

introduction (for the subject is not so new as at the first blush we are so apt to suppose), it behooves us, as educators, to give the matter our most serious consideration.—*The Intelligence*.

## COMMERCIAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

A VALUABLE memorandum prepared by the United States Commissioner of Education for the British Embassy at Washington, and appended to the recent report\* to the Foreign Office on Commercial Education in the United States, deals in an interesting manner with the progress, during the last half century, of the methods adopted in the various States for providing an education suitable for those who intend to make commerce their life's work.

Commercial or business colleges, so-called, had their beginning in the United States more than fifty years ago. At least one institution of this class now in existence was established in 1840. For many years the branches taught in these business schools were substantially limited to book-keeping, arithmetic in which prominence was given to percentage and commercial calculations, penmanship, and business forms. Later, stenography and type-writing were added. For twenty years or more these private schools made but slow progress, partly because the training offered in these branches was not superior to that which could be obtained by their study in many of the colleges and private academies.

In 1870 the Commissioner of Education at Washington received reports from twenty-six business colleges, although there must have been a larger number then in existence. These twenty-six schools had 5,824 students. In 1880 the number of schools reporting had increased

to 162, and the number of students to 27,146.

The demand for stenographers and type-writers caused the rapid growth attendance upon these schools. Amanuensis courses were offered in nearly all of them, and students obtained diplomas or certificates of graduation in from two to six months in some of them. Very few of these schools had courses of study extending over more than one year.

In 1890 the number of business schools was 263, with 78,920 students. The high-water mark was reached in 1894, when 518 of these schools reported, with an enrolment of 115,748 students. Since that time there has been a steady decline in the number of schools, and a rapid decrease in the number of students. For the year 1898 there were only 337 commercial or business schools reporting to the Bureau of Education, and the number of students was only 70,950. This decrease is attributed partly to the business depression of the past few years, and partly to the fact that so many public high schools, as well as many private colleges and academies, have established commercial courses in many respects superior to those offered by a majority of the business colleges.

### HIGHER COMMERCIAL EDUCATION.

It has been long admitted among leading business men that those preparing for business careers should have the opportunity of a commer-

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