

tion has been slowly but increasingly acknowledged; and the practicability of a preparatory training outside of the machine-shop has been admitted by the most crusty and conservative defenders of the older system of apprenticeship.

Is there any analogy in this experience which may be applied to the more recent developments of economic life? There are two questions to be considered: first, Is a commercial education needed? and, secondly, Can such an education be provided through the agency of an educational institution? In regard to each of these inquiries there is considerable scepticism even among business men. The answer consequently demands careful reflection. It will be impossible in this place to consider the whole range of commercial education through its several grades; and I shall therefore confine my attention to one particular portion of the subject,—to that part, however, in regard to which there is the greatest amount of perplexity and doubt.

A recent report of a sub-committee appointed by The Technical Education Board of the London County Council points out that the commercial classes may be divided into three groups of persons, performing very diverse functions, and, consequently, needing very different educational opportunities. These are: (1) the general class of office boys, junior clerks, shorthand clerks, copyists, and book-keepers, who are engaged in operations which are largely mechanical; (2) employees in more responsible positions, correspondence clerks, managers of departments, agents, dealers and travellers; (3) the great employers of industry and heads of large firms and business houses. Here, also, may be included the experts employed in government positions, national and municipal, and commercial attaches engaged in consular service. The proper education of the first two of these classes is for the present passed by, and will not fall within

the scope of this brief paper. My inquiry is limited to the training of the third group; that is, the commercial education of a collegiate type for youth from eighteen to twenty-one or twenty-two years of age.

First, then, is a special education for those who hope to reach a high mark in the commercial organization needed? Is there a special education which will be helpful to the commercial cadet in overcoming difficulties, in lessening wasteful effort, and in gaining the desired promotion? When it is seen that thousands of young men leave the college or university and enter upon commercial life without any special preparation, and achieve a certain measure of success in the business world, many are disposed to answer these questions in the negative. Business, we are told, is a comparatively simple matter, requiring first of all certain moral and personal qualities, as honesty, industry, shrewdness, and tact. Given these, the young man who has learned to handle his powers, and who possesses an intuitive business knack, can best pick up in the counting-room, or "on the road," the professional knowledge which is required for success. In the past there may have been some truth in this reply, but observation shows that the change now going on in the commercial organization is so great that this older answer must now be modified.

Goods are produced to be consumed. It was formerly, for the great proportion of exchanges, an easy matter to get the goods, when once produced, into the hands of the consumers. The producer and the consumer were economic neighbors. They lived in the same community or district, and easily adjusted the exchanges which they wished to make. The exceptions in exchangeable goods were for the most part luxuries and certain staples of raw materials. It needs no extended illustration to show that the distance between the producer and the consumer is growing greater and greater.