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# History of commercial education in the Boston public schools.

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Thesis

HISTORY OF COMMERCIAL EDUCATION

in the BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Submitted by

Ruth Weaver Towle

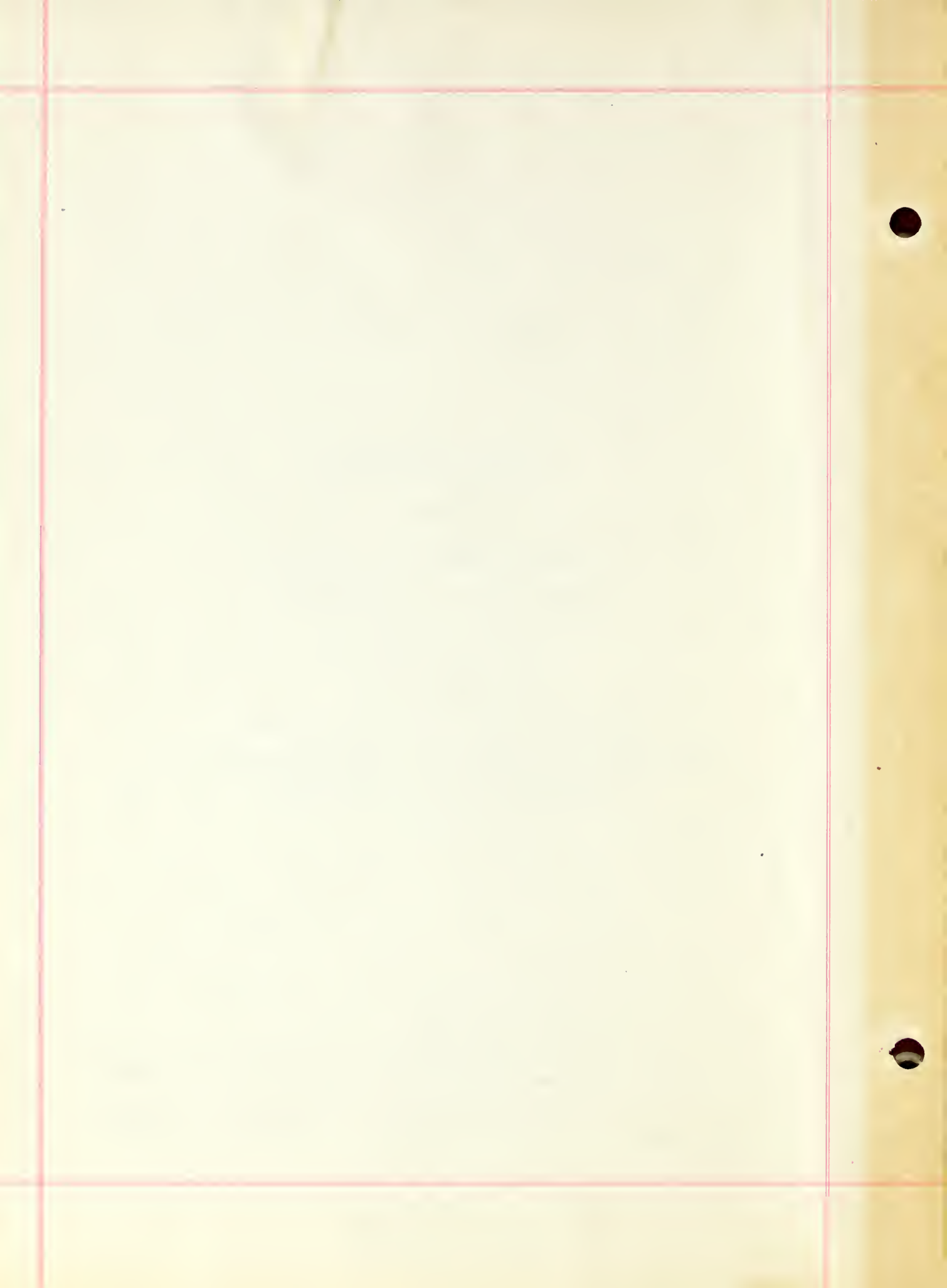
(B.B.A., Boston University, 1927)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for the  
degree of Master of Education

