment of such problems without formally defining "business." It is probable that the following interpretations would be condemned as too narrow by many economists, but still they serve to show the limitations placed on the term by two different writers of texts on economics:

"Business may be defined as production for sale. It may also be defined as buying to sell at a profit,"¹ and

"Business means profit seeking."²

Then there is the viewpoint of the business educator.

Frederick G. Nichols says:

The term business comprehends every type of economic endeavor from the conduct of a peanut stand on the corner to the executive management of the United States Steel Corporation. It includes not only the wide range of management implied in the above statement but hundreds of facilitating occupations ranging in many directions from the humble office messenger to the sales manager, office manager, production engineer, advertising manager, personnel director and scores of other easily recognized executive positions.³

Leverett S. Lyon states: "It is apparent that business is that scheme of economic organization which is at present largely responsible for gratifying human wants,"⁴ and "Business, thus, as society is now organized, is as socially significant as want-gratification."⁵

It is evident that the educator views business in its broadest sense. The term comprehends every type of economic endeavor; it embraces most activities associated with

¹L. A. Rufener, Principles of Economics, p. 67.

²R. T. Ely, Outlines of Economics, p. 201.

³Frederick G. Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 258.

⁴Leverett S. Lyon, Education for Business, p. 24.

⁵Ibid., p. 25.

gratifying human wants. Obviously if such a view be accepted--and for purposes of this work it is accepted--practically every individual engages in business. He may or may not carry on production for sale, he may or may not buy to sell at a profit; but still he performs innumerable business transactions as he engages in activities having to do with gratification of his own wants and those of others.

It is not intended here to deal at any length with the meaning of the term "education." Suffice it to say that, in terms of a product to the individual, education suggests improved adjustment to and control of environment arising out of learning experiences and activities.

Business education must concern itself with the learning experiences and activities which will enable the individual to engage more effectively in the workings of the economic organization responsible for gratifying human wants. Everett W. Lord, in speaking of business education at the College of Business Administration of Boston University, said, "This college is to be a college of BUSINESS, giving its students insight into economic life and a degree of familiarity with business principles and practice."⁶ Clearly the scope of such an educational program is very wide, for it includes not only school training but also various types of training offered

⁶E. W. Lord, "Education for Business Leadership." National Business Educational Quarterly, VI, (December, 1937), p. 36.

outside the school. Nor is it confined to technical subject matter. It is quite reasonable to assume that certain of the so-called academic subjects of the school curriculum should also be included, for indirectly at least such subjects have a bearing on effective business participation.

Nichols has stated:

Commercial education is a type of training which, while playing its part in the achievement of the general aims of education on any given level, has for its primary objective the preparation of people to enter upon a business career, or having entered upon such a career, to render more efficient service therein and to advance from their present levels of employment to higher levels.⁷

Here is the broad interpretation. Business education, or commercial education--and the two terms will be used as having identical meaning--plays its part in the achievement of the general aims of education as well as in providing training for employment.

This study is concerned primarily with secondary school business education. Therefore, scant attention will be given to commercial training through the business college, the company school, the university or collegiate school of business, the evening school, the continuation school, or the various other agencies which offer such training. There is difference of opinion as to what constitutes the responsibility of each of these agencies, for some persons

⁷Frederick G. Nichols, op. cit., p. 51.

would strongly contend that much of the present training done at the taxpayers' expense should be done by the business college or other agencies. Nevertheless, it is intended herein to regard secondary school business education as including all that work which is suited to presentation in the secondary school and which provides appropriate training for the pupils thereof, either for personal and community living or for vocational purposes. Little reference will be made to the "constant" subjects, namely English, social studies, and hygiene. Their place in the program of every pupil, whether in the academic, the commercial, or any other type of course, is generally conceded and, therefore, they need not be a topic for consideration in this study.

In keeping with the above statement business education must serve two major purposes in the secondary school program. It must first provide for training in everyday business understandings and techniques, thus supplying the individual with knowledge which, while having broad significance for vocational purposes, is of immense value for personal and community living. In the second place it must offer vocational training in the form of special knowledge and skills planned exclusively to meet employment needs. These two major objectives are obviously in the minds of writers of such statements as the following:

Without attempting to make any definite statement as to the content of these (commercial) studies it may be said that the practical skill and knowledge which they embody should be so thoroughly taught that they are immediately available for daily use. At the same time they should be made to minister consciously to the larger life of the individual and society. Thoroughly taught, in an atmosphere of broad sympathies, and large outlook, they give cultural as well as business ability,⁸

and

It should be kept in mind, however, that any worthwhile vocational business curriculum is not a narrow thing, limited to a few narrow skill subjects, but rather includes a broad combination of general subjects and vocational background subjects along with the essential skill or technical knowledge subjects.⁹

Mention of general subjects and vocational background subjects in contrast to skills and technical knowledge subjects suggests two questions. First, what is meant by everyday business understandings? Second, in what way do they prove useful to the individual in his social and business life? Both questions are significant in relation to subsequent subject matter and, therefore, demand immediate attention.

Everyday business understandings and techniques should supply a broad comprehension of the organization of society to provide for want-gratification, as well as a knowledge of the commoner business procedures which must be followed by

⁸J. F. Brown, The American High School, pp. 114-115.

⁹E. A. Zelliot, "Objectives of High School Business Subjects." The Business Education World, XIX, (June, 1939), p. 845.

the individual in his personal and community living. This implies the desirability of some study of the functions of business and of government in providing for human wants, and of the responsibilities which both of these agencies should assume in an effort to improve the common welfare. In turn, it suggests the need for some knowledge of world production, manufacture, and trade, whereby commodities are made available for human consumption. Finally, it indicates that attention should be given to all those commoner business procedures which the average man may be called upon to perform in connection with the various transactions in which he engages, either on his own behalf, or on behalf of social or business groups.

For the ordinary individual the acquisition of such understandings and techniques serves several purposes. It has already been pointed out that practically every person engages in a great variety of business transactions. The average man buys goods and services; he may also sell both. His purchases and sales result in his use of such negotiable instruments as money, cheques and promissory notes. He meets problems having to do with communication and transportation. He pays rent, or taxes, or both. He may buy various types of insurance. He enters into numerous contracts, simple oral and written contracts, as well as specialty contracts under seal. Possibly he saves money and

deposits it in the savings bank; he may even invest his savings in bonds or stocks, or in investment securities of other forms. In all these activities clear understanding is a requisite for intelligent participation, and intelligent participation is essential to individual welfare. Clearly then, from the standpoint of personal business, an extremely useful end is achieved when the individual has gained some understanding of the mechanics and the implications of ordinary business proceedings. Such training is frequently referred to as "consumer education."

This person-use value of business understandings may be extended beyond the point where it merely serves the ordinary person in his individual dealings with others. Many a business concern, chiefly of the smaller type, trading in goods and services, is owned and operated, or is operated for its owners, by some one person who determines its policy and directs its activities. Sole ownership or management often arises out of the most fortuitous circumstances. It is not anticipated, nor is it preceded by a period of intensive training in business administration. Frequently it demands no particular vocational business skills, a clear understanding of everyday business procedures being ample to meet all needs. Hence this training in consumer education assumes broader significance in that it provides essential knowledge for business ownership and operation.

General business understandings and techniques serve

a second purpose in helping to supply occupational concepts. A knowledge of business procedures helps to point out some of the duties and responsibilities of different types of commercial occupations. But this must not be the terminal point; pupils should be made aware of the requirements, the opportunities, and the limitations of their chosen occupational fields. Desirable personal qualities, good habits of work, capacity for independent study, ability to analyze situations and to reach sound conclusions, these and many other characteristics are essential to satisfactory service in business. Pupils should know of these requirements. Similarly they should acquaint themselves with facts concerning opportunities for advancement to higher levels, income possibilities, and personal satisfactions to be derived from working within chosen fields. In turn, thought should be given to employment limitations such as those pertaining to future advancement, wages, health, personality development, and use of leisure time. It might be argued with some justification that training in the line of general business knowledge can hardly provide information to measure up to this standard. But the secondary school program includes work in guidance, and the earnest pupil of business subjects who supplements his commercial studies with well-directed investigation in problems relating to selected business vocations and business needs--and every commercial pupil should do this--will equip himself with broad and

useful occupational concepts.

General business knowledge has a third use in so far as it helps to develop social and economic intelligence.

Douglass evidently has this end in mind when he says:

"Business education as much as any field has seemed not to realize the social nature and the social obligation of the public school. It has concentrated on vocational business education of the individual for his own gain alone."¹⁰

Commercial pupils should realize that business owes its existence to the organization of society. Hence, business has a debt to society, namely to see that society benefits as widely as possible from the results of business activities, and society should here be interpreted as including such groups as consumers and employees. This debt can be paid only if each and every person engaged in business is imbued with certain high ideals and ethical standards to govern all business relationships and activities.

Obviously business is closely linked up with government since both are integral parts of society and since the existence of business is so largely dependent on its co-operation with law and government regulation. Thus the establishment of a high standard of business ethics infers

¹⁰H. R. Douglass, "Expanding Business Education to Meet Present Needs." Business Education World, XIX, (September, 1938), p. 19.

also the development of what might be termed civic intelligence, which involves right attitudes towards the functioning of governing bodies as well as readiness to cooperate actively with such bodies in striving for the maintenance and improvement of common welfare.

The philosophy of business education must give direction to a program of instruction in which all students will be given an understanding of business as an institution of society, universal in its effects, and in which interested and appropriate students will also be equipped with highly efficient skill masteries demanded by business for vocational purposes. If young people are to be qualified to participate democratically in the elimination of undesirable business practices and in the establishment of desirable ones business education must inform youth about the structure and functions of business, its relationship to other social institutions, its social and civic obligations.¹¹

Still further, a proper appreciation of the place of government and business in the organization of society must be accompanied by some understanding of certain economic principles which, if actually applied, will guide not only individuals but also both these agencies towards maximum achievement in the interest of the common good. That Douglass considers business education to have a responsibility here may be inferred from his statement, "The tendency to neglect education aimed at the development of

¹¹R. E. Slaughter, "Lost Horizons and Business Education." National Business Education Quarterly, VIII, (October, 1939), p. 40.

economic intelligence, so badly needed today, and the tendency to overemphasize direct values and immediate values to the individual have been carried to the point of absurdity."¹²

Finally, general business understandings provide a background for vocational training. Precision in the performance of business duties is highly desirable but mere machine-like precision, without a knowledge of when and why certain procedures are adopted, is insufficient. To a considerable degree intelligent application of vocational business skills is dependent on proper comprehension of circumstances. Thus general business understandings tend to broaden the significance of vocational skills, supplying knowledge of business functions, and thus aiding in effective application of specialized training. It might even be suggested that in some cases this unspecialized type of training reaches beyond the point of supplying background and forms the only vocational training obtained, since many secondary school pupils withdraw from school to occupy initial business positions before ever reaching a point where specialized training is offered to them.

The second major objective of business education, as already pointed out, is to provide special knowledge and

¹²H. R. Douglass, "Expanding Business Education to Meet Present Needs." Business Education World, XIX, (September, 1938), p. 21.

technical skills for employment needs. "Vocational education is concerned with those specialized bodies of knowledge, those special skills and attitudes which are requisite for successful participation in specific occupations."¹³

Whereas special skills represent the major purpose, yet it should be borne in mind that vocational education has its place in making more effective certain outcomes of the general business training already discussed. It supplies experience in business activities together with added information about business activities and principles, thereby making consumer education far more vital. A knowledge of procedure has an extensive personal-use value, but principle supplemented by practice deepens understanding, increases judgment, and gives confidence for later use.

Specialized training also adds greatly to occupational and vocational understanding. The first effort to supply such understanding by vocational education may take the form of brief try-out courses of an exploratory nature, or it may be the result of intensive study of strictly vocational material belonging to such subjects as bookkeeping, stenography, office practice, clerical practice, or retail selling. Yet the fact remains that

¹³J. C. Chapman and G. S. Counts, Principles of Education, pp. 509-510.

actual experience in the performance of duties of certain business vocations, together with the study of related problems, brings about a very appreciable increase in occupational knowledge.

"The consumer education values of the vocational commercial subjects should be purely incidental to the primary vocational values which must be achieved through these subjects if they are achieved in the high school at all."¹⁴ Similarly, improved occupational understandings are but concomitants of the major outcome of vocational training. The responsibility of the secondary school in relation to this major outcome has several aspects. The school should train for such occupations as are open to its pupils in the community, should make every effort to develop in each of its pupils a high degree of proficiency in the skills required for the particular occupational field selected by the pupil, should aim to give specialized training as closely as possible to the time when the pupil takes the job, and should constantly bear in mind that it is training for initial contact jobs. Education for highly specialized occupations which are open to pupils only after years of business experience and education for advanced administrative work belong to agencies other than

¹⁴F. G. Nichols, "What is a Sound Philosophy of Business Education?" Business Education World, XVI, (February, 1936), p. 447.

the secondary school. A business education program which loses sight of any of these responsibilities tends to fall short. It may be that failure is in the development of inappropriate skills, or it may be that it is through overdevelopment of skills at the expense of cultural and general business education. On the other hand, a program constructed with proper regard for these responsibilities is likely to provide specialized training of direct use to the pupil, as well as broad general training.

With this brief survey of the place of business education in the secondary school program, we are now ready for the next step, namely a study of the development of British Columbia's business education program from its early beginning to the present day.

CHAPTER III

THE GROWTH OF BUSINESS EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Long before British Columbia had been established as a Province business education had made its start on the North American continent.

Students of the early history of the private commercial schools in America agree as to the pioneers in the movement but disagree as to the individual who is to be classed as first. R. M. Bartlett, first of Philadelphia, then of Pittsburgh, and finally of Cincinnati, is claimed by some writers to be the first in the business-college field. His position is disputed respectively by the champions of Peter Duff, of Pittsburgh, of G. N. Comer, of Boston, and Jonathan Jones, of St. Louis, all of whom offered private commercial education in the early days of the movement. Dolbear, who opened a school in New York in 1835, is also named by some as the leader in the field. Unquestionably among the first of the private schools was that of James Gordon Bennett, who is said to have started a school in New York in 1824 which he heralded with the following announcement:.....¹

Who led in the business college field is of minor importance, but it is significant that the business college was the earliest institution for commercial education and that the early studies included penmanship, bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic and commercial law. For a considerable period this situation continued for "It is said that commercial education in public schools was first considered in Boston in the fifties, and had its beginning in New York

¹Leverett S. Lyon, op. cit., p. 223.

Free Academy in that decade."²

A second stage in the history of business education began when, "In 1863 shorthand (and perhaps bookkeeping) was made a part of the course of study in Central High School, Philadelphia, and the St. Louis High School. The introduction of this work is supposed to be the origin of clearly defined commercial education at public expense in the United States."³ From this time onward different factors were responsible for increase in numbers of secondary school commercial pupils and for alterations in the commercial curriculum. The introduction of a usable typewriter in 1875 resulted in a complete change in the field of business communication and was a signal for a corresponding change in the school program. Bookkeeping, previously the leading business subject, soon gave place to stenography, while business English gained in prominence.

The first school program which went into effect following British Columbia's admission into the Dominion of Canada in 1871 made certain provision for business education. From that time to the present day commercial subjects have been offered in either the elementary schools or high schools, or both. The period from August, 1871, to June, 1937, presents an interesting study in the development of

²Ibid., p. 239.

³Leverett S. Lyon, loc. cit.

the program and during this time four major phases are to be observed.

British Columbia's entry into the Dominion preceded the introduction of the typewriter into the business office by only four years. As might be expected then, the first program of studies limited commercial work to a training in bookkeeping and penmanship. This condition continued until June, 1906, in spite of the fact that long before this date wide recognition had been given in the United States to shorthand and typewriting as secondary school subjects.

An examination of the Annual Reports issued by the Department of Education of the Province shows that from 1871 to 1906 bookkeeping was included in the elementary school program and that after 1875, when the first high school was opened in Victoria, the secondary school program also included the subject. Until 1897 bookkeeping was optional in the elementary school, and from that date until 1906 it was to be found in the High School Entrance Examinations either as a separate subject (1898 - 1900), or in conjunction with arithmetic (1901 - 1906).

Conflicting opinions concerning the place of bookkeeping as an elementary school subject were voiced by the two inspectors in the Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Department of Education. This was the only year throughout the entire period under consideration when direct reference was made to the suitability of the subject

by any inspector in his annual report. Inspector David Wilson said:

Bookkeeping is a subject which on account of its practical value is deserving of attention--more than it at present often receives. It also affords the opportunity of giving instruction in penmanship, spelling, arithmetic and neatness. The returns show that the number of pupils who study this subject is annually increasing. There is no reason why pupils of rural schools--both boys and girls--should not begin the study of bookkeeping as soon as they reach the Fifth Reader class. Even a short course, such as would enable them to keep simple accounts and familiarize them with the ordinary mercantile forms, would be a great boon to all whose education ends with the common school course.⁴

Inspector Wm. Burns reported as follows:

Bookkeeping is taught in many other schools in accordance with the requirements of the Department. Teachers should be careful not to commence the subject at too early a stage of the pupils' advancement. If the scholars are previously told that when they have attained neatness in writing, correctness in spelling, exactness and rapidity in the use of the ordinary rules of arithmetic, they will then be taught the elements of bookkeeping, a new incentive will be added in the higher work to be accomplished, and that, too, in a branch of such eminently practical utility in every field of life.⁵

As might well be expected, extensive fluctuation in the number of elementary pupils studying bookkeeping from year to year is to be found. (See Figure 1, p. 24.) From 1871

⁴D. Wilson, "Report of Inspector Wilson." Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1894-1895, p. 213.

⁵Wm. Burns, "Report of Inspector Burns." Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1894-1895, pp. 217-18.

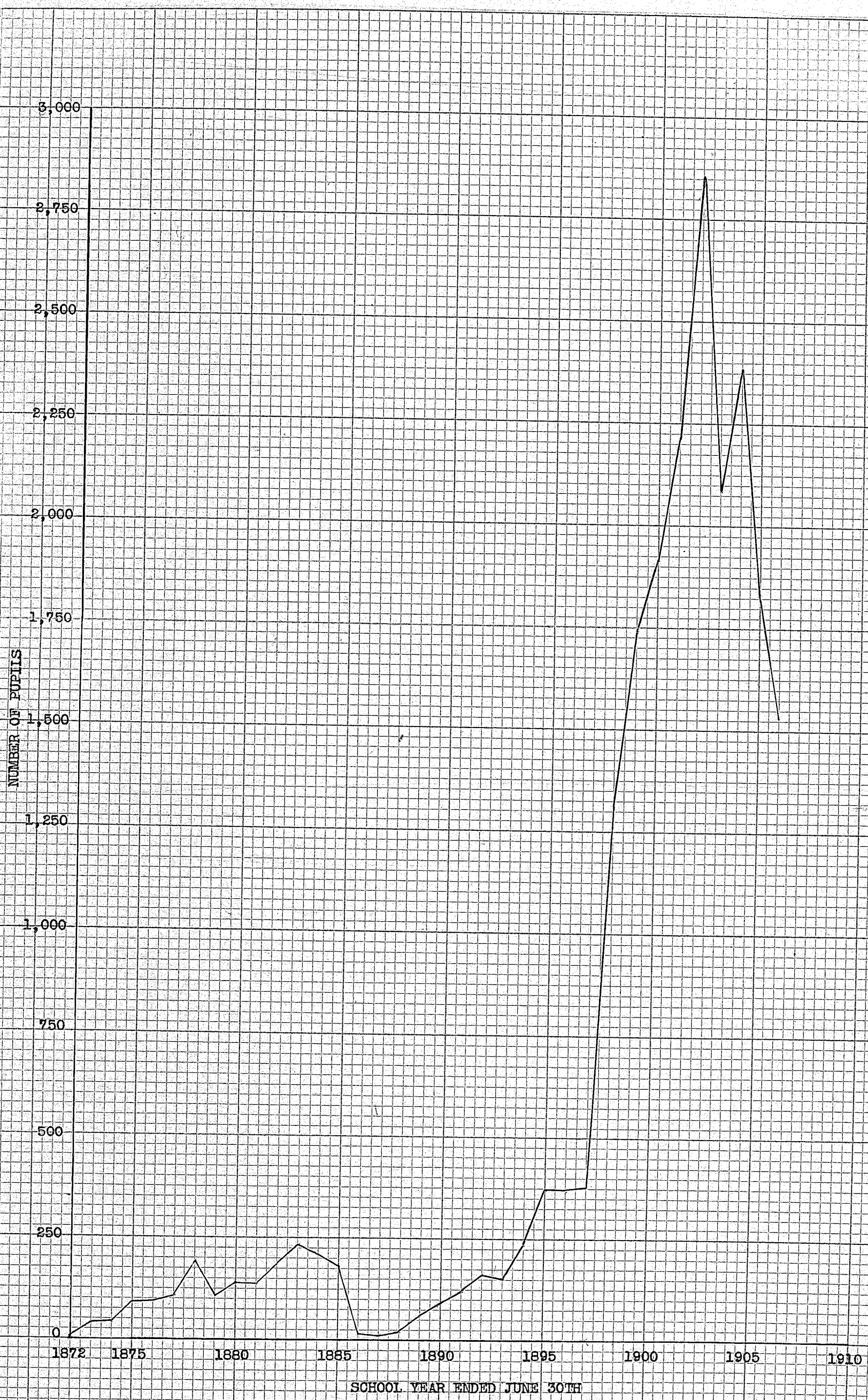


FIGURE 1. NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA STUDYING BOOKKEEPING, 1871 - 1906 (SEE APPENDIX A FOR DATA FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ON WHICH FIGURE 1 IS BASED)

until 1883 there was a continuous increase, with a rise from six to 234. The next few years saw a rapid decline for by June, 1887, the number had dwindled to eleven. In 1887-88 expansion was again under way and there was a growth from twenty-two in that year to 376 in 1896-97. The year 1897-98 saw the tremendous advance to 1,313 for, as already mentioned, this was the first year when bookkeeping appeared as a High School Entrance subject. A peak of 2,854 pupils was reached in 1901-02, and thereafter again a gradual decline.

Meanwhile, Victoria High School was opened in August, 1875, and the school program showed bookkeeping as a requisite subject. The Department of Education Annual Report for 1879-80 outlines the prescribed course of study for the school, the following being an excerpt therefrom:

Junior Division

Bookkeeping and Writing

- (a) Single Entry and Principles of Double Entry.
- (b) Practice in Writing according to principles contained in Payson, Dunton and Scribner's copy books.

Senior Division

Bookkeeping and Writing

- (a) Single Entry and Double Entry.
- (b) Practice in Writing according to principles contained in Payson, Dunton and Scribner's copy books.⁶

Later years saw the opening of new high schools, New Westminster in 1884, Nanaimo in 1886, and Vancouver in 1890,

⁶Department of Education, Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1879-1880, pp. 358-9.

with the majority of the pupils receiving instruction in bookkeeping. In fact, this subject remained a constant for junior pupils until the year 1904-05. After 1900 a marked disparity developed between total number of high school pupils and number registered for bookkeeping. (See Figure 2, p. 27.) The peak for the period was reached in 1903-04 when 735 out of 981 high school pupils engaged in a study of the subject.

Throughout all this first period the bookkeeping requirements remained materially the same, but one significant point is to be found in the fact that the Fifteenth Annual Report of the Department of Education classifies courses offered in the high schools of British Columbia as the English Course, the Commercial Course, and the Classics Course. For the Commercial Course it indicates the following studies:

Bookkeeping--Single and Double Entry--including Banking, Commercial Correspondence, Commercial Law, etc., together with all subjects prescribed for the English Course.... [viz.,] all subjects prescribed for the Graded and Common Schools: Anatomy (Physiology and Hygiene) and other subjects in which candidates for the First Class, Grade B, Teaching Certificates are examined, namely Reading, Writing, Spelling, Arithmetic, Mental Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, History, Composition, Bookkeeping, Mensuration, Algebra, Euclid, and Natural Philosophy.⁷

⁷Department of Education, Fifteenth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1885-1886, p. XXXVIII.

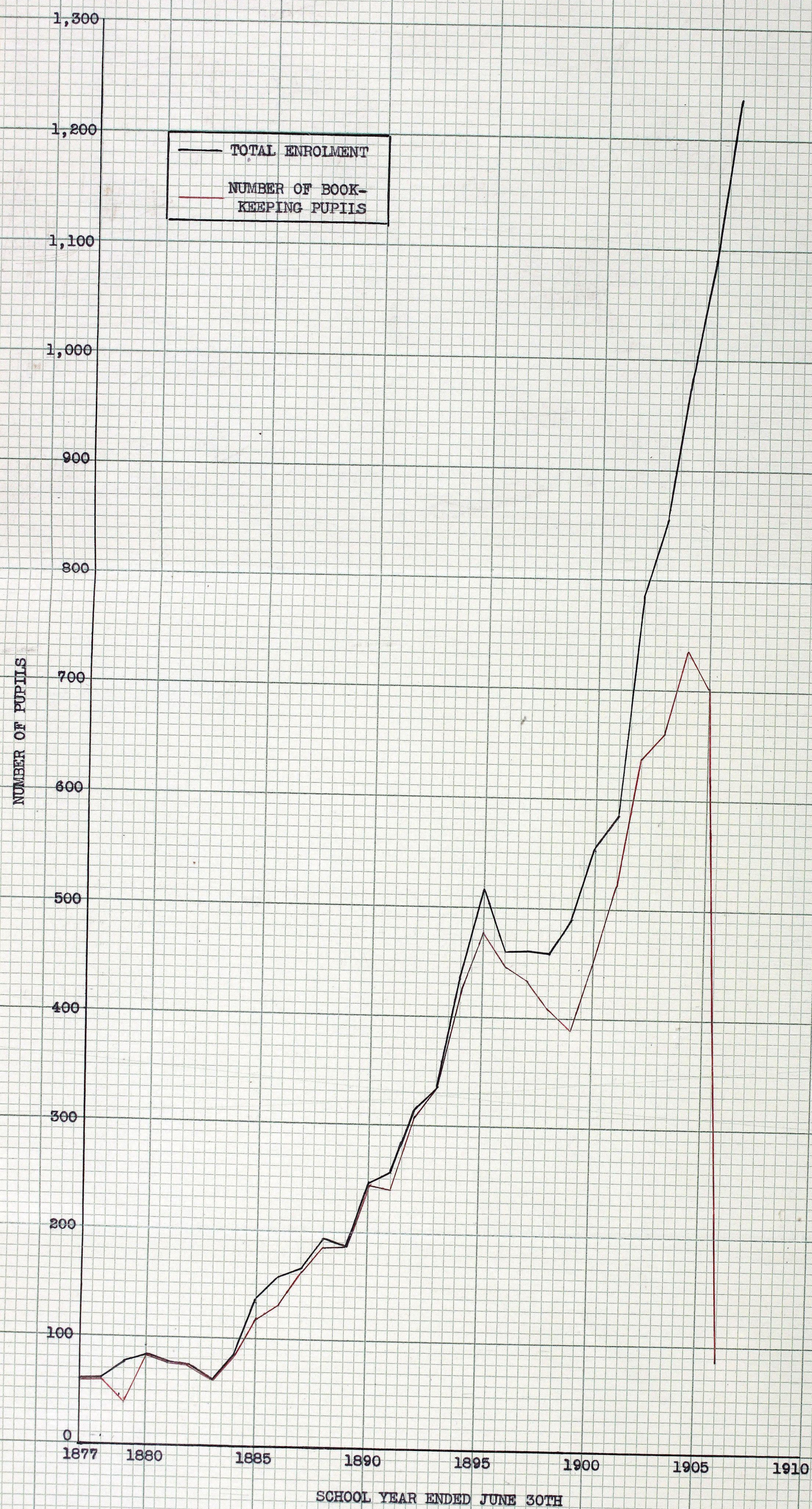


FIGURE 2. TOTAL ENROLMENT AND NUMBER OF PUPILS STUDYING BOOKKEEPING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOLS, 1876 - 1906 (SEE APPENDIX A FOR DATA FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ON WHICH FIGURE 2 IS BASED)

It is not the purpose of this study to evaluate the early commercial programs. Consequently the period terminating in June, 1906, will simply be left as one during which the studies corresponded closely with the earliest offerings in business training in Eastern United States. Nevertheless, during the latter part of the period recognition was being given to the need for a broader commercial curriculum in the Province. The business college had already opened its doors and, being so readily able to meet popular demand, had established courses in shorthand and typewriting to supplement the work in bookkeeping and allied subjects. The persistent request for the introduction of these new subjects into the high school program met with a favorable response in the autumn of 1906, the beginning of the second period in the history of business education in British Columbia, namely 1906-1914.

During the first two years of this new period certain of the elementary schools continued with the teaching of bookkeeping, despite the fact that the subject was no longer given recognition in requirements for high school admission. After June, 1908, no further bookkeeping instruction was reported by the elementary school.

In the high schools the commercial program was broadened to make provision for teaching of bookkeeping, shorthand theory, shorthand dictation, typewriting, and business forms and laws of business. Until June, 1910,

examinations were set by the Department of Education in the above subjects at the end of the Advanced Course, Junior Grade, though reference to the Annual Reports of the Department would indicate that training in the subjects was given in the Preliminary Course as well. During the last four years the Department conducted examinations in the commercial subjects at the conclusion of both Preliminary and Advanced Courses of the Junior Grade.

The Thirty-eighth Annual Report of the Department shows in detail the program for commercial pupils as follows:

Commercial Course for High Schools

The following subjects of the Junior Grade course, designated Group 1, are prescribed for the commercial course, without change:-

Group 1. - Reading and Orthoepey
English Grammar
English Literature
Algebra
Geometry

The following subjects of the Junior Grade course, designated Group 2, are prescribed for the commercial course, with slight change:-

Group 2. - Writing and Spelling
Composition
Arithmetic

The special trend of the teaching in these subjects is indicated below.

The following subjects of the Junior Grade course, designated Group 3, should be omitted from the commercial course:-

Group 3. - Latin
Greek
French
Drawing
Physiology
Physics and Chemistry
Botany

The following special subjects, designated Group 4, will form a part of the commercial course:-

Group 4. - Bookkeeping
Stenography
Typewriting
Business Forms
Laws of Business.⁸

Each of the courses included in the above program is outlined at some length in the Annual Report, attention being given also to the special trend of the teaching in subjects of Group 2, so that the reader may, if he so desires, acquaint himself with the actual content of any or all of the courses.

Annual Reports of the Department of Education for the years ending in June, 1907, to June, 1910, inclusive, fail to show any record of the pupils enrolled in the commercial courses other than bookkeeping. For the next four years enrolments by subject are shown. Growth in numbers is evident from Table I.

⁸Department of Education, Thirty-eighth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1908-1909, pp. 54-56.

TABLE I. ENROLMENTS BY SUBJECT IN THE COMMERCIAL COURSE, SEPTEMBER, 1906, TO JUNE, 1914

Year	Bookkeeping	Stenography	Typewriting	Business Forms and Laws of Business
1906-07	145	---	---	---
1907-08	104	---	---	---
1908-09	150	---	---	---
1909-10	181	---	---	---
1910-11	98	101	97	96
1911-12	120	120	118	27
1912-13	144	144	144	107
1913-14	230	234	232	123

The reader should remember, when perusing Table I, that no longer was the study of any commercial subject obligatory. Consequently it is to be expected that numbers would not equal those of the last few years of the preceding period.

During the latter part of this second period a tremendous development in business activity took place within the Province. Office organization became more intricate as it was geared up to meet greater demands, and the need for broader commercial training began to make itself felt. The two-year program was filling a place in education but it was turning out many immature young people who were far from being equipped to meet the requirements of the business office. This fact was mentioned by J. S. Gordon, High School Inspector, in his report for 1910-11 when he stated:

The little technical training that has already been attempted in our high schools calls for some consideration. A commercial course of two years' work is prescribed by the Council of Public Instruction, and may

be taken during the first two years in any school where the local authorities make provision for it by engaging a qualified teacher or teachers, and by providing the necessary equipment for the work. One hundred and one students started to take the course last year. Of these, only forty-seven presented themselves for examinations at the close of the year, and only twenty-nine of those were successful. These are not encouraging statistics for the advocates of technical training in the high schools, for young students. They rather justify one in the opinion expressed above that many of those starting to specialize at the very early age of fourteen along technical lines, have no strong conviction as to what they mean to make their life's work, and that others who started out in this course considering it easier than the ordinary course, but finding it none too easy, embraced the first opportunity of dropping out of school altogether.⁹

During the next few years subject matter also came in for broad criticism and, as a result of the evident inadequacies of the program, an extensive revision was made in 1914.

The years 1914 to 1930 comprise the third stage in the development of business education. The outstanding advances of the period were the extension of the time assigned to the commercial studies and the broadening of the scope of the work offered. Curriculum changes introduced from time to time were not of sufficient magnitude to demand further period classification.

The first significant feature of the new program was the extension of the time required for completion to three

⁹J. S. Gordon, "Inspectors' Reports--High Schools." Fortieth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1910-1911, p. 28.

years. Pupils had previously finished their commercial studies at the end of two years and, as already mentioned, they were immature and insufficiently trained for business positions. The addition of another year's work obviously made for greater maturity and, at the same time, permitted of higher standards of achievement.

The second feature was the addition to the curriculum of studies in economics and civics, accounting theory, accounting practice, business correspondence, statute law and penmanship. In addition, subject matter pertaining to business forms was separated from business law and associated with bookkeeping instead. These new subjects, together with those already included in the program, provided a far more comprehensive vocational training in the needs for efficient business service than did the content of the previous program. By the inclusion of economics, recognition was given for the first time to the need for a subject which would supply general business knowledge and principles rather than strictly vocational knowledge and skills.

Table II shows the subjects specified by the Department of Education in September, 1914, for pupils enrolled in classes conducted under the reorganized commercial program.

TABLE II. SUBJECTS SPECIFIED FOR PUPILS OF
THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD YEARS OF THE
COMMERCIAL COURSE, SEPTEMBER, 1914

First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Literature Composition Grammar Algebra Arithmetic Typewriting Spelling Penmanship Bookkeeping and Business Forms Shorthand Theory Reading and Orthoepey	Literature Composition Algebra Grammar Arithmetic Typewriting Spelling Penmanship Bookkeeping Shorthand Business Law Reading and Orthoepey	Literature Arithmetic and Rapid Calculation Business Corre- spondence Penmanship Economics and Civics Typewriting Shorthand Business Law Statute Law Accounting Theory Accounting Practice

It should be noted that geometry, a requisite during the previous period, was omitted altogether from the requirements, and that business correspondence took the place of composition for third-year pupils. It is of some interest too that first-year examinations were set by the Department of Education in June, 1915, but not thereafter. Second-year Departmental tests continued until June, 1917, after which date only third-year tests were under Provincial direction.

Between 1914 and 1923 the only significant change in the business education curriculum was the removal of algebra and grammar from the first-year and second-year requirements. But in September, 1923, a major adjustment was introduced of which John Kyle, Organizer of Technical Education for the Province, reported thus:

The commercial course has been greatly improved during the past year and the changes will be sure to appeal to those who have practical office experience and can thus appreciate the kind of knowledge which is of greatest practical value. In the third year, for instance, the course is now divided into two sections--(a) secretarial and (b) accounting--the student thus being able to specialize. The requirements of statute and commercial law have been reduced to the minimum, it being accepted that a full discussion of those subjects is suitable only to the maturer minds of those who attend university courses. When a chair for commercial education has been established in the University the legal aspects of business life will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.¹⁰

Dr. Willis, Superintendent of Education for the Province, reported:

The High School Commercial Course was thoroughly revised. In the third year the subjects of English, Business Correspondence, and Commercial Geography are obligatory for all students. In addition to those subjects, students must study intensively a course in either Secretarial work or Accounting.¹¹

By these changes specialization was made possible for third-year pupils to the extent that they might choose between studies related to the secretarial field or those pertaining to the field of accounting. The work in law was reduced and one final examination in commercial law was substituted for previous tests in business law and statute

¹⁰John Kyle, "Technical Education, Report of the Organizer." Fifty-third Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1923-1924, p. 76.

¹¹S. J. Willis, "Report of the Superintendent of Education, 1923-1924." Fifty-third Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1923-1924, p. 10.

law. In addition, economic geography was introduced into the curriculum, taking the place of the previous course in economics. Table III shows the program as outlined by the Department of Education, a program which continued in effect as far as the business subjects are concerned until the next major curriculum revision.

TABLE III. COMMERCIAL PROGRAM OF STUDIES, 1923-24

First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Reading Penmanship Literature Composition Arithmetic Bookkeeping Stenography Typewriting History	Reading Penmanship Literature Composition Arithmetic Bookkeeping Stenography Typewriting Business Law Civics	Literature Composition Commercial Geography Commercial Corre- spondence and Filing and (Shorthand (Typewriting (Stenographic Practice or (Business Arithmetic (Accounting Theory (Accounting Practice (Commercial Law

An increase in the number of pupils registered in the commercial courses was to be expected during this period. The total attendance in British Columbia's high schools had greatly increased, and business had called for a much larger number of office employees to keep pace with greater activity and greater use of records and statistics. Possibly, too, the fact that the school system had broadened its

commercial course was sufficient incentive to attract pupils who realized that it was no longer necessary to pay the charges made by the private institution for extensive training. At any rate, registrations in the commercial courses increased from less than 400 in 1914 to nearly 3,000 in June, 1930. Tables IV and V show the number studying each of the business subjects from year to year as noted in the Department of Education Annual Reports.

Care should be taken lest the reader misinterpret Table V. By 1927-28 certain junior high schools were in operation and some business subjects were being given to the pupils thereof. However, typewriting was offered to large numbers of pupils who had no particular interest in intensive business training. Hence, when it is suggested that registrations had reached nearly 3,000, this estimate is based on numbers taking commercial subjects other than typewriting. Table VI shows junior high school registrations in certain business subjects between 1927 and 1930, and reference to it will help to clarify Table V. A new subject, junior business, was added to the curriculum of the junior high school, but no figures are available to show how many pupils engaged in a study of it. Figures for economic geography are lacking, due to the fact that the Department of Education, in its Annual Reports for the period under consideration, made no differentiation between this course and the more comprehensive course taught to pupils following the academic curriculum.

TABLE IV. PUPILS STUDYING DIFFERENT COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS IN
BRITISH COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOLS, 1914 - 1926

Year	Bookkeeping	Shorthand	Typewriting	Business Forms & Law	Economics and Civics	Statute Law
1914-15	380	380	380	254		
1915-16	444	444	444	303		
1916-17	542	547	547	253		
1917-18	802	802	802	378		
1918-19	866	866	871	491		
1919-20	938	943	944	517		
1920-21	976	995	995	809	55	55
1921-22	1,110	1,135	1,136	598	71	71
1922-23	979	998	996	629	78	197
1923-24	974	846	847	439	92	146
1924-25	1,238	1,222	1,239	225		482
1925-26	1,532	1,599	1,604	209	44	587

TABLE V. PUPILS STUDYING DIFFERENT COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS IN
BRITISH COLUMBIA SECONDARY SCHOOLS, 1926 - 1930

Year	Bookkeeping and Accounting	Shorthand	Typewriting	Commercial Law	Citizenship and Economics	Business Correspondence and Filing
1926-27	1,936	2,044	2,111	702	244	462
1927-28	2,653	2,492	3,334	855	385	831
1928-29	2,802	2,779	3,615	1,118	486	940
1929-30	2,860	2,661	4,055	991	771	1,703

TABLE VI. JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS STUDYING DIFFERENT COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1927 - 1930

Year	Bookkeeping and Accounting	Shorthand	Typewriting	Commercial Law
1927-28	503	38	983	--
1928-29	582	275	954	114
1929-30	726	343	1,685	57

The year 1930 has been set as a terminal point for the third period under consideration for, in September of that year, the old program of studies was superseded by an entirely new program based on a four-year plan. This change had been hinted at in the 1928-29 report of the Superintendent of Education when he stated:

A careful and thorough revision of the High School Curriculum has been undertaken. In recent years the Elementary School Programme was revised and enriched and two years ago a Course of Study was compiled for the Junior High School. This type of school has been spreading with remarkable rapidity in this Province, and on that account, as well as for many other reasons, it was found advisable to begin a revision of the High School Curriculum.

The old Grade X High School Course is not well adapted to the needs of students who are passing through Grade IX by way of the Junior High School. Moreover, the change from the Elementary School to Grade IX of the High School is at present very abrupt. The High School Courses are generally considered too heavy. So many new subjects are attempted in the first year that some of the pupils become disheartened and leave school, or, if they remain, find it necessary to repeat the work of one or two years. The principals and teachers of the Normal Schools and the professors of the University consider that our students are too immature on entering these institutions. Besides, there are

in the High School some types of student not well provided for in the prescribed courses. Accordingly, a General Committee representing the Department, the large and small High Schools, the rural High School, and the University was appointed to go into the matter of revising the curriculum. The Committee was unanimously of the opinion that no revision, however careful or scientific, would be satisfactory if it were based on a three-year High School Course. Hence it was decided to make new four-year courses leading to a General Graduation Diploma, Normal Entrance, or Junior Matriculation....Subject to the approval of the Council of Public Instruction, the work of the General Committee is chiefly to determine the courses to be given, the subjects of the courses, and the allotment of the time for each subject. Special committees of High School experts are assisting in the drawing-up of the content of the courses. It is expected that the revision will be completed by Easter, 1930. The new curriculum will then be printed and made available to all the High Schools of the Province.¹²

With the introduction of the four-year plan in 1930 the commercial course as a separate entity disappeared. Business subjects on a credit basis were made available for all secondary school pupils who might, if so permitted by their own schools, engage in a study of one or of many such subjects. The Department of Education stated in the New Programme of Studies of 1930 that a Junior Business Diploma, and a Senior Business Diploma with High School Graduation, would be granted to pupils completing ninety and 120 credits of work respectively, on condition that a certain portion of these credits had been earned in business subjects. Yet

¹²S. J. Willis, "Report of the Superintendent of Education, 1928-1929." Fifty-eighth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1928-1929, p. 11.

at no time were such diplomas issued, the Department actually granting only the newly-established High School Graduation Diplomas to pupils earning a minimum of 120 credits including the "constant" subjects.

The new program brought changes in both subject matter and course organization. Junior business, a course which had been planned for the junior high school, was made optional for all secondary pupils. Business law disappeared as a separate course, its subject matter being linked up with related topics in bookkeeping. Likewise, penmanship became primarily the responsibility of the bookkeeping teacher. More extensive work was planned and actually carried out in stenographic practice, or secretarial practice as it was called in the new outline. The work in bookkeeping and business arithmetic was extended to provide for certain advanced courses but it is doubtful whether any pupil ever actually completed the requirements set in cost accounting, business statistics, or mathematics of investment. Similarly, a laboratory course in mechanical appliances for use in the office was added, but unfortunately no school had, or has to this day, acquired adequate equipment to offer the instruction outlined. Radio communication subjects were added for one school but as they were not in any way intended for students of business subjects, they will not be discussed here.

Table VII gives the outline of courses planned to

become effective in 1930. It is followed immediately by Table VIII, the outline issued by the Department of Education in 1933. Minor differences are to be found in course numbers and course names in the latter program, but these differences are slight.

TABLE VII. COMMERCIAL CURRICULUM-
PROGRAMME OF STUDIES, 1930

- (1) A Senior Business Diploma with High School graduation will be granted to a student who obtains 120 credits.
- (2) A Junior Business Diploma will be granted to a student who obtains 90 credits.
- (3) If a student finds it necessary to leave school at the end of the first or the second year, he will be granted a certificate by the Principal, showing subjects taken and credits gained at school.

Grade IX.

	Periods (Credits)
Constants (24 credits)	
English I.....	6
Social Studies I.....	5
Health and Physical Education.....	3
Junior Business (or Elementary Bookkeeping and Penmanship <u>or</u> Shorthand I.).....	5
Typewriting I.....	5
Variables (6 credits)	
Business Arithmetic.....	3
Junior Business (or Bookkeeping and Penman- ship not taken as a constant).....	5
Shorthand I. (if not taken as a constant)..	5
Art I.....	3-5
Special English.....	2-3
Modern Language (French I., Spanish I.)....	4
Mathematics I. (Algebra I., Geometry I., Arithmetic).....	6
Algebra I.....	3

Grades X., XI., XII.

Constants

A. English II., III. (each).....	6
English IV.....	5
B. Social Studies II., III. (each).....	3
Economic Geography.....	3
C. Health and Physical Education II., III., IV. (each).....	2

TABLE VII. (Continued)

Grades X., XI., XII Variables	Periods (Credits)
D. Mathematics I.....	6
Mathematics I.(a), Algebra I.....	3
Mathematics I.(b), Geometry I. and Arithmetic.....	3
Business Arithmetic.....	3
Advanced Business Arithmetic.....	2-3
Mathematics II., III. (each).....	6
Mathematics IV.....	5
Business Statistics (prerequisite, Mathe- matics III.) <u>or</u> Mathematics of Invest- ment.....	2½
E. French I., II., III., IV. (each).....	4
Spanish I., II., III., IV. (each).....	4
German I., II. (each).....	5
Special English.....	2-3
F. Shorthand I., II. (each).....	5
Typewriting II.....	5
Secretarial Practice I. (prerequisites, Shorthand II. and Typewriting II.....	5
Secretarial Practice II. (prerequisite, Secretarial Practice I.).....	5
G. Junior Business (if not already taken)...	5
Elementary Bookkeeping and Penmanship (if not already taken) <u>or</u> Bookkeeping..	5
Accounting Practice I. (prerequisite, Bookkeeping).....	5
Accounting Practice II. (prerequisite, Accounting Practice I.).....	5
Cost Accounting (five periods per week for one-half year) (prerequisite, Accounting Practice I.).....	2½
H. Laboratory Course in Mechanical	
Appliances used in the office (five periods weekly for one year).....	5
I. Radio Communication Courses (for High School of Commerce)	
Traffic.....	2-3
Design.....	2-3
Transmission.....	5
Transcription.....	5
Technic.....	2
Theory.....	5 13

¹³Department of Education, New Programme of Studies for
the High and Technical Schools of British Columbia, p. 123.

TABLE VIII. COMMERCIAL CURRICULUM, 1933

- (1) A Senior Business Diploma with High School graduation will be granted to a student who obtains 120 credits, of which at least 40 credits must be for purely Commercial subjects. Ten of these must be for Commercial subjects taken in Grade XII.
- (2) If a student finds it necessary to leave school at the end of the first, second, or third year, he will be granted a certificate by the Principal, showing subjects taken and credits gained at school.

Grade IX.

Constants (24 credits)	Periods (Credits)
English III.....	6
Social Studies III.....	5
Health and Physical Education III.....	3
Junior Business (<u>or</u> Bookkeeping I. <u>or</u> Shorthand I.).....	5
Typewriting I.....	5
Variables (6 credits)	
Business Arithmetic I.....	3
Bookkeeping I. (<u>or</u> Junior Business - the one not taken as a constant).....	5
Shorthand I. (if not taken as a constant).	5
Art III.....	3-5
Spelling.....	3
Modern Language (French I., Spanish I.)...	4
Mathematics I. (Algebra I., Geometry I., Arithmetic I.).....	6
Algebra I.....	3

Grades X., XI., XII.

Constants

A. English IV., V. (each).....	6
English VI.....	7
B. Social Studies IV., V. (each).....	3
Economic Geography (Geography III.) (primarily for fourth year).....	3
C. Health and Physical Education IV., V., VI. (each).....	2

TABLE VIII. (Continued)

Grades X., XI., XII. Variables	Periods (Credits)
D. Mathematics I.....	6
Mathematics I.(a), Algebra I.....	3
Mathematics I.(b), Geometry I. and Arithmetic I.....	3
Business Arithmetic I.....	3
Business Arithmetic II.....	2-3
Mathematics II., III. (each).....	6
Mathematics IV.....	5
Business Statistics (Business Arithmetic III.) prerequisite, Business Arithmetic II. or Mathematics of Investment (Business Arithmetic IV.)..	2½
E. French I., II., III., IV. (each).....	4
Spanish I., II., III., IV. (each).....	4
German I., II. (each).....	5
Business English I., II. (each).....	3
F. Shorthand I., II. (each).....	5
Typewriting II.....	5
Secretarial Practice I. (prerequisite, Shorthand II. and Typewriting II.)....	5
Secretarial Practice II. (prerequisite, Secretarial Practice I.).....	5
G. Junior Business (if not already taken)..	5
Bookkeeping I. (if not already taken)...	5
Bookkeeping II.....	5
Accounting Practice I. (prerequisite, Bookkeeping II.).....	5
Accounting Practice II. (prerequisite, Accounting Practice I.).....	5
Accounting Practice III. (five periods per week for one half-year) (pre- requisite, Accounting Practice I.)....	2½
H. Laboratory Course in Mechanical Appliances used in the office (five periods weekly for one year).....	5
I. Radio Communication Courses (for High School of Commerce)	
Traffic.....	2-3
Design.....	2-3
Transmission.....	5
Transcription.....	5
Technic.....	2
Theory.....	5 14

¹⁴Department of Education, Programme of Studies for the
High Schools of British Columbia, p. 153.

It is not possible to give an accurate picture of the growth in demand for the different commercial courses during the 1930 - 1937 period since after June, 1930, the Department of Education no longer published the figures showing the number of pupils engaged in the study of each individual subject in the secondary school program. An examination of the yearly reports of the Organizer of Technical Education for British Columbia over the seven years reveals the fact that there was rapid growth. Four centres in the Province added commercial courses to their offerings, thus increasing from twelve to sixteen the number of centres in which provision was made for the business curriculum. Meanwhile the number of pupils electing business courses increased from 2,792 to 4,582, an advance of approximately 64 per cent. Table IX shows total registrations by centres for the period under consideration.

TABLE IX. NUMBER OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS ANNUALLY ENGAGED IN THE STUDY OF ONE OR MORE COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS, 1930 - 1937

Centre	For Year Ending June 30						
	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Burnaby	166	184	213	198	226	235	195
Delta	17	19	19	18	16	35	35
Kamloops	43	40	42	42	42	73	75
Nelson	23	40	143	---	41	40	41
New Westminster	149	163	145	165	168	209	224
North Vancouver	74	73	70	70	64	66	98
Oak Bay	44	36	43	30	33	33	33
Prince Rupert	41	50	28	28	35	40	38
Revelstoke	20	23	22	23	23	13	13
Vancouver	1775	2137	2437	3393	1843	3071	2963
Victoria	343	303	289	295	297	283	289
West Vancouver	97	53	44	44	53	49	96
Penticton	---	---	159	108	108	51	71
Nanaimo	---	---	---	76	140	76	87
Saanich	---	---	---	127	144	146	186
Duncan	---	---	---	---	---	---	140
Total	2792	3121	3654	4617	3233	4420	4584

It is hardly to be expected that the first courses prepared for the four-year high school program would prove thoroughly suited to the needs of the Province, nor is it to be expected that the Department of Education would ignore the tremendous interest in curriculum construction so evident amongst educators in the early 1930's. In 1935 the first steps for a complete revision were taken. A section of the report of the Superintendent of Education for the 1935-36 school year dealing with "Revision of the Curriculum" states:

Early in the year 1935 the Department of Education decided to make a thorough revision of the curriculum of Elementary, Junior High, High, and Technical Schools. Every two or three years partial revisions had been made. The last partial revision of the Elementary Programme of Studies was made in 1933, of the Junior High School Programme in 1932, and of the High School Programme in 1933. While it was recognized that much excellent work was exemplified in these programmes, it was felt that more recent contributions of the Science of Education justified a complete revision of all programmes.

The revision was to be made under a carefully organized plan. Committees composed of administrative officers, normal-school instructors, inspectors of schools, and teachers were selected to carry out the work under the direction of the Minister of Education and the Superintendent of Education.¹⁵

Here was the forerunner of the most recently prepared program of studies, that which went into effect in 1937, and that which is to be the topic for consideration in the next chapter of this study.

¹⁵S. J. Willis, "Report of the Superintendent of Education, 1935-1936." Sixty-fifth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1935-1936, p. 26.

CHAPTER IV

AN EVALUATION OF THE PRESENT BUSINESS
EDUCATION PROGRAM

September, 1937, marked the beginning of a new period in the history of secondary education in British Columbia, for at that time the revised program of studies promised by the Department of Education was put into effect. A central committee had directed the revision, first determining what subjects should be the "constants" for the various curricula, and what subjects the options. Courses had been evaluated by this committee, and in some cases credit allowances were altered from those previously existing. Integration had been effected, certain course names disappearing from the program because of the linking up of related matter of different subjects into more comprehensive courses. Committees of teachers had examined objectives, teaching procedures, and subject matter in their own fields, and had completely redrafted the different courses of study.

The commercial curriculum was included in this general reorganization. The list of offerings was revised, new values were given to a number of the subjects, and such changes were made in content as were deemed necessary to provide for effective business education. Table X shows the courses offered under the 1937 program, together with their respective credit values.

TABLE X. COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS IN 1937
PROGRAMME OF STUDIES

Subject	Credits
Shorthand I.....	5
Shorthand II.....	5
Typewriting I.....	5
Typewriting II.....	5
Secretarial Practice I.....	10
Secretarial Practice II.....	10
Business Arithmetic.....	5
Business English..... (3 and 2) or (2 and 3)	5
General Business and Law..... (3 and 2) or (2 and 3)	5
Office Appliances..... (Sec. A, 3; Sec. B, 2; Sec. C, 2)	5
Junior Business and Introductory Bookkeeping....	5
Bookkeeping I.....	5
Bookkeeping II.....	5
Bookkeeping III.....	5
Radio Communication Course.....(no credits)	

A comparison of the list of subjects in Table X with that in Table VIII reveals a distinct reduction in the number of courses. Business arithmetic was outlined as a five-credit course, but business statistics and mathematics of investment were withdrawn from the program. Introductory bookkeeping was combined with junior business to comprise the work for one year, while the balance of the bookkeeping material was organized into three parts, one for each remaining year. Accounting III, cost accounting, was no longer offered. Business law reappeared as one of the constituent parts of a course in general business, law, and record keeping.

The general plan which became effective in 1930, namely

that of allowing commercial subjects as options in all secondary schools, continued in operation. In other words, the offerings of any school were dependent on such factors as accommodation, equipment, and staff. Both small and large schools might limit their offerings to junior business or general business, or they might undertake to teach every business course included in the Programme of Studies.

Just how effectively does the program make provision for furnishing general business knowledge? In answer to this question it should first be stated that two courses, or rather parts of two courses, junior business and general business, have been outlined primarily to deal with the everyday business situations encountered by the average person. The junior business, planned for younger pupils, is made up of subject matter which should be interesting and useful to everyone. General business, planned for more mature pupils, aims at an extensive and searching study of the commoner business problems of the ordinary layman. While the courses in junior business and general business are a part of the Provincial Programme of Studies, it is not necessary that any pupil engage in their study. Nor is it absolutely essential that any school, even a school specializing in commercial education, include these courses in its list of offerings. The Department of Education permits individual schools to select the optional subjects

to be given and, as all commercial courses are optional, their inclusion in the school program is at the discretion of the principal. This is a grave weakness in the business education program for, even though junior business is offered fairly widely, yet there is no core of general business subjects which are "constants" for pupils electing the commercial curriculum.

Instruction in general business subjects should not be limited to pupils wishing a vocational business training, for business activities are not confined to persons in business occupations. It is just as important that the laborer or the artisan be capable of conducting his personal affairs efficiently as it is in the case of the office worker. Thus it is just as important that the school program provide general business training for the academic pupils, or household science pupils, as it is that the commercial pupils be so trained. Hence the general business subjects should be so planned that they may be readily fitted into the individual programs of pupils in all the different branches of secondary education in the Province.

Reference has already been made to the fact that the course in junior business, a course for Grade IX pupils, was in the 1937 revision united with introductory bookkeeping. This arrangement is fairly satisfactory for the commercial curriculum. Subject matter may be so organized as to combine studies in business procedures with the technical recording

of these procedures, thereby developing increased understandings on the part of the pupils. The linking of the two subjects also reduces the possible overlapping that may be found when different courses of study include similar subject matter with like objectives, a condition that exists in the case of junior business and elementary bookkeeping. On the other hand, there is the very grave danger that the teacher will assume the desired general business understandings to be concomitants of the study of technical procedures, with the result that the major emphasis will be given to the bookkeeping portion of the course.

For the various other secondary school curricula the uniting of the two parts into one course is most unsatisfactory. The bookkeeping section is intended to be definitely vocational, not to stress the personal-use side of the subject. Hence there is a tendency for school principals to regard the combined course as one suited only to the needs of pupils electing the business program. It is true that the junior business section alone may be offered, for in the case of certain practical subjects the credits may be so divided as to allot part of the allowances to well-defined bodies of subject matter included within the courses. But this is not always an acceptable plan, since pupils so engaged must devote themselves to the work daily for only a part of the year, or for a few periods each week throughout the year, and this necessity complicates time-

table construction. Thus from the very start the course intended to develop general business understandings amongst all junior pupils has been looked upon with a certain amount of disfavor by principals of secondary schools other than those engaged in commercial training.

It is most unfortunate from another standpoint that junior business and introductory bookkeeping were combined. The junior business topics are well selected, and a comprehensive course developed around these topics would be extremely valuable. But time does not allow for thorough treatment of pertinent subject matter. Junior business was originally planned as a five-credit course and the content would seem to merit, even to require, five periods per week on the school time-table. Yet the work must be covered in half that time to allow for proper attention to the bookkeeping studies. Doubtless useful work is being done in the junior business classes, but the time element seriously reduces the possibility of maximum achievement.

Senior pupils may be offered training in general business, a subject which forms a part of the course in general business, law, and record keeping. Three credits are allotted to the general business section, while the remaining two credits may be earned by a study of either the law or the record keeping. In the part devoted to general business the utility of the subject matter is beyond question. The studies deal with personal finance, banking,

investments, insurance, home ownership, taxation, and other such problems, all of which should give secondary school pupils extensive business knowledge. The second section, that dealing with business law, was planned primarily for commercial pupils, and a number of the units are distinctly technical. This is unfortunate, for some knowledge of the fundamentals of business law is of use to everyone, while the extremely technical material is beyond the grasp of even the commercial pupils. The third section, that given to record keeping, should meet a need in the high school program for it provides a training in personal bookkeeping and in the interpretation of business terms and statements, thus supplementing both the junior business and general business studies in the development of a background of economic understandings.

As in the case of junior business and introductory bookkeeping, general business--and the term here is meant to include the alternative section as well--has not yet been as widely introduced into the secondary schools as might reasonably be expected. Conditions in the city of Vancouver offer proof of this statement. The city has eleven senior high schools, two of them high schools of commerce, two composite schools offering four years of business training, three composite schools with quasi-commercial departments, three academic schools, and one technical school. Yet, during the 1939-40 school year,

general business was offered in only two of the eleven centres, one being a commercial school and the other a composite school with a quasi-commercial department. Where the business curriculum is offered there is a tendency to make provision for the teaching of business law, but to consider that the general business topics are covered as incidental work in the vocational courses. This is certainly not the case, and it is questionable whether commercial pupils are on the average much better trained in the field of general business knowledge than are the graduates of the non-commercial curricula.

In schools not offering vocational business studies there is still a strong tendency to refrain from including general business in the time-table. Probably the course name suggests a technical subject not to be offered to academic pupils, and, in addition, it is not always easy for the school to find a teacher with the proper background to teach the complete course. A further obstacle was recently removed, and this also applies to the junior business and introductory bookkeeping, when the Department of Education ruled that, beginning in 1939-40, fifteen credits of commercial work would be accepted towards University admission. Prior to that time credits earned in commercial subjects counted only towards High School Graduation.

In Chapter II it was stated that general business

knowledge should supply understandings of ordinary business procedures, occupational concepts, social and economic intelligence, and background for vocational training. This brief consideration of the general business courses included in the British Columbia Programme of Studies is surely sufficient to prove that they cannot be relied upon to achieve these objectives. Further, there is no longer a course in economic geography, there is no course dealing with the marketing of world products, there is no study of even the most elementary principles of economics or of their application to practical problems of business. Junior business and general business are in the program but, as already pointed out, it is quite conceivable that even a graduate of the business curriculum might have gained his certificate with a minimum of training in the former subject and absolutely none in the latter.

Now let us consider how effectively the present program functions in providing vocational knowledge and skills. A perusal of Table IX shows that far greater attention has been given to the vocational subjects than to the general business knowledge subjects. The vocational courses centre around the fields of stenography and bookkeeping, with shorthand, typewriting and secretarial practice having an allotment of forty credits, and bookkeeping together with junior business, twenty credits.

Certain criteria by which to measure the worth of the

vocational program have already been laid down in Chapter II. It would seem advisable to recall these before going on to consider the functioning of the secretarial and bookkeeping courses. It was stated that the school should train for occupations open to its pupils in the community, should develop a high degree of proficiency in the skills required for the special occupational field selected by the pupil, should give specialized training as nearly as possible to the time when the pupil is to make use of the training, and should equip the pupil for the initial contact job.

A business education program which trains for occupations open to pupils in their own communities must be based on a knowledge of what these occupations are. This implies some form of job survey from which are determined the types of occupations, the approximate number of persons engaged in each, and a reasonably close estimate of the number of new positions opening up annually in each occupation. With such information available, a school might at least expect to advise its pupils wisely concerning their prospects of gaining employment in any special line of work, and it might even succeed to some extent in limiting its registrations in the different vocational courses to the number likely to obtain positions through their training.

At no time has a job survey of the type suggested been conducted in British Columbia. The Department of Labor

does compile certain statistics pertaining to women and girls engaged in certain occupations for which minimum wage rates have been set. Mercantile workers, and persons engaged in office occupations, are included in this group. Table XI gives particulars taken from the 1939 Annual Report of the British Columbia Department of Labor as to numbers engaged in the two types of work.

TABLE XI. NUMBER OF WOMEN AND GIRLS EMPLOYED IN CERTAIN OCCUPATIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1939

Age Classification	Mercantile Workers	Office Workers
Number of Employees over 18 years of age.....	5194	6691
Number of Employees under 18 years of age.....	398	88
Total Number of Employees.....	5592	6779

These figures cannot be regarded as giving an absolutely accurate picture of female employment in the two fields specified, since employers are asked annually to show the numbers for the week of greatest employment. They do indicate, however, that there is a very substantial body of women engaged as mercantile workers, and they show that there is a large group of women office workers, though unfortunately this latter group has not been classified as stenographers, secretaries, file clerks, machine operators, etc. Statistics for men in the business occupations are entirely lacking.

Lack of detailed information makes it impossible, particularly in the larger centres in the Province, to attempt to train suitable numbers of workers for all the different occupational opportunities open to school pupils. But it is evident that there are business positions other than those of typist, stenographer, and bookkeeper. Mercantile employees need specialized business training for their work, as do many general clerical workers who make use of neither stenography nor formal bookkeeping. That there is a sufficiently large group of persons of such types to warrant consideration in the business education program seems evident when one examines the distribution of workers composing the staffs of a few of Vancouver's larger business concerns. Table XII gives some idea of the nature of the duties of the holders of business positions in three establishments.

TABLE XII. DISTRIBUTION OF BUSINESS EMPLOYEES
IN THREE LARGE ESTABLISHMENTS IN VANCOUVER,
JUNE, 1940

Classification of Workers	Case 1 ^a	Case 2 ^b	Case 3 ^c
Stenographers.....		13	57
Bookkeepers and Machine Operators.....	18	34	
General Clerks.....	^d 153	33	^e 112
Sales Persons.....	7	300	

^aBritish Columbia Electric Railway Company, Limited.

^bHudson's Bay Company.

^cVancouver City Hall, inside staff.

^dAbout 40 per cent may be called upon to use stenography at some time.

^eMany of the group keep records of different types but very few could be classed as bookkeepers or machine operators.

Despite this variety of business occupations, British Columbia's commercial education program continues to stress the traditional subjects, shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping. In the 1937 curriculum revision efforts were made to determine suitable objectives and efficient teaching procedures in the stenographic and bookkeeping fields, but no attempt was made to introduce necessary vocational business training subjects for such other types of work as have been mentioned.

It should be noted that training for occupations open to pupils implies also the need for flexibility in courses of study. The pupil in the farming community, for example, is interested in different aspects of bookkeeping from those that are of greatest significance to the city pupil.

His studies in junior business may involve a different emphasis, and so with his problems in mathematics. Yet the individual courses of study in business education fail to recognize such differences of outlook, there being no suggestion that local conditions may result in some variations in subject matter or in teaching procedures.

Proficiency is an essential in vocational training, for employment standards in office occupations are high. But it is not to be expected that a pupil will become proficient in all the branches of the vocational program. He must select a field in which he wishes to train, a field for which he is suited through both his interests and abilities, and he must strive to attain excellence in that field. By specializing he reduces the number of skills to be acquired and thus increases his chance to develop proficiency within the limits of his choice. Meanwhile he reduces the period needed for vocational studies, thereby making a greater portion of his time available for general business training and general education. In British Columbia the tendency has been, and for that matter still is, to expect the pupil electing the vocational business course to become proficient in both stenography and bookkeeping, regardless of his particular aptitudes and in spite of the fact that by and large "only about 2 per cent of office workers are

bookkeepers and only about 10 per cent are stenographers."¹ As a consequence, many commercial pupils are trained in work for which they are not specially suited and, besides, they are deprived of the opportunity to broaden their general education. Boys and girls might benefit greatly from a study of general science, while most girls following the business curriculum would find work in home economics beneficial. Yet these courses are frequently sacrificed for unnecessary vocational training.

To illustrate the prominence that may be given to vocational studies in a British Columbia school, the writer submits in Table XIII the typical program of a pupil following a four-year commercial course in one of Vancouver's large commercial schools, the Fairview High School of Commerce. The school program is organized on the basis of thirty-five periods of forty minutes each per week, with each period representing one credit, except that credits are not allowed for requisite periods in study, library, and guidance.

¹F. G. Nichols, op. cit., p. 212.

TABLE XIII. FOUR-YEAR PROGRAM OF COMMERCIAL PUPIL,
1939-40 TIME-TABLE

Subjects	Grade IX		Grade X		Grade XI		Grade XII	
	P ^a	Cr ^b	P	Cr	P	Cr	P	Cr
English.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Social Studies.....	5	5	-	-	5	5	5	5
Health and Physical Education.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Library.....	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-
Guidance.....	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-
Study.....	5	-	5	-	5	-	5	-
Shorthand.....	5	5	5	5	-	-	-	-
Typewriting.....	5	5	5	5	-	-	-	-
Secretarial Practice. Junior Business and Introductory Book- keeping.....	-	-	-	-	10	10	10	10
Bookkeeping.....	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Business Arithmetic..	-	-	5	5	2	2	3	3
Commercial English...	-	-	3	3	-	-	-	-
Law and General Business.....	-	-	2	2	3	3	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Total	35	28	35	28	35	28	35	28

^aPeriods
^bCredits

Of the courses listed in Table XIII possibly the only one requiring any description is the secretarial practice. This course has been planned to provide training in the application of shorthand and typewriting to business situations, as well as to prepare pupils for a wide variety of other duties which might enter into office work. Prerequisites include shorthand I, shorthand II, typewriting I, and typewriting II. Actual content of the course includes a great deal of shorthand dictation and transcription. In addition there are units of work dealing with personality

development, qualifications of office workers, use of the telephone in the office, uses to which different office machines are put, sources of business information, preparation and typing of telegrams, business forms and reports, filing, etc. In other words, the course really aims at meeting the needs of the stenographer or secretary, as well as many of the needs of the general office worker.

Unfortunately there is no provision whereby the pupil who wishes to qualify as a general office worker may omit the shorthand dictation and the transcription from his studies.

It will be clear to the reader who examines Table XIII closely that there are no optional courses offered, that practically fifty-five credits out of a total of 112 credits required for graduation are gained through the study of stenographic and bookkeeping subjects, that general business understandings are regarded as being relatively unimportant, that business arithmetic, admittedly an essential for commercial pupils, receives scant attention, and that general education offerings include only the bare essentials of English, social studies, and health and physical education.

Reference to Table XIII shows also that Grade IX is the starting point for extensive specialized work, a condition that is common in British Columbia. Yet the principle has been advanced that vocational business training should be given near the time when the pupil is expected to use this

training. Referring to the matter of grade placement of business subjects, Blake W. Spencer in an article, "Required Courses for Business Students," says: "...we believe that all materials recommended for any group should be offered as near as possible to the time when they will be needed by the student. If this principle were followed much subject matter frequently covered in early high school would be placed in the eleventh or twelfth grade instead."²

The writer considers that Grade IX is not the place to start specialization for, if the pupil is to be allowed to choose a specialized field of study, he should make his choice on the basis of understanding and interest. Here maturity plays a part, since it is accompanied by broader knowledge of the demands of various business positions and a better estimate of personal capacities and desires. In turn, mature choice based on interest means that there is greater motivations towards serious effort, since the pupil is far more aware of the significance of the subject matter and the skills he must master. Yet the commercial curriculum of the Province is not planned to take advantage of the benefits to be derived from this motivation. Many pupils electing the business program are expected to start their vocational work in Grade IX, before they have evinced an interest in any special type of business occupation and,

²Blake W. Spencer, "Required Courses for Business Students." Business Education World, XIX, (March, 1939), p. 562.

because of the lack of keen interest, they use four years of school time to accomplish what they might do in a far shorter period.

A further difficulty arises in certain districts where junior high schools offer the work of Grades VII to IX inclusive, and where separate senior high schools plan programs including the work of Grades IX to XII, or XIII, inclusive. If the senior high school commences vocational business education in Grade IX, the junior high school is obliged to do the same or else to transfer possible business pupils to the senior high school at the end of Grade VIII. Otherwise the transition at the end of Grade IX is accomplished only with a certain amount of difficulty. But the junior high school is not intended to be a vocational centre. This school has been established in the interest of the pupils and, wherever possible, all pupils should complete the junior high school program before going on to the senior school. Hence either procedure, that of the junior high school's commencing vocational work in Grade IX, or that of transferring prospective commercial pupils to the senior high school at the end of Grade VIII, results in an unfavorable situation which could be obviated by the postponement of vocational work until pupils have reached at least Grade X.

The practice of allowing pupils to commence the vocational business subjects in Grade IX is not confined to commercial high schools or to other secondary schools which

offer a complete commercial course. In some of the composite secondary schools it is possible for Grade IX pupils to elect vocational subjects with a view to completing the requisite number of credits for the grade. Shorthand may be selected as an optional subject and it may be studied for one year to yield five credits, only to be dropped at the end of that time. Little thought is given to the fact that a single year of shorthand taken this way has practically no value, nor is consideration given to the point that, even if the pupil plans to resume his study of the subject at some later date, a long period of disuse almost nullifies the value of the early training.

It is not necessary to commence the vocational training in Grade IX. Department of Labor reports for British Columbia, as recorded in Table XI, show that less than 8 per cent of the female workers in the mercantile industry and less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the female workers in office occupations are under eighteen years of age. It would seem evident, therefore, that employment in business positions is open largely to persons who have reached an age corresponding to that of pupils in the highest grade of the secondary school. This view is supported by the information gathered in an investigation of the withdrawals from Grades IX to XII inclusive of the Fairview High School of Commerce, Vancouver, during the period extending from June 30, 1939, to June 30, 1940. Included in the investigation were those

1938-39 pupils who did not return for the 1939-40 school year and those who withdrew from school before the closing date in June, 1940. Fifty-six of the Grade XII pupils were members of the 1938-39 graduating class who left school after four years' attendance, most of them immediately setting out in search of positions. Table XIV shows the distribution of a total of 239 withdrawals according to the nature of the activities of the pupils concerned after leaving the school.

TABLE XIV. DISTRIBUTION OF 239 WITHDRAWALS FROM
FAIRVIEW HIGH SCHOOL OF COMMERCE CLASSES
JUNE 30, 1939, TO JUNE 30, 1940

Nature of Activity	Grade IX		Grade X		Grade XI		Grade XII		Total
	B ^a	G ^b	B	G	B	G	B	G	
Transferred to Other Vancouver High Schools..	2	4	1	3	-	1	-	1	12
Moved Away from the City.....	-	10	1	4	-	2	-	2	19
Unemployed - Staying at Home.....	1	13	1	18	2	13	-	19	67
Left School Because of Illness.....	-	2	1	4	-	1	-	-	8
Married.....	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	1	4
To Business College.....	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	4
To Train in Other Courses ^c	-	4	-	2	1	-	-	1	8
In Army or Navy.....	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	3
Employed in Business Positions in Office Occupations.....	2	-	6	2	3	-	11	31	55
In Mercantile Positions.....	-	4	-	8	-	1	-	5	18
Employed in Factory Jobs.....	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	1	7
Employed as Domestic Servants.....	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	3
Employed in Other Types of Work ^d	2	2	1	-	4	-	1	2	12
Not Accounted for.....	1	4	4	4	1	3	-	2	19
Total.....	8	47	16	53	11	25	14	65	239

^aBoys

^bGirls

^cMatriculation Courses, Hair-dressing Courses, etc.

^dWaitresses, Beauty Parlor Operators, Elevator Operators, etc.

The conditions pictured in Tables XI and XIV support the writer's view that in British Columbia vocational education, at least in the commercial field, should be deferred until pupils reach the higher grades of the secondary school. Not only are the great majority of those employed in business positions eighteen years of age or over, but a very large percentage of those who withdraw from the lower grades of the commercial school fail to find positions in which they use their vocational business training. This is somewhat less obvious with the boys than with the girls, for evidently some business firms prefer to train their male employees from the beginning, and they are not concerned whether these beginners have had specialized training other than possibly typewriting and business arithmetic. Thus, though in the case of the withdrawals studied the percentage of junior boys obtaining business positions was much higher than that for girls, this does not argue for an earlier start at vocational studies for boys, for over 75 per cent of the total of all boys and girls obtaining business positions were amongst withdrawals from Grade XII.

The figures shown in Table XIV not only support the postponing of vocational business education but they also present a very strong argument in favor of more training for general business understandings. Approximately 30 per cent of the total withdrawals remained unemployed over an

extended period, while only 58 per cent of those who gained employment obtained office positions. Thirty-five of the withdrawals were persons who transferred to other Vancouver secondary schools, went to business college, or moved away from the city, and several of this last group planned to continue with their high school education. If these thirty-five be disregarded, it will be observed that over 70 per cent of the remainder had no immediate use for their vocational training. General business knowledge would have had a personal-use value to all the groups as well as a certain amount of occupational value to those who obtained mercantile positions and work of other types.

It should be noted that over 50 per cent of the total withdrawals was made up of pupils from Grades IX and X, many of whom would later drift into jobs where vocational skills would not be used, or where, if needed, would have to be relearned because of long disuse. It is no use asserting that the technical subjects were the best ones to offer this younger group. Possibly many of them would have remained in school longer had they been given the opportunity of choosing their special fields of work at more mature ages. At any rate, broader general education and more comprehensive general business understandings would have given them better capacity to adjust themselves to different types of life situations and employment situations which they would be called upon to face later.

To return to the vocational aspect, it is the responsibility of the school to train its pupils up to the standards for the initial contact job, but not for positions open only after years of experience, or for those entailing technical problems of business management. Spencer, in his article, "Required Courses for Business Students," suggests standards as follows:

The Secretarial Curriculum

Although there must be considerable variation in standards to meet business demands in various localities, in general the ability to type about 50 words a minute should be required of the student who is preparing for secretarial work. This would demand about three semesters of typewriting.

Typewriting should be followed by required office practice, which would include advanced typewriting, filing, simple secretarial record keeping, and a study of the most commonly used machines of the community.

Shorthand sufficient for initial contact jobs, or a dictation rate of about 100 words a minute (again differing in various communities) should be required. This would probably involve two years of shorthand for the average high school, though the final semester might well be combined with secretarial practice of various types.

For this group, at least one semester of business letter writing should be required, to be taken just prior to entrance into transcription.

The Bookkeeping Curriculum

At least one, preferably two years of bookkeeping should be required, although there is evidence to indicate that one year is sufficient for the usual type of initial contact job today. Further training can be secured as needed for promotion.

At least one semester of business mathematics should be included for this group, as well as sufficient office practice to give elementary knowledge of the common office machines, together

with simple methods in filing.

One full year of typewriting should be required.

Where community situations indicate placement opportunities in the use of bookkeeping machines, girls should be given an opportunity to learn to operate them.³

Reference has already been made to the fact that the pupil in British Columbia may devote ten periods per week for four years to shorthand and typewriting and to the application of these subjects to secretarial activities, while for the equivalent of three and one-half years he may devote five periods weekly to vocational bookkeeping. There is something to be said in favor of such a scheme purely from the standpoint of the standards attained. Frequent lesson periods spread over a four-year term result in the development of extensive vocational knowledge and in a high degree of proficiency in the skills taught. Many pupils who remain at school to graduate far exceed the standards set by Spencer for the secretarial curriculum, while those who continue with bookkeeping throughout the four years deal with advanced principles and difficult problems with which only the experienced bookkeeper or the accountant need be familiar.

To offset the advantage of proficiency there is the disadvantage that the cost is far too great. Pupils are equipped with vocational knowledge and skills beyond their needs, but they lack general education as well as those

³Ibid., p. 563.

occupational understandings so necessary to beginners in business positions. Actually some of the time devoted to the advanced bookkeeping is sheer loss for the average pupil, since certain of the subject matter is so far beyond the realm of his experience that it creates no lasting impression. In both the secretarial and bookkeeping fields there is need for wise selection of topics for intensive study, as well as for proper grade placement. There is need also in certain localities for other types of business training. Only when these requirements have been met, and when pupils make mature selections on the basis of interest and capacity, will standards for initial contact jobs be reached with the greatest economy of time and effort.

So far there has been no reference to the course in business English or to that in the operation of office appliances. The former concerns itself largely with remedial English, business correspondence and filing, while the latter pertains to the use of office machines other than the typewriter. Undoubtedly certain units of both courses are useful to stenographers and bookkeepers alike. Yet in the case of business English a number of the topics are far more applicable to the secretarial studies, while the mastery of certain office appliances also belongs to workers in that field. Likewise, certain units, particularly in the office appliances course, bear more directly on the bookkeeping field.

At the present time the business English, an optional course, is widely taught and it would seem certain that much good work is being done by teachers of the subject. On the other hand, the course in office appliances received little attention despite the fact that it calls for the attainment of genuine employment standards, the achieving of which should aid the learner to obtain a position. The truth is that schools in the Province are poorly equipped to supply this type of instruction, with the result that the course is largely disregarded.

In the opinion of the writer both business English and office appliances should be eliminated from the program as individual courses, but suitable units from both should be integrated into the secretarial and bookkeeping courses. In the case of the business English this integration would result in a certain saving of time and labor. With the office appliances it would encourage some instruction, even if only a minimum amount, on the limited office equipment at present available in the schools. In fact it might even act as an incentive to school boards to supply additional equipment, at least of the low-cost variety, since mastery of such equipment would become a part of the secretarial and bookkeeping courses. Finally, it should bring about increased effectiveness in both of these fields since all effort would be directed towards the mastery of the most appropriate subject matter.

It seems clear that the vocational business education program fails to reach a high standard in terms of the various criteria which have been set up. This must not be taken to mean that there is no effective work being done, for with all the time given to technical bookkeeping and secretarial studies there must be many pupils who are well trained in the routine duties associated with these two fields of employment. The job placement records of the different commercial schools, together with reports from employers in the Province, would confirm this statement. But the weaknesses are in training too many pupils for jobs of the two types and not for business occupations of other types, in not being sufficiently selective in the subject matter required of even the prospective bookkeepers and stenographers, in not making the starting point for vocational work such that there is the greatest motivation or that the other objectives of education may be best achieved, and in not determining with sufficient care the standards which should be reached by pupils earning graduation.

Partially to determine the validity of his criticisms of the business education program, and partially to gain added information concerning the occupations and duties of recent withdrawals from the business course, the writer resorted to the use of a questionnaire, a copy of which forms Appendix B. Whereas large numbers of responses were received

from pupils who had withdrawn from different grades of certain British Columbia secondary schools offering commercial courses, yet in most cases the sampling was not sufficiently broad to warrant the use of the returns in this report. A further limitation was necessary since, as will be evident to the reader, the replies of many withdrawals from the lower grades, and even replies of higher grade pupils who had never occupied business positions, could have little value beyond the use made of them in Table XIV. Consequently Tables XV to XXI inclusive have been based on replies received from a group of former pupils of the Fairview High School of Commerce, Vancouver, each individual having entered the final year of the four-year school program, and the great majority having earned graduation certificates. Pupils who had not reached the fourth year have not been considered.

It will be apparent that Tables XV to XXI are not concerned with a select group since of the 127 cases considered 104 belonged to the graduating classes of 1937-38 and 1938-39. The total registration in the graduation groups for these two years was 156, of whom thirty-three were disregarded, some having never had any work, others not being traceable, and still others having joined the Canadian Naval or Air Forces. Thus the 104 cases represent over 80 per cent of the 123 available persons from the graduating classes of the two years, a sufficiently

representative group for purposes of this study. Since these 104 persons were in attendance for some time after the new curriculum went into effect, and since their experiences in initial contact positions were not very remote at the time of completing the questionnaire, the information given in the responses should be specially pertinent to this report.

Table XV shows the age distribution of the 127 cases concerned, while Table XVI shows a distribution of the employment periods.

TABLE XV. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF 127 CASES

Age in Years	Boys	Girls	Total
16.....	-	1	1
17.....	4	3	7
18.....	4	26	30
19.....	9	26	35
20.....	4	21	25
21.....	1	16	17
22 or over	-	12	12
Total..	22	105	127
Median Age	19	19	19

TABLE XVI. DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT PERIODS FOR 127 CASES

Employment Period in Months	Boys	Girls	Total
1 - 6	7	36	43
7 - 12	5	16	21
13 - 18	4	20	24
19 - 24	3	8	11
25 or over	3	22	25
Part Time	-	2	2
Temporary	-	1	1
Total	22	105	127
Mean Employment Period in Months	15.6	15.1	15.2
Median Employment Period in Months	12.0	11.0	12.0

Tables XV and XVI, while confirming the statement that most of the cases considered typify persons of limited experience, show that the investigation was not altogether confined to this one class. In actual fact, while some responses from persons of three or more years' employment were incorporated into this report, it was felt inadvisable to make use of returns from a number of persons who had been out of school for anywhere from five to ten years.

At the time of completing the questionnaire 103 of those involved were actually employed. Some persons reported having held only one position, whilst others had occupied as many as four. Table XVII shows a distribution on the basis of the number of positions held, Table XVIII a classification of the positions on the basis of Section 3 of the questionnaire.

TABLE XVII. NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, OR FOURTH POSITION AND NUMBER UNEMPLOYED AFTER FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, OR FOURTH POSITION

Position	Boys		Girls		Total No. of Positions Involved
	Employed	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed	
First	15	1	42	13	71
Second	4	-	22	7	66
Third	1	-	13	1	45
Fourth	1	-	5	2	32
Total	21	1	82	23	214

TABLE XVIII. DISTRIBUTION OF 214 POSITIONS HELD BY 127 PERSONS

Type of Position	Boys	Girls	Total
1. General Clerk.....	4	6	10
2. Shipping Clerk.....	-	1	1
3. Receiving Clerk.....	-	-	-
4. Stock Clerk.....	1	-	1
5. File Clerk.....	1	7	8
6. Mail Clerk.....	-	1	1
7. Messenger Boy.....	1	-	1
8. Office Boy.....	5	-	5
9. Billing Clerk.....	-	3	3
10. Cost Clerk.....	-	-	-
11. Statistical Clerk.....	-	1	1
12. Entry Clerk.....	-	-	-
13. Ledger Clerk.....	-	-	-
14. Statement Clerk.....	-	1	1
15. Assistant Bookkeeper.....	1	1	2
16. Bookkeeping Machine Operator..	1	2	3
17. Bookkeeper.....	2	4	6
18. Calculating Machine Operator..	-	1	1
19. Timekeeper.....	-	-	-
20. Cashier.....	-	-	-
21. Collector.....	-	2	2
22. Order Clerk.....	-	1	1
23. Typist.....	2	19	21
24. Duplicating Machine Operator..	-	1	1
25. Dictating Machine Operator....	-	-	-

TABLE XVIII. (Continued)

Type of Position	Boys	Girls	Total
26. Stenographer.....	4	90	94
27. Secretary.....	-	14	14
28. Sales Person.....	4	8	12
29. Mail Order Assistant.....	1	1	2
30. Bundle Wrapper.....	-	-	-
31. Window Trimmer.....	-	-	-
32. Switchboard Operator.....	-	3	3
33. Information Clerk.....	-	2	2
34. Other Types of Work:			
Factory or Mill Worker....	2	4	6
Waiter or Waitress.....	1	1	2
Domestic Worker.....	-	1	1
Miscellaneous.....	1	8	9
Total.....	31	183	214

It is significant that of the 214 positions listed in Table XVIII only eleven, or about 5 per cent, may be definitely classed as bookkeeping positions. Stenographers and secretaries number 108, or approximately 50 per cent of the total. Though it is to be expected that the stenographic field would be strongly represented since the great majority of the individuals reporting were young women, yet these 108 positions were distributed amongst only seventy of the 127 persons involved. Therefore Table XVIII would seem to provide a very strong argument against the lengthy bookkeeping training offered high school commercial pupils. It would indicate also that stenography, which pretty well constitutes the backbone of the commercial curriculum, is given too great stress.

The variety of other positions included in Table XVIII

would suggest that many pupils would have been better trained for actual employment had they been given broader general business training, a certain amount of general clerical training, and less stenography and bookkeeping. Probably many of the persons concerned would have selected such a program had it been available, but only one plan was open to them.

The reader will see that a total of twelve positions involved selling. Reference to Table XIV dealing with withdrawals from the regular grades of the Fairview High School of Commerce for one year will show that even more persons from the lower grades obtained mercantile positions than from the upper grades. In other words it would seem that training in advanced bookkeeping and stenography does not aid pupils to gain positions as sales persons. It is possible, however, that certain persons not represented in Table XVIII because they had never been employed might have been specially suited to training in retail selling, and might have been better served by the school had the curriculum made provision for this type of education.

Table XIX, prepared from Section 4 of the questionnaire, indicates the number of the positions represented in Table XVIII calling for the performance of certain duties.

TABLE XIX. DUTIES PERFORMED IN 214 POSITIONS

Nature of Duty	Positions Demanding Performance of the Duty		
	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Cashier Duties.....	10	37	47
2. Typing from Copy.....	14	123	137
3. Using Telephone.....	18	122	140
4. Mail Clerk Work.....	15	53	68
5. Posting Original Entries.....	7	34	41
6. Messenger Services.....	7	19	26
7. Operating Adding and Listing Machines.....	9	59	68
8. Writing or Dictating Letters...	7	61	68
9. Operating Calculating Machines.	7	26	33
10. Checking Postings.....	5	25	30
11. Operating Addressograph.....	2	11	13
12. Payroll Work.....	4	26	30
13. Monthly Statement Work.....	8	55	63
14. Keeping Stock Records.....	4	12	16
15. Typing Bills.....	8	69	77
16. Using Dictaphone or Ediphone...	-	5	5
17. Figuring Costs.....	8	22	30
18. Using Card Indexes.....	8	59	67
19. Information Clerk Work.....	3	24	27
20. Operating Bookkeeping Machine..	3	6	9
21. Verification or Audit Work.....	-	6	6
22. Taking Inventory.....	6	21	27
23. Collection Work.....	4	20	24
24. Keeping Shipping Records.....	2	17	19
25. Operating Billing Machine.....	1	7	8
26. Operating Mimeograph.....	6	28	34
27. Operating Multigraph.....	-	1	1
28. Sorting Vouchers, etc.....	8	35	43
29. Figuring Discounts.....	3	24	27
30. Recording Orders.....	9	28	37
31. Making out Shipping Papers.....	5	18	23
32. Operating Sealing Machine.....	3	5	8
33. Writing Orders.....	10	29	39
34. Timekeeping.....	1	5	6
35. Credit Clerk Work.....	2	7	9

TABLE XIX. (Continued)

Nature of Duty	Positions Demanding Performance of the Duty		
	Boys	Girls	Total
36. Routing Shipments.....	1	5	6
37. Tracing Production Orders.....	1	1	2
38. Receiving Clerk Work.....	1	6	7
39. Marking Shipments.....	3	5	8
40. Blueprint Duplicating.....	-	1	1
41. Price Marking.....	3	5	8
42. Show Card Lettering.....	1	5	6
43. Taking Shorthand Dictation and Transcription.....	9	114	123
44. Trimming Windows.....	1	2	3
45. Filing Letters, etc.....	14	117	131
46. Operating Switchboard.....	2	23	25
47. Other Duties:			
Selling Goods.....	4	8	12
Miscellaneous Duties.....	3	17	20

Table XIX might be used extensively in the preparation of individual courses of study but, as actual subject matter of courses is not of prime importance here, only certain general comments will be made. The reader will see first that this table bears out Table XVIII in showing that few positions demand the performance of such technical bookkeeping duties as posting entries, checking postings, operating bookkeeping machines, or doing audit work. It has already been contended that too much time is given to technical bookkeeping and this contention is further supported, particularly when one realizes what few junior positions call for verification or audit duties.

In the case of stenography, whereas only four boys classified themselves as stenographers, yet in nine of the

thirty-one positions involved stenography was required at some time. Still the percentage is not high, and it must be remembered that this report covers boys who had reached at least their fourth year in secondary commercial training, and who might therefore be called upon to perform technical duties. In the case of the girls it has already been shown that 104 of 183 positions listed were of the secretarial type. Only ten other positions called for the use of any shorthand or transcription. Table XIV suggests that a large portion of the girls withdrawing from school before reaching Grade XII do not obtain office positions. Table XIX shows that in more than one third of the positions held by Grade XII girls who reported for this study, shorthand was unnecessary. How much more unnecessary is it then to start every boy and every girl in the commercial course on the subject at the beginning of Grade IX, or even later!

General office duties are widely represented in Table XIX. Large numbers of positions call for typing from copy, using the telephone, filing letters, doing mail clerk work, using card indexes, using simple adding machines, typing bills and monthly statements, and a variety of other tasks that do not require protracted technical instruction. Many pupils desiring business education are competent to perform these duties but are not able to attain employment standards in either technical bookkeeping or stenography. Yet, as has been frequently mentioned, there is no special

provision for school students to qualify for these duties without continuing with the more technical instruction.

Advanced work in typewriting, that involving copying of legal documents and formal reports, is a part of the secretarial practice course, a course which calls for shorthand dictation and transcription. The use of the telephone is regarded as a part of the same course so that, indirectly at least, even work of this nature is linked with the study of shorthand. Filing of letters is one of the constituent duties of over 60 per cent of the 214 positions reported, stenographers, bookkeepers, and other types of workers being required to perform services of this kind. In fact, eight positions were actually reported under the name of file clerk. In the school program, however, there has been a strong tendency to regard filing as being associated with the secretarial field, or at least as a form of instruction which should be open only to advanced commercial pupils. Evidence points to the fact that though all these procedures must enter into the training of the stenographer and bookkeeper, they should also form a part of a separate general clerical course not calling for advanced technical education.

Instruction in the use of office equipment merits some attention since large numbers of positions call for the operation of simple adding, calculating, and duplicating machines. The secretarial practice course includes a unit

of work on office machines, its purpose being to acquaint pupils with the various types of appliances and their uses in business. The office appliances course calls for intensive training in the operation of at least one or two machines in each of such classes as adding machines, calculators, posting machines, bookkeeping machines, duplicators, and dictating machines. Since the cost of equipping a school for this latter course is very high, it is common procedure to do some theoretical work on various types of equipment in the secretarial practice course, but to refrain from offering the office appliances course. Hence we have a further case of important subject matter being indirectly dependent on a study of shorthand. And because it is possible to cover the minimum requirements in secretarial practice with practically no machines other than typewriters, schools in general are without modern and efficient equipment for this important type of instruction. There seems to be little need for installing expensive bookkeeping machines of different makes in the commercial schools, but the possession of simpler types of equipment is essential to comprehensive instruction in bookkeeping, stenographic, general clerical, and even retail selling courses.

That pupils who graduate from the business curriculum are adequately trained in shorthand, typewriting and bookkeeping, the strictly technical subjects, would seem evident

from a study of Table XX. This table was prepared from Section 5 of the questionnaire, in which those reporting stated whether their training was sufficient to meet needs in their positions. Not all of the 127 persons reported on every subject.

TABLE XX. RESPONSES AS TO ADEQUACY OF TRAINING
IN COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS

Subject	Boys			Girls			Total		
	S ^a	I ^b	U ^c	S	I	U	S	I	U
Business English.....	18	1	-	76	18	7	94	19	7
Filing.....	11	5	3	79	4	13	90	9	16
Shorthand.....	14	-	5	80	2	17	94	2	22
Typewriting.....	17	-	2	90	2	4	107	2	6
Secretarial Practice.	13	-	6	78	9	11	91	9	17
Arithmetic.....	15	3	1	64	23	12	79	26	13
Bookkeeping.....	13	-	6	59	5	31	72	5	37
Business Law.....	6	3	10	37	12	42	43	15	52
General Business Practice.....	12	4	3	58	30	7	70	34	10
Operating Office Machines (other than typewriter)...	4	9	6	19	63	16	23	72	22

^aSatisfactory

^bUnsatisfactory

^cUnnecessary

The numbers of persons who reported insufficient training in shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping are so small that they hardly deserve attention. Possibly it should be mentioned that three of the five girls signifying inadequate training in bookkeeping were persons whose work showed no bookkeeping duties. Of the nine persons reporting insufficient secretarial practice practically all were stenographers. Two of these were persons reporting

insufficient bookkeeping also, though only one of the two had bookkeeping duties. The writer has already contended that pupils should not be called upon to master the technicalities of advanced vocational work in two or more fields, and it is his view that probably the nine individuals reporting inadequate secretarial practice would have been better trained had they been asked to master the secretarial work and not the advanced bookkeeping.

Twenty-two of the 127 persons concerned reported shorthand as being unnecessary, while thirty-seven, or practically one third, found no use for their bookkeeping. In actual fact many more might have indicated that these subjects had served no vocational purpose. Only eighty-five different individuals out of the 127 had held positions in which they took any shorthand dictation, some of these eighty-five having held more than one position involving this type of work, while but thirty-eight persons out of the total number had put their bookkeeping to vocational use. In all probability many of the group felt that some use might be made of these subjects at a later time and, therefore, chose to regard the training they had received as being adequate, so marking the questionnaire forms.

Nineteen persons indicated insufficient training in business English. A number of these criticized the lack of adequate attention to spelling. Filing, at present a

portion of the business English course, and a study topic in secretarial practice as well, shows nine persons with insufficient training, all nine having filing duties. The percentage involved is decidedly small and would probably be still smaller were the school equipment more appropriate.

Twenty-six persons reported insufficient arithmetic. Mention has already been made of existing difficulties which stand in the way of introducing enough arithmetic into the school program. Nor is the situation improved by the fact that the commercial program treats business arithmetic as a subject in itself, rather than integrating it with various related general and technical business topics.

Business law shows fifteen persons reporting need for more instruction. As fifty-two others stated that they found the law unnecessary the writer contends, not that the law should be eliminated from the program, but that an effort should be made to revise the course so that much of the technical work already criticized unfavorably would give way to fundamental principles having greater personal-use value.

In the case of general business training practically 30 per cent reported a deficiency, while a small number considered such learning unnecessary for positions they had occupied. The latter group is readily explained, for factory workers, domestic workers, switchboard operators, and holders of other routine positions find little occasion

to use their business knowledge while on the job. The fact that one third of the remainder felt the need for broader education in this field clearly indicates that the present extensive technical education does not carry with it the essential understandings of fundamental business principles.

Much has already been said about the weaknesses of the present practice in reference to instruction in the use of office machines. The fact that over 60 per cent of all the cases reporting stated that they had not sufficient teaching along this line should be ample evidence to justify the criticisms which have been made. It must not be assumed that what is unsatisfactory in this respect in Vancouver would be unsatisfactory in many of the smaller centres of the Province. The writer is not advocating a uniform practice throughout British Columbia, but rather the adoption of a scheme which will permit of instruction suited to local needs whether it be in the use of office appliances or in any other form of business training.

Section 6 of the questionnaire gave those responding an opportunity to make suggestions and remarks. In many cases no comments were made, and in others the statements merely explained why training in some subjects, as covered in Section 5, was regarded as unsatisfactory. The variety of answers was so great that it is impossible to make a comprehensive tabulation of them here. Table XXI will give some idea of the nature of certain comments

together with the frequency of their occurrence.

TABLE XXI. SUGGESTIONS AND REMARKS MADE BY
PERSONS RESPONDING TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Nature of Suggestion or Remark	Frequency of Suggestion
More instruction on office machines.....	23
More instruction on use of telephone....	17
Less instruction in bookkeeping.....	12
More practical office routine work and work on basis of office standards.....	12
More instruction in spelling.....	11
More business English, including com- posing of business letters.....	11
More opportunity to meet the general public.....	10
More instruction in arithmetic.....	7
More instruction in filing.....	7
Greater personality development (poise, confidence, independence, etc.).....	6
More instruction in penmanship.....	3
More practical bookkeeping with study of special bookkeeping systems.....	3
More appropriate business law.....	2
Study of income tax, sales tax and pay- roll problems.....	2
Study of psychology.....	1

No real purpose will be achieved by expanding on Table XXI. Suffice it to say that probably many of the respondents felt that they had completed their tasks when they had filled in the blank spaces on the questionnaires, and that the comments made by others emphasize shortcomings in various courses making up the present commercial program.

From all the evidence gathered the writer concludes that the present British Columbia business education program falls short of the complete realization of either of the

major purposes of business education. General business understandings receive insufficient attention in the scheme, and it is not obligatory that pupils be trained in this field. Vocational education is patterned after the traditional view which recognized the bookkeeper and the stenographer as the only types of business employees, and is so organized that it fails to achieve best results even in preparing for these occupations. Such a condition could be remedied without too radical a change in the whole set-up of the curriculum, and a suggested scheme is put forth in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

A SUGGESTED PROGRAM OF BUSINESS EDUCATION

It is not enough that the writer voice his criticisms of the commercial curriculum at present in operation, for to stop at that point would imply a lack of constructive opinion. If there be weakness, there should be some form of remedy, and the fact that the writer has found fault places upon him the responsibility of suggesting what in his opinion constitutes the remedy.

Throughout this study it has been argued that the first major objective of business education is to provide general business understandings so as to equip pupils for proper completion of personal business activities, to supply them with economic and civic intelligence as well as occupational concepts, and to give them background for specialized vocational training. Such being the case, general business courses should be made available for all secondary school commercial pupils, indeed for all secondary school pupils. It is suggested then that there be a core of such courses, all of which would be "constant" subjects for those pupils electing the business program. At the same time these courses would be suited to all secondary schools and might be offered in composite high schools not desiring to provide vocational business training, and in small centres with insufficient population

or business activity to warrant the offering of specialized instruction.

Under such a system Grade IX pupils with leanings towards business education would be expected to engage in a study of junior business, a course which would occupy one period daily and which would be definitely non-vocational. The purpose of the course would be to serve as an introduction to business by showing in an elementary way how business functions in the present social organization, and to familiarize the pupil with the procedures involved in a number of the simple types of business transactions, together with the significance of each. Besides the regular investigations and discussions, requirements would include the preparation or the completion of certain of the simple business papers associated with the transactions considered, and also the related arithmetical calculations. The addition of this latter work would tend to make the subject matter far more meaningful than a mere study of the theory involved. The arithmetic would also gain in significance and vitality because of its being linked with situations necessitating its use.

It is suggested that the junior business course should also include remedial penmanship. Many pupils who enter Grade IX are not good writers. Should such pupils intend to go on with business training, it is very desirable that they be able to write a neat, legible hand. A minimum standard

might be set on a hand-writing scale, a standard which all pupils would be expected to reach even at the expense of extra practice.

Obviously a junior business course of the nature suggested would supply some knowledge of business occupations. Hence it would have a value from the standpoint of vocational guidance. In centres offering vocational business subjects in the school program the last five or six weeks of the junior business course might be devoted to exploratory work in the field of shorthand. During such a period both teachers and pupils would have opportunity to determine which class members might be interested, and hope for success, in this work.

The only other business subject recommended for Grade IX is typewriting. All pupils considering the business course should be expected to learn to use the typewriter, so that they might become proficient in its operation by the time any of them would be expected to transcribe shorthand notes or to do other applied typewriting work. The personal-use value of typewriting is sufficiently great to justify its inclusion in the program even if it is never used for vocational purposes.

To the supporter of the traditional commercial program it will likely seem quite wrong that Grade IX pupils should not be started on vocational work in shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping. Yet it is probably true that a

comprehensive junior business course, supported by training in typewriting, constitutes more suitable work. It must be borne in mind that some of the pupils electing business education change their plans before commencing vocational courses, while others withdraw from school while still in the early grades. To these pupils a little technical training has no great value but, on the other hand, some general business training should prove distinctly helpful not only for personal use but also for such business occupations as they may have a chance to enter. Such a plan should be advantageous too in the fact that it would increase the possibility of achieving the real aims of the junior high school.

In Grade X the general business subjects might well comprise economic geography and record keeping. Pupils entering business positions should have some knowledge of world production in relation to both raw and manufactured goods, as well as of world trade, trade routes, and trade centres. While it is probably most desirable that a study of geography should be sufficiently comprehensive to include the physical and political sides as well as the economic, yet it is not suggested that the economic geography be rated as the equivalent of a science. On the basis of five periods per week an extremely useful course could be covered in half a year.

The purpose of the record keeping course suggested for

the latter half of the Grade X year would be to acquaint pupils with methods which would prove suitable for keeping all types of records for personal use, and to aid the pupils in interpreting financial records and statements of business firms and government bodies. Besides giving general business understandings, such work would be of service in the matter of guidance, since it would give some insight into the demands which would be made of those electing the bookkeeping program as a major vocational choice. Typewriting would be continued, but the aim in Grade X would be definitely vocational.

The Grade XI general business program might well be made up of a half-year course in fundamentals of business law, with the other half year being devoted to marketing. It is not reasonable to expect secondary school pupils to become widely acquainted with the technicalities of business law. Nevertheless, the ordinary individual in his daily activities may frequently find a knowledge of legal principles to be of use, and it is this type of law which should constitute the backbone of the course.

The work in marketing would provide information concerning the types of business firms and the procedures associated with the buying and selling of goods. It would be advisable also to have the course deal with a variety of such topics as selling methods and advertising, with a view to an evaluation of business practices along these lines.

The general business knowledge course suggested for Grade XII is that of general business and applied economics. This course would provide for a more comprehensive treatment of some of the topics dealt with in junior business, a summarization of the whole business knowledge program to date, and an effort to apply certain of the general principles of economics to actual business situations. It should be obvious that such a course as this one would extend the personal-use value of general business training to the point where it would assume real importance even for purposes of business management.

There should be no misunderstanding about the place of the general business courses in the commercial program. These courses would really be "constants" just as much as English, social studies, and health and physical education, the latter group providing a certain core of general education and the former a core of general business understandings. It is even suggested that for purposes of coordination the junior business course and the general business and applied economics course be made "constants" for all secondary pupils.

In this day innumerable articles are written stressing the importance of consumer education for everyone. "Every individual behaves as a consumer during at least a part of his conscious life, and he experiences many needs for

information and skill in the management of his economic activities."¹ Consumer education is not a particular type of education, it is a matter of emphasis. "Effective consumer education must cross many traditional subject-matter lines. The tendency of several subject-matter groups to feel that consumer education is a field in which they have special or exclusive license to graze by right of precedent or discovery has caused the [Consumer Education] Association considerable concern."² Each of the general business knowledge subjects already suggested lends itself to consumer training as do, for that matter, such other subjects as household economics, social studies, hygiene, mathematics, and the various sciences. Doubtless teachers of the latter group of subjects take opportunity on many occasions to stress points which are of value from the consumer standpoint, and such must be particularly true in the case of household economics and the sciences. Nevertheless, it would seem advisable that there should be at least one course planned for the highest grade of the junior high school, and one course for senior pupils of the high school, in which a very definite effort would be made to give consideration to suitable consumer problems.

¹A. O. Colvin, "Strengthening the Business Curriculum." Business Education World, XVIII, (December, 1937), p. 285.

²H. F. Clark, and G. McCloskey, "The Consumer Education Movement." Business Education World, XX, (April, 1940), p. 645.

Though the claim may be made that teachers of all subjects should be responsible for consumer education, and though the writer may theoretically agree with this claim, yet the fact remains that in all probability better results are obtainable by permitting teachers of the various subjects to do such incidental work as they may see fit, while at the same time responsibility for some definite treatment of consumer topics is placed on teachers of particular courses. It is suggested that the general business courses are best suited for this purpose and that teachers of these subjects should be competent to do the work effectively. Thus, by requiring junior business as well as general business and applied economics of all secondary pupils, a minimum program of consumer education would be provided for all. Meanwhile business education pupils, and other pupils electing additional general business education courses, would receive further consumer training.

The vocational side of the proposed business education program must next be considered.

There is abundant justification for providing vocational commercial work to enable boys and girls to earn a living. It may fairly be assumed that for any socially acceptable type of business occupation as many pupils should be trained as are needed by the business world, but there is no justification whatever for training more persons for any occupation than can be placed, particularly when there are other business occupations for which an insufficient number are being trained.

Yet excess thousands of pupils are annually trained in bookkeeping and stenography, and not nearly enough are trained for selling, general office work, office machine operation, and small business operation.³

Training for the socially acceptable types of business occupations as many pupils as are needed suggests that the school must first determine for what types of occupations it will train. It would seem quite reasonable to assume that to be socially acceptable the job, amongst other things, must pay sufficient wages to justify the taxpayers' providing the essential training. Should the wages paid to the workers be inadequate, it would seem that the responsibility for any training required should be that of the employer.

It may be that the school should not offer special training for certain socially acceptable business occupations. One can readily conceive of a situation where the number of workers required for the operation of expensive business machines is very small and where an expenditure of the taxpayers' money for equipment and teaching services could not possibly be justified. It may even be the case that employers in certain types of business occupations are prepared to accept and train workers who have good personality and sound general education. Such a situation may actually exist in the mercantile industry in British Columbia, an industry which employs large numbers of

³E. G. Blackstone, "Remodeling Your Commercial Department." The School Review, XLVII, (January, 1939), p. 18.

young people who actually get their early training on the job. It is not intended to suggest that this training should be done on the job, but rather, as is more fully explained later in this Chapter, that the school should determine to what extent, and with what results, it might take over this type of work.

In addition to determining what special lines of business training are to be offered, the school must make an earnest effort to find the number of persons engaged in each, together with the annual labor turnover. Such a procedure obviously has its difficulties in the larger centres, and the problem of determining the number of pupils the school should train is further complicated through the fact that various private agencies have a part in meeting the aggregate needs. In small centres the difficulties of determining types of training to be offered and numbers to be trained are not so great, so that there is a reasonable chance of effective work being done.

As a general rule community needs should determine the nature of the vocational program. The situation might even arise where technical business education could not possibly be justified, under which circumstances general business training would be the only type of commercial work included in the school program. As an exception to the general rule pupils might be trained for positions away from home if there were a gradual depopulation of the district

concerned.

While training for community needs the school should, as far as possible, recognize pupils' choices and capacities. To do so effectively involves heavy responsibility for both the guidance department and the teachers of business courses. Wise choice of a vocation is dependent on a broad knowledge of the requirements, the advantages, and the disadvantages of the vocation, as well as on the pupil's capacity to meet the standards demanded of the worker in the occupation. Thus, if pupils are to be assisted towards wise choices, the school staff must be conversant with a wide range of facts pertaining to the occupations for which training is being given, as well as to the personality, scholastic record, and the activity program of each commercial pupil under their direction. Teachers must be in constant touch with business houses, business employees, and government employment offices with a view to maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of employment standards, office procedures, and labor turnover within the community. Such knowledge adds greatly to the usefulness of theoretical occupational information gained from business literature and business education publications.

Choice of particular fields for study must not be left to mere chance.

Surely the stenographer must be possessed of good hearing, a sound fundamental knowledge of English, a good vocabulary, a high degree of expertness in the fundamentals of sentence structure, manipulative ability, and a high degree of coordination between hand and mind. The book-keeper must be a good penman, accurate and rapid in the handling of arithmetical computations, and be able to analyze business transactions so as to record them in such a way as to indicate the effect they have had upon the business involved. He must be able to interpret the results of his work and to write reports that will convey needed information to executive officers. The retail salesperson must possess ability to deal with people, ability to express herself well, good memory for faces, adequate knowledge of merchandise handled and ability to make friends of her customers. A clerical worker must be possessed of a high degree of ability in handling details, a good memory for details, manipulative skill in the operation of certain types of machines, mathematical ability such as is involved in machine calculating, and many other qualities essential to the successful handling of a great variety of clerical operations.⁴

Here again the responsibility of the guidance department and of the business teachers is perfectly clear in that every pupil must be directed into the field for which he is best qualified.

A suggested business education program for the Province is outlined in Table XXII. It provides for four specialized fields of training, namely the secretarial, bookkeeping, general clerical, and mercantile or retail selling fields. Shorthand has been included in the work for Grade X, though the writer considers that with a year or two of experimentation in the development of office practice and

⁴Frederick G. Nichols, op. cit., pp. 298-299.

secretarial practice courses, and with a carefully worked-out plan for selecting pupils for the secretarial option, this subject might be commenced in Grade XI. The arrangement of constant and optional subjects is intended to meet the various recommendations and principles already advanced.

Possibly a few points in Table XXII require explanation. It will be observed that the selection of a special field for study is, in a sense, required at the beginning of Grade X, for at that time the pupil must decide whether or not to include shorthand in his program. Nevertheless the pupil selecting the bookkeeping, general clerical, or retail selling course at the commencement of Grade XI is not prevented from taking a year of shorthand, or for that matter two years of the subject, since there is an optional five-credit course possible in both Grades X and XI. Likewise the pupil electing the secretarial course has opportunity of including a year of bookkeeping if he so desires. Such extra vocational work should be open only to pupils reaching high standards in all their studies.

Only one year of vocational training has been suggested for those selecting the retail selling course, and it is recommended that this training should not be offered unless it is possible to organize a cooperative scheme with certain community retail stores. A large part of the time devoted to store practice should involve actual selling experience under the direction of sales persons responsible for reports on pupils' work. Those planning to enter this field might well be directed to optional courses in clothing, art, and clerical practice, while some might find a year of bookkeeping very useful.

As the academic schools in many British Columbia

centres now make provision for Grade XIII, it seems fitting that the suggested business program should do the same. Pupils desiring to spend their thirteenth school year in the commercial department might even be beginners at business education and, therefore, for them a number of elementary vocational courses have been included amongst the options. On the other hand there might be pupils wishing more advanced business studies than had been offered them during their four years in the commercial curriculum, and for them the proposed options include certain courses with a leaning towards business management. Probably very few centres would ever find it necessary to cater to a group of the latter type but still, if Grade XIII is to be included in the program, such students must not be overlooked.

Present regulations of the Department of Education demand that social studies be included in each pupil's program for two of the three years between Grades X to XII inclusive. In the suggested program this subject has been omitted from the constants of Grade XI. Thus pupils may make an extensive start at vocational subjects in this grade, a point of significance since, as a general rule, a number of those who complete Grade XI do not return for Grade XII. A further advantage is gained in the fact that greater maturity is a distinct asset to those completing the final section of the social studies course.

It is recommended that in large centres the vocational business studies be restricted to a limited number of schools. General business knowledge subjects belong in every secondary school, but a proper atmosphere for vocational training cannot be attained where the work is but a minor incidental, engaging the attention of a few pupils and a very few teachers. By gathering many commercial pupils in one school it is possible to broaden the vocational offerings included in the program, to maintain a more progressive attitude to business education on the part of pupils and teachers, and to provide for better instruction by a better distribution of the teaching load. There is also the possibility of obtaining better equipment as a result of concentration, for by such the amount of duplication is reduced and, therefore, a wider variety of office machines can be made available for a given expenditure.

Since it is likely that the commercial department will always have to expect large numbers of withdrawals, it is suggested that some consideration might be given to the idea of developing certain short courses which could be completed by brief but intensive effort. Such courses might consist of instruction in filing, or in the mastery of such commonly-used office machines as the adding machine, the comptometer, the Burroughs bookkeeping machine, billing machines, or the dictaphone. Pupils whose circumstances

demanded their withdrawal from school on short notice, or even those who proved incapable of completing all the work necessary for certification, might be given such intensive training as would develop one particular skill up to employment standards.

As a final suggestion, individual courses of study should not be hard and fast in their nature. "While in a general way commercial needs are more or less alike in different places, it is true that commercial development in any given community may be such as to call for specialized training that would not be needed in other communities."⁵ Hence, in the outlining of various courses provision should be made to permit business teachers to adapt subject matter and procedures to community needs. With a broad core of general business subjects as proposed in Table XIV, and with flexible vocational courses to offer in response to local demands, it should be possible to attain high standards in commercial education in the Province.

⁵Leverett S. Lyon, op. cit., p. 537.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM

A study of business education in British Columbia would be incomplete without some reference to the teacher problem, for inclusion of business subjects in the program indicates a need for qualified commercial teachers. In the early days, before the opening of the Provincial Normal School in Vancouver, all teachers sitting examinations for First Class and Second Class Certificates were called upon to qualify in bookkeeping. Excerpts from the earliest statements of certification requirements show:

Requirements for First Class Grade A and Grade B Certificates:

Bookkeeping: To understand bookkeeping by single and double entry.¹

Requirements for Second Class Grade A and Grade B Certificates:

Bookkeeping: To understand the keeping of accounts by single entry.²

With the opening of the first Provincial Normal School in Vancouver in January, 1901, the method of certification was changed and it was not until August, 1921, that the Government again set examinations in business subjects for teachers. In the meantime shorthand, typewriting, and

¹Department of Education, Ninth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1879-1880, p. 353.

²Department of Education, Sixteenth Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1886-1887, pp. xliv-xlv.

business law had been added to the commercial course of the high school program in 1906. Despite this fact, the number of business teachers needed in the Province had dwindled for, as shown in Table I, page 31, the commercial enrolments for a considerable period after 1906 were very small.

Consequently for a number of years the Department of Education was able to meet calls for commercial teachers largely by engaging persons who had already had special training and teaching experience in other parts of Canada.

Soon after 1914 the situation in relation to teachers of business subjects changed. Increased business activity resulted in a demand for more and better trained office help, while better prospects of business positions enticed larger numbers of pupils into the commercial course. In the four years beginning in September, 1914, the number of commercial pupils increased from 380 to 802 (Table IV, p. 38) and the number of centres in which courses were given practically doubled. Trained teachers were sorely needed and what was considered a happy solution of the difficulty was described by High School Inspector J. B. DeLong in his report for 1917-1918 when he stated:

Recently the Education Office decided to admit to Normal School pupils who are successful in passing the Departmental examinations for third-year commercial pupils. I understand that four Vancouver pupils, who have completed three years of high school commercial work, are planning on attending Normal School next year. The probability is that in future a number of such teachers will be sent from our Normal Schools each

year; if so, School Boards will not experience the difficulty they have in the past in securing commercially trained teachers.¹

The needs of the Province, however, were far from being met through the certification of commercial graduates who attended Normal School, and finally in the year 1921 the Department of Education instituted special summer classes designed to train its business teachers. Until 1924 these classes were under the management of the University of British Columbia, though examinations in the subjects taught were conducted at the close of the session by the Department of Education. In 1925 the Department organized its own Commercial Summer School and since that date classes have been operated under its direction.

In 1921 when the Department of Education instituted commercial teacher training classes a new basis for certification was established. The following statement embodies the essential features of the original requirements:

High School Assistant Commercial Teacher's
Certificate (Interim)

Candidates who hold an Academic Certificate or a First-class Teacher's Certificate for this Province, or its equivalent, and who have passed the examinations set by the Department of Education on the subjects specified hereunder, will be granted a High School Assistant Commercial Teacher's Certificate (Interim).

¹J. B. DeLong, "Inspectors' Reports, High Schools." Forty-seventh Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1917-1918, p. 18.

Stenography Theory

Stenography Practice - the writing from dictation, in Isaac Pitman Shorthand, at a speed of not less than eighty words per minute from matter having a syllabic intensity of 1.5 with type-written transcript at a rate of not less than twelve words per minute.

Typewriting Theory and Practice - the mechanism and manipulation of the standard machines, with ability to write at a rate of at least forty words per minute for ten or more minutes from standard test material.

Bookkeeping Theory

Bookkeeping Practice

Business and Statute Law

Penmanship

Commercial Arithmetic

Economics and Economic Geography.

Commercial Specialist's Certificate (Permanent).

Candidates who hold High School Assistant Commercial Teachers' Certificates and pass the examinations set by the Department on any four of the subjects specified hereunder will be granted a Commercial Specialist's Certificate for this Province.

Auditing

Business Finance

Office Practice and Business Organization

History of Commerce and Industry

Commercial Correspondence and Filing

Commercial French or Commercial Spanish

Shorthand - a speed of at least 120

words per minute from matter having an intensity of 1.5 words.

Typewriting - a speed of sixty words per minute from standard test material.

Two Years' Approved Business Experience.²

Possibly a few comments concerning these requirements for certification are in order. Primarily they were planned

²Department of Education, Courses of Study for the Elementary, High, Technical, and Normal Schools of British Columbia, 1923, pp. 74-77.

to make available as promptly as possible a supply of teachers capable of teaching the courses included in the commercial curriculum at the time. Hence, though the ordinary high school teaching certificate was dependent on the holder having acquired a university degree, the prerequisite for the commercial standing was the first-class teaching certificate. It can hardly be argued that the added studies equalized the efforts demanded by the two certificates, for an examination of the list of subjects prescribed for candidates for the Assistant Commercial Teacher's Certificate shows that it practically duplicated the list of business subjects taught to third-year high school pupils (Table II, p. 34). Even the requirements for the Specialist Certificate were not intended to be too severe, and probably this was rightly so, for each year additional teachers were needed for newly-opened commercial departments. That the qualifications should have been based on mastery of the classroom subjects is to be expected since the concept of business education in the Province at the time was based almost entirely on mastery of skills in shorthand, typewriting and bookkeeping.

For sixteen years the original requirements for the Interim and Permanent Certificates remained materially the same. The Department of Education pamphlet, "Certification of Teachers," issued in 1934, and effective until the end of the 1936 session of the Summer School for Teachers, shows

that commercial certificates were awarded on the following basis:

High School Assistant Commercial Teacher's Certificate (Interim).

Candidates who hold an Academic Certificate or a First-class Teacher's Certificate for this Province, or its equivalent, and who have passed the examinations set by the Department of Education on the subjects specified hereunder, will be granted a High School Assistant Commercial Teacher's Certificate (Interim).

- (a) Stenography (Theory)
- (b) Stenography (Practical) - 80 words per minute
- (c) Typewriting (Theory and Practice) - 40 words per minute
- (d) Bookkeeping (Theory)
- (e) Bookkeeping (Practice)
- (f) Business Law
- (g) Commercial Correspondence and Filing; Secretarial Practice
- (h) Commercial Arithmetic
- (i) Economics.

Commercial Specialist's Certificate (Permanent).

Candidates who hold High School Assistant Commercial Teachers' Certificates and pass the examinations set by the Department on any four of the subjects specified hereunder will be granted a Commercial Specialist's Certificate for this Province.

- (a) Accounting
- (b) Auditing
- (c) Business Finance
- (d) Office Practice and Organization
- (e) History of Commerce and Industry
- (f) Commercial French or Spanish
- (g) Shorthand - 120 words per minute
- (h) Typewriting - 60 words per minute
- (i) Two Years' Approved Business Experience.³

It will be observed that these standards virtually

³Department of Education, Certification of Teachers, 1934, pp. 2-4.

repeated those of 1921 except that commercial correspondence and filing had been transferred to the requirements for the Interim Certificate, economic geography was no longer demanded, and accounting was added to the list of optional subjects for the Specialist standing.

A study of these requirements reveals certain weaknesses. It has already been argued that commercial education should provide pupils with broad general business understandings, or that pupils on leaving school should be conversant with the procedures involved in the commoner business practices and with their significance. Despite this, until 1936 the business teacher was required to qualify almost entirely on technical knowledge and skills. A study of the principles of economics was necessary, but the reader well knows that such a study may at any time be so abstract that the student learns little about actual business procedure.

Having qualified for the Interim Commercial Assistant Teacher's Certificate, the candidate was expected to sit examinations on four more subjects to earn the Permanent Specialist's Certificate. Even a cursory examination of the list of optional subjects offered will show that the candidate could qualify for the higher certificate without having gained any more extensive knowledge of business.

It will be observed, too, that candidates for either certificate were required to pass examinations set by the

Department on the various subjects, but they were not necessarily expected to take their training in subject matter under the direction of the Department. The result was that anyone with the necessary prerequisite could prepare for the Departmental tests by private study, by correspondence, by attendance at business college, day school, or night school, or by taking the regularly organized teacher training classes. One consequence is obvious, namely that many persons passed the subject matter tests while having little knowledge of the techniques of teaching business subjects.

Teachers who obtained the Commercial Specialist's standing were entitled to permanent certificates permitting them to teach in secondary schools. In practically all other branches of secondary education certification was dependent on the candidate's having a University degree. Here then was an anomaly. The commercial teacher expected equal standing with his colleagues and yet, as already pointed out, his training was not as extensive.

In 1937 the Department of Education decided that the time had arrived to remedy these weaknesses. Consequently new standards were set as follows:

Assistant Commercial Teacher's Certificate

Prerequisite:

First-class or Academic Certificate

Requirements:

Stenography (Theory and Methods)
Stenography (Practice and Speed)
Typewriting (Theory and Methods)
Typewriting (Practice)
Bookkeeping (Theory and Methods)
Bookkeeping (Practice)
Business Law (Economics 17 and 18)
Correspondence and Filing
Commercial Arithmetic
Economics (Economics 1)

Commercial Specialist Certificate

Prerequisites:

Assistant Commercial Teacher's Certificate
Academic Certificate or First-class
Certificate, with a minimum of two years
in Arts.

Requirements:

Accounting
Office Routine, Business Forms, and
Secretarial Practice
Economic Geography (Economics 10)
Money and Banking (Economics 4)
Economic History (Economics 2 or Senior
Matriculation Economic History), or
Corporation Economics (Economics 7), or
International Trade and Tariff Policy
(Economics 6), or Mathematics of
Investment (Mathematics 3).⁴

The reader will note that additional demands were included in the requirements for the Assistant's Certificate. Teaching methods as related to shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping were definitely specified, so that candidates for certificates today must satisfy the Department of their familiarity with modern classroom practices and procedures in the teaching of these subjects.

⁴Department of Education, Certification of Teachers, 1940, p. 11.

Of particular significance is the fact that a major change was made in the subjects offered for the Specialist standing. No longer is it possible to qualify for the higher certificate by the study of commercial French or Spanish, or by acquiring a higher degree of skill in shorthand or typewriting. Instead, one must master a group of subjects, certain of which correspond to University of British Columbia courses, subjects intended to provide broader business knowledge. Where the Departmental requirement parallels a University course the candidate may satisfy certification requirements by gaining University credit for the corresponding course, or by writing the Department of Education examination on the specified subject. Whichever procedure the candidate may elect, it is expected that he will do like studies and be tested by equally difficult examinations. A similar rule applies to certain subjects included in the Assistant Certificate requirements.

In an effort to equalize the Commercial Specialist Certificate with the Academic Certificate demanded of junior and senior high school teachers of academic subjects, an additional year of study in the Arts Faculty of the University was added to the minimum prerequisite. This means that the Department of Education evaluated the specialized training required for the Assistant Certificate as equal to a year's work at the University, and that for

the Specialist Certificate as equal to another year.

Obviously then, it was necessary to rule that the candidate could not use his standing in a required subject having a University course as an equivalent for both the Arts prerequisite and the certification requirement..

Certainly a very distinct advance was made when the new regulations pertaining to the Commercial certificates became effective in 1937. Nevertheless the writer considers that certain other advantages might be gained without any major upset in the present scheme of certification. It has been urged most strongly in Chapter V that training in general business knowledge for everyday use, or in consumer problems, should constitute an essential part of every secondary school pupil's program. Such being the case, teacher training in this field is also an essential, for teachers on the whole are not widely informed on everyday business activities. It is not advocated here that business teachers alone should be trained in consumer problems, nor that the work of teaching consumer problems be limited to a single course taught only by business teachers, but it is argued that every business teacher should be prepared to give instruction of this type. The commercial curriculum may require that the teacher of junior business, of fundamentals of business law, of applied economics, or of some other business subject, deal with certain topics from the consumer standpoint. Effective treatment of such topics

is dependent on a proper concept of consumer education and a broad knowledge of consumer problems. Hence, it is recommended that a comprehensive teacher training course dealing with general business problems and methods of instruction therein be added to the requirements for the Assistant Commercial Teacher's Certificate. The writer would even go so far as to recommend that the Department of Education make an exception in its demands in the case of this subject by requiring that the candidate for a certificate not only pass the examination set by the Department for business teachers but also attend an approved instruction class in the subject.

It is recommended also that consideration be given to the idea of permitting some specialization in the vocational studies. Whereas every teacher of business should be competent to teach the subjects that supply general business knowledge, namely junior business, personal record keeping and elementary bookkeeping, fundamentals of business law, merchandising, commercial geography, applied economics, and elementary typewriting, yet it is hardly necessary that every business teacher be well equipped to teach advanced work, or even elementary work, in every vocational subject. The present curriculum really stresses the bookkeeping and secretarial fields. Why not, then, make sure that the business teacher has a sound background of general business knowledge and then demand a high standard of training in one

or other of the specialized fields? It has already been argued that when a school includes a vocational program in business subjects, it must have more than one business teacher to cover the work effectively and, if there be more than one teacher, provision for competent instruction in the two major fields can be made.

While it is not intended to outline programs of studies to admit of specialization in the different fields, it is suggested that in the Assistant and Specialist requirements adjustments could readily be made to assure adequate training in both the general and vocational subjects. Similarly the determining of suitable requirements for teachers specializing in such additional fields as those suggested in this study, namely general clerical work and retail selling, should present no insurmountable difficulties.

The place of actual business experience in the training program of the teacher merits attention. Nichols has said: "In all other fields of vocational education only people who have had successful occupational experience, as well as proper professional training, are employed to give certain courses. This course should be adopted for the field of commercial education."⁵

It will be remembered that until 1936 the Department of Education of British Columbia gave credit in the Specialist

⁵Frederick G. Nichols, op. cit., pp. 126-7.

requirements for two years of approved business experience. With the revision of the certification standards in 1937 this allowance was discontinued because of the difficulty of determining what experience should be approved. Two years' experience in a routine position may have far less value for the prospective teacher than even a few months of administrative work. The writer contends that approved experience should be obtained only in a position which involves duties of management. Since such positions are open to relatively few candidates for business teaching certificates, it would seem that business experience should be regarded as highly desirable but not absolutely essential in the certification requirements.

It is not enough that a suitable program of subject matter be established. "The teacher training program in business education should be given to carefully selected individuals with invigorating and pleasing personalities who are keenly interested in and potentially trainable for the particular skills which they are expected to teach."⁶ Proper selection of teachers on the basis of personality offers a solution to many of the problems of business education. Effective instruction and guidance are dependent on such factors as regular contact with business and understanding of business practices and procedures, knowledge of

⁶J. L. Holtsclaw, "Business Education Looks Ahead." National Business Quarterly, VI, (October, 1937), p. 5.

job possibilities and job requirements in the community, capacity to judge potentialities of pupils and to inspire pupils to achieve maximum results in their efforts, comprehension of the general principles which govern economic activity, and cognizance of changing thought in the field of education and of economic organization. Given a group of teachers who are aware of the significance of these factors and business education will gain new vitality. Given a group of teachers blest with such understandings, teachers who are well trained in the field of general business knowledge and in chosen branches of vocational work, and given a commercial curriculum carefully planned to meet the needs of the pupils, and the maximum achievement in business education may be expected.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY

During the past half century steady advances have been made in the field of industry. As specialization has been extended and as trade and commerce have increased, business occupations have multiplied, and methods have been improved to meet the call for greater efficiency in administration and record keeping. The introduction of a usable typewriter in 1875 added to the significance of shorthand, and brought stenography to the forefront to take its place with the long established art of bookkeeping. The more recent invention of a variety of office machines has resulted in further division of labor, and has made possible more extensive records and more involved office procedures than ever before. With the development of a great variety of business occupations commercial training has attained a prominent place in the general plan of education.

A comprehensive business education program, in addition to providing for general education, must supply general business knowledge as well as vocational knowledge and skills. Recent years have seen a distinct shift in the relative importance placed upon these two major outcomes by leaders in the field of education. While early business educators saw their goal in the acquisition of a limited group of technical skills, the more recent view has placed

great value on the development of broad general business understandings. It is becoming more and more widely recognized that general business knowledge has a personal-use value to practically everyone who acquires it, a fact that has resulted in an ever-increasing demand for what is now commonly termed "consumer education." It is becoming more widely admitted too that this general business knowledge has an important place in preparing great numbers of business employees for the variety of situations with which they must cope in their occupational duties.

Vocational business training involves the providing of technical knowledge and the developing of specific skills for occupational work. Even in the field of vocational training recent years have brought changes. The earliest business education concerned itself with the teaching of bookkeeping and penmanship. Shorthand and typewriting were later added to the program and for a great many years an effective business education was thought to consist of shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping. More recently it has been recognized that the business employee may not require training in all these subjects. Such leading business educators as Frederick G. Nichols, Leverett S. Lyon, Harl R. Douglass, and many others, advocate the practice of allowing the pupil to specialize in some one field for which he is particularly suited, a field in which he may be thoroughly trained and in which he may expect to find

employment in his own community. The strictly vocational subjects should be fitted into the higher grades of the secondary school so that the pupil may have sufficient maturity and judgment to look upon his training as a vital matter demanding his best effort, and in the hope that no long period of disuse will intervene between the term of training and the time when the pupil takes a position. Educators have also been advocating a study of the requirements in business positions open to secondary school pupils so that the school may educate as broadly as possible, while still giving the vocational training needed for the junior positions ordinarily open to the beginners.

British Columbia's business education program began with the inauguration of the Province in 1871. For many years bookkeeping, the only commercial subject in the curriculum, was offered by both elementary and high schools. In 1906 a two-year high school commercial course including bookkeeping, shorthand, typewriting, business forms and laws of business was instituted. The year 1914 brought the three-year course and 1930 the four-year course, each new program providing for more extensive training. Specialization in the field of bookkeeping, or in that of stenography, was made possible in 1923, while in 1930 all business education subjects became optional for secondary schools.

British Columbia's present secondary school program became effective in 1937, at which time both the course

offerings and the subject matter of courses were revised. Changes were made in the commercial curriculum, but comparatively little effort was directed towards harmonizing the studies in this field with the existing philosophy of business education.

Some slight recognition was given to the need for the development of general business understandings, for junior business and general business were introduced into the list of offerings. Unfortunately these subjects were linked up with vocational work, the former with certain studies in vocational bookkeeping and the latter with training in either business law or with non-vocational work in record keeping. Consequently junior business has found its place largely in the individual programs of only those pupils electing a business course, while few schools attempt to offer general business. Only a bare handful of non-commercial pupils elect these necessary general business studies, and even in the commercial schools there is a tendency to relegate them to a distinctly inferior position in comparison with that given the vocational studies.

On the vocational side the traditional viewpoint has continued uppermost, for bookkeeping, shorthand, typewriting, and secretarial practice dominate the Programme of Studies in the commercial curriculum. Pupils may commence their bookkeeping and stenographic studies when they enter Grade IX and may continue with them till they finish Grade XII; it is

even safe to say that in most schools offering a complete commercial course they are expected to do so. Pupils are extensively trained in two fields of office work. Indeed they are overtrained, especially in the field of book-keeping.

No consideration is given to the fact that business employs more general clerks and sales persons who use neither shorthand nor vocational bookkeeping than it does bookkeepers and stenographers. Yet much of the training that would be useful for general clerical work is a part of the secretarial course in which shorthand is a requisite throughout. No provision is made for the fact that business education requirements in the rural community may differ from those in the city, or that requirements may differ from city to city. Grade placement of vocational subjects does not tend to bring maximum results on the most economical basis, nor are the courses necessarily planned to meet the demands of initial contact jobs.

The criticisms which the writer has levelled against the present British Columbia business education program tend to emphasize the fact that the program does not conform to the standards set by the leading educators. The reader may wonder whether these standards should be regarded as applicable to a practical situation in this Province. An investigation of the activities of a large number of recent withdrawals and graduates from one of Vancouver's large

commercial high schools, as reported in the latter part of Chapter IV, would seem to substantiate every criticism and to point to the need for the adoption of an entirely new program based on the present-day concept of business education.

A suggested program has been put forth in Chapter V of this study. A core of general business subjects, "constants" for commercial pupils, provides for the cumulative development of general business understandings. It constitutes an adequate business education program for the secondary school in the small centre, and it opens up a new field of studies suited to the needs of pupils in the various non-commercial curricula.

Vocational subjects do not enter into the work of Grade IX, so that difficulties in the transition from junior high school to senior high school are eliminated. For the higher grades the program is so planned that pupils may choose from general clerical, bookkeeping, secretarial, and retail selling options. Common elements in the training required for different occupational fields are considered as belonging to such courses as bookkeeping I, clerical practice I, and office practice, courses which appear in the requirements of more than one of the optional fields of study. Organization of the common elements into separate courses reduces to a minimum the number of distinct courses any school must include in its time-table, even if offering

all the options. This is as it should be, for even the largest schools in the Province do not enrol sufficient vocational business pupils to warrant a wide variety of courses. It is especially recommended that the retail selling option be offered only where a cooperative scheme with local stores can be instituted. A further recommendation suggests that short-term, highly specialized units of work be made available for pupils who are forced to discontinue their studies before graduation.

A new commercial curriculum such as has been outlined would call for a revision in the qualifications of commercial teachers. Prior to 1936 practically all requirements were in the field of vocational knowledge and skills. The year 1936 saw a change in the standards set by the Department of Education, the permanent Commercial Specialist Certificate calling for more extensive general education in the form of an added year of University training, and broader general business knowledge in the form of such added courses as economic geography, money and banking, and one other option. But the present requirements must not be regarded as adequate. As the new conception of business education enters into British Columbia's teaching practices, there must be a new concept of what constitutes the most satisfactory training for the commercial teacher. And as revision is made in the certification requirements it must be made with a view

to training teachers who will strive to achieve the two major outcomes of business education, general business knowledge and vocational knowledge and skills.

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APPENDIX A

PUPILS STUDYING BOOKKEEPING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, 1871 - 1906

Year	Bookkeeping Pupils	Year	Bookkeeping Pupils
1871-1872	6	1889-1890	90
1872-1873	40	1890-1891	122
1873-1874	45	1891-1892	159
1874-1875	93	1892-1893	152
1875-1876	96	1893-1894	235
1876-1877	105	1894-1895	374
1877-1878	191	1895-1896	373
1878-1879	107	1896-1897	376
1879-1880	138	1897-1898	1,313
1880-1881	136	1898-1899	1,741
1881-1882	182	1899-1900	1,916
1882-1883	234	1900-1901	2,219
1883-1884	211	1901-1902	2,854
1884-1885	179	1902-1903	2,084
1885-1886	17	1903-1904	2,384
1886-1887	11	1904-1905	1,833
1887-1888	22	1905-1906	1,529
1888-1889	59		

TOTAL ENROLMENT AND NUMBER OF PUPILS STUDYING
BOOKKEEPING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA HIGH
SCHOOLS, 1876 - 1906

Year	Enrol- ment	Book- keeping Pupils	Year	Enrol- ment	Book- keeping Pupils
1876-1877	60	60	1891-1892	312	307
1877-1878	61	61	1892-1893	333	333
1878-1879	76	39	1893-1894	434	423
1879-1880	82	82	1894-1895	515	476
1880-1881	76	76	1895-1896	460	446
1881-1882	74	74	1896-1897	461	434
1882-1883	61	61	1897-1898	459	408
1883-1884	84	84	1898-1899	490	389
1884-1885	134	119	1899-1900	553	449
1885-1886	157	131	1900-1901	584	521
1886-1887	166	163	1901-1902	784	637
1887-1888	193	185	1902-1903	856	660
1888-1889	187	187	1903-1904	981	735
1889-1890	244	243	1904-1905	1,090	701
1890-1891	256	240	1905-1906	1,236	86

APPENDIX B

BUSINESS EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME: (PRINT - SURNAME FIRST) _____ AGE _____ YEARS.
ADDRESS: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

SECTION 1 — SCHOOL RECORD

LAST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ATTENDED: _____

HIGH SCHOOL TRAINING BEFORE TAKING COMMERCIAL COURSE:

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____ TIME: _____ YEARS.

SCHOOL WHERE COMMERCIAL COURSE WAS TAKEN: _____

NUMBER OF YEARS IN HIGH SCHOOL COMMERCIAL COURSE: (A CHECK-MARK TO THE RIGHT OF THE ONE MOST NEARLY CORRECT)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ YEAR _____ 1 YEAR _____ $1\frac{1}{2}$ YEARS _____ 2 YEARS _____ $2\frac{1}{2}$ YEARS _____ 3 YEARS _____ $3\frac{1}{2}$ YEARS _____ 4 YEARS _____ MORE THAN 4 YEARS _____

GRADE IN WHICH REGISTERED AT TIME OF LEAVING SCHOOL: IX _____ X _____ XI _____ XII _____ SPECIAL CLASS _____

REASON FOR LEAVING SCHOOL: (CHECK THE MOST SUITABLE ONE)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GRADUATED FROM SCHOOL | <input type="checkbox"/> ILL HEALTH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> INABILITY TO PAY FEES | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMIC NECESSITY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED 4 YEARS IN HIGH SCHOOL | <input type="checkbox"/> TO TAKE A POSITION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IN WRONG COURSE | <input type="checkbox"/> NOT INTERESTED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO TRAIN IN SOME OTHER BUSINESS SCHOOL. IF SO, FOR HOW LONG? _____ MONTHS. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SOME OTHER REASON (STATE BRIEFLY) _____ | |

SECTION 2 — EMPLOYMENT RECORD

GIVE PARTICULARS ABOUT POSITIONS HELD SINCE LEAVING SCHOOL

ARE YOU AT PRESENT EMPLOYED? Yes _____ No _____

POSITION	NAME OF EMPLOYER	CITY	PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT (IN MONTHS)	HIGHEST MONTHLY SALARY RECEIVED
(1)				
(2)				
(3)				
(4)				

(IF YOU HAVE HAD MORE THAN FOUR POSITIONS SINCE LEAVING SCHOOL, LIST THE LAST FOUR)

SECTION 3 — NATURE OF WORK DONE WHILE EMPLOYED IN POSITION OR POSITIONS LISTED ABOVE

BELOW YOU WILL FIND TABULATED 33 TYPES OF WORK ENGAGED IN BY BUSINESS PERSONS. YOU ARE ASKED TO CLASSIFY EACH POSITION YOU HAVE HELD AS ONE OF THESE TYPES. USE A CHECK MARK TO INDICATE THE PROPER TYPE FOR POSITION 1, POSITION 2, ETC. SHOULD YOU HAVE ENGAGED IN SOME TYPE OF WORK NOT SPECIFICALLY NAMED BELOW, INDICATE IN THE SPACE OR SPACES OPPOSITE #34 THE NATURE OF THE WORK DONE.

(IF A POSITION INVOLVED WORK OF MORE THAN ONE OF THE TYPES LISTED BELOW, SELECT FOR CHECKING ONLY THAT TYPE WHICH WAS MOST IMPORTANT. A LATER SECTION IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE WILL PERMIT YOU TO LIST THE DUTIES PERFORMED IN THE POSITION.)

POSITIONS	POSITION				POSITIONS	POSITION			
	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4
1. GENERAL CLERK					18. CALCULATING MACHINE OPERATOR				
2. SHIPPING CLERK					19. TIMEKEEPER				
3. RECEIVING CLERK					20. CASHIER				
4. STOCK CLERK					21. COLLECTOR				
5. FILE CLERK					22. ORDER CLERK				
6. MAIL CLERK					23. TYPIST				
7. MESSENGER BOY					24. DUPLICATING MACHINE OPERATOR				
8. OFFICE BOY					25. DICTATING MACHINE OPERATOR				
9. BILLING CLERK					26. STENOGRAPHER				
10. COST CLERK					27. SECRETARY				
11. STATISTICAL CLERK					28. SALES PERSON				
12. ENTRY CLERK					29. MAIL ORDER ASSISTANT				
13. LEDGER CLERK					30. BUNDLE WRAPPER				
14. STATEMENT CLERK					31. WINDOW TRIMMER				
15. ASSISTANT BOOKKEEPER					32. SWITCHBOARD OPERATOR				
16. BOOKKEEPING MACHINE OPERATOR					33. INFORMATION CLERK				
17. BOOKKEEPER									

34. OTHER TYPES OF WORK: POSITION 1 _____ POSITION 2 _____
POSITION 3 _____ POSITION 4 _____

APPENDIX B

PAGE 2

NAME: _____

SECTION 4 - DUTIES PERFORMED WHILE EMPLOYED IN THE POSITIONS LISTED ABOVE

CHECK THE DIFFERENT DUTIES PERFORMED WHILE YOU WERE EMPLOYED IN EACH OF THE POSITIONS LISTED IN SECTION 2. YOU MAY HAVE BEEN CALLED UPON TO PERFORM MANY OF THE DUTIES LISTED BELOW WHILE WORKING IN POSITION 1, POSITION 2, ETC. IF SO, PUT A CHECK MARK OPPOSITE EACH.

DUTIES	POSITION				DUTIES	POSITION			
	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4
1. CASHIER DUTIES					24. KEEPING SHIPPING RECORDS				
2. TYPING FROM COPY					25. OPERATING BILLING MACHINES				
3. USING TELEPHONE					26. OPERATING MIMEOGRAPH				
4. MAIL CLERK WORK					27. OPERATING MULTIGRAPH				
5. POSTING ORIGINAL ENTRIES					28. SORTING VOUCHERS, ETC.				
6. MESSENGER SERVICE					29. FIGURING DISCOUNTS				
7. OPERATING ADDING AND LISTING MACHINES					30. RECORDING ORDERS				
8. WRITING OR DICTATING LETTERS					31. MAKING OUT SHIPPING PAPERS				
9. OPERATING CALCULATING MACHINES					32. OPERATING SEALING MACHINE				
10. CHECKING POSTINGS					33. WRITING ORDERS				
11. OPERATING ADDRESSOGRAPH					34. TIME KEEPING				
12. PAYROLL WORK					35. CREDIT CLERK WORK				
13. MONTHLY STATEMENT WORK					36. ROUTING SHIPMENTS				
14. KEEPING STOCK RECORDS					37. TRACING PRODUCTION ORDERS				
15. TYPING BILLS					38. RECEIVING CLERK WORK				
16. USING DICTAPHONE OR EDIPHONE					39. MARKING SHIPMENTS				
17. FIGURING COSTS					40. BLUEPRINT DUPLICATING				
18. USING CARD INDEXES					41. PRICE MARKING				
19. INFORMATION CLERK WORK					42. SHOW CARD LETTERING				
20. OPERATING BOOKKEEPING MACHINE					43. TAKING SHORTHAND DICTATION AND TRANSCRIBING				
21. VERIFICATION OR AUDIT WORK					44. TRIMMING WINDOWS				
22. TAKING INVENTORY					45. FILING LETTERS, ETC.				
23. COLLECTION WORK					46. OPERATING SWITCHBOARD				
47. OTHER DUTIES:									

SECTION 5 - SCHOOL TRAINING

INDICATE BY A CHECK MARK WHETHER YOUR SCHOOL TRAINING IN EACH OF THE SUBJECTS LISTED BELOW WAS SUFFICIENT OR INSUFFICIENT TO MEET YOUR NEEDS IN YOUR BUSINESS POSITIONS. IF THE SUBJECT WAS NOT REQUIRED FOR ANY POSITION YOU HAVE HELD, PUT A CHECK MARK IN THE COLUMN UNNECESSARY.

SUBJECTS	SUFFICIENT	INSUFFICIENT	UNNECESSARY	SUBJECTS	SUFFICIENT	INSUFFICIENT	UNNECESSARY
1. BUSINESS ENGLISH				6. ARITHMETIC			
2. FILING				7. BOOKKEEPING			
3. SHORTHAND				8. BUSINESS LAW			
4. TYPEWRITING				9. GENERAL BUSINESS PRACTICE			
5. SECRETARIAL PRACTICE				10. OPERATING OFFICE MACHINES (OTHER THAN THE TYPEWRITER)			

SECTION 6 - SUGGESTIONS AND REMARKS

(1) ON THE BACK OF THIS SHEET NOTE ANY SPECIAL TYPE OF COMMERCIAL TRAINING WHICH WAS NOT GIVEN YOU IN YOUR SCHOOL WORK BUT WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN USEFUL TO YOU IN EITHER YOUR OWN PERSONAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES OR IN BUSINESS ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH ANY POSITION YOU HAVE HELD.

(2) POSSIBLY YOUR PERSONAL OR BUSINESS EXPERIENCES SINCE LEAVING SCHOOL HAVE RESULTED IN YOUR WISHING TO MAKE SOME SUGGESTIONS REGARDING TRAINING IN THE COMMERCIAL COURSE IN HIGH SCHOOL. ON THE BACK OF THIS SHEET MAKE ANY COMMENT OR SUGGESTION WHICH IN YOUR OPINION MIGHT ASSIST TEACHERS IN PROVIDING A MORE EFFECTIVE BUSINESS TRAINING FOR PUPILS STILL IN SCHOOL.