1934

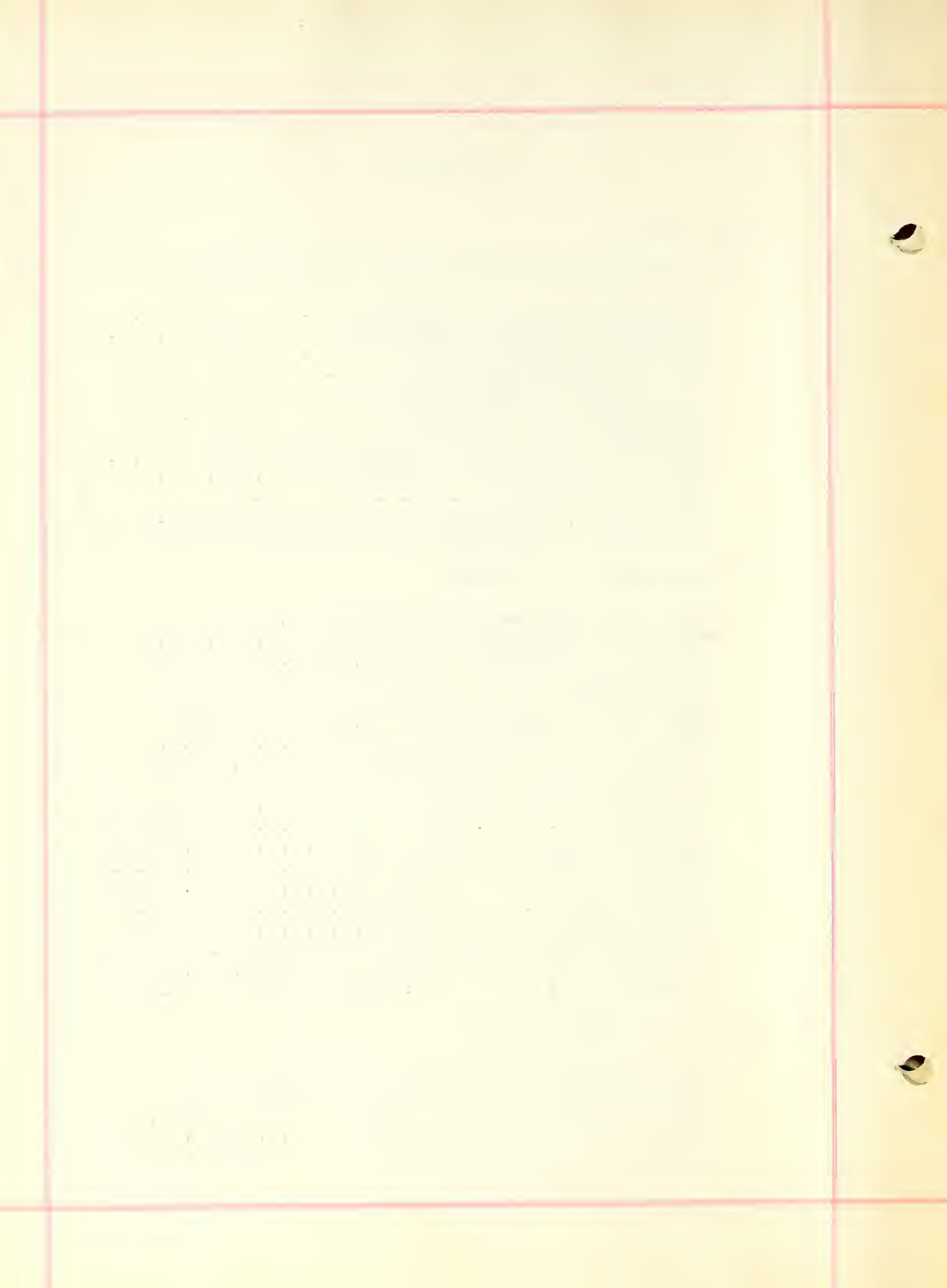
First reader - Edward J. Eaton, Professor of Education

Second reader - Herbert Blair, Professor of Education



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3. The second part of the document outlines the procedures for reconciling bank statements with the company's records.

4. Regular reconciliation helps to identify any discrepancies and ensure that the financial statements are accurate.

HISTORY OF COMMERCIAL EDUCATION  
in the BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

Boston was founded in 1630. Five years later, in 1635, the Public Latin School was established. Writing and ciphering schools formed a part of the Boston Public Schools in 1682. In the American colonies commercial life was a simple matter and those who wished to train for business left school early to be trained by their employers. This business apprenticeship was so popular that the number of applicants exceeded the number which the offices could train. The first formal training for business was offered by private schools during the nineteenth century.

Between 1830 and 1840 private commercial schools and classes in bookkeeping sprang up in Boston. Apparently foreseeing the need and importance of business training those who shaped the course of study included bookkeeping in the program of the English High School of Boston for 1823-24.

From this time on the gradual process of the development of commercial education is outlined in the following pages. As the provisions in commercial education in the Boston Public Schools include (1) the commercial courses in general high schools for boys and girls, (2) the High School of Commerce for boys, (3) the Boston Clerical School for girls, (4) the evening commercial high schools, (5) the cooperative courses in sales-

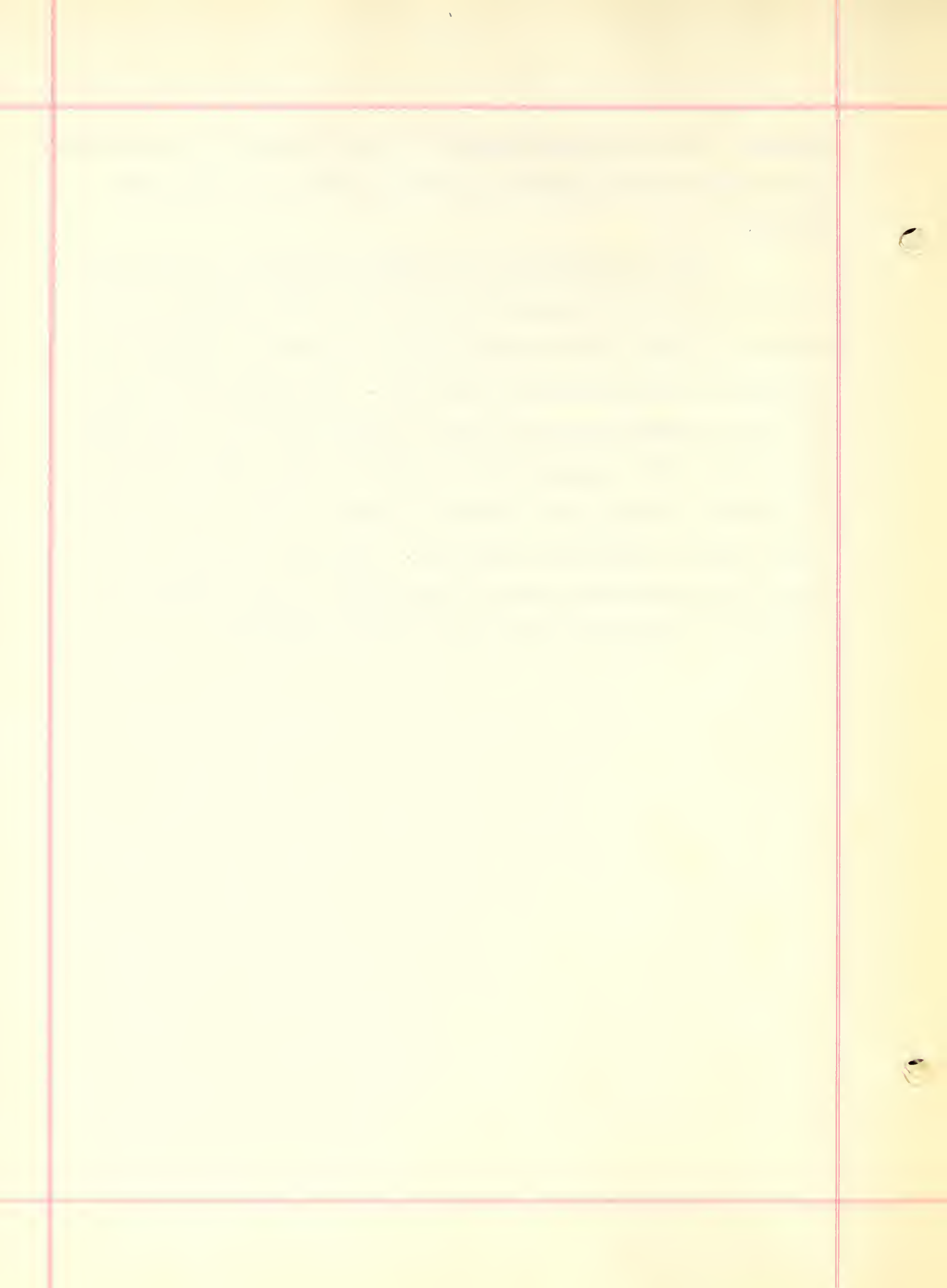


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manship, and (6) the continuation school in some of its aspects, each phase will be treated separately and in the order mentioned.

The Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston from the year 1824 to the year 1934 furnish minute details of facts and data pertaining to commercial education--proposals, new aspects, and adoptions. The Annual Reports of the School Committee of the City of Boston from the year 1840 to the year 1934 contain annual reports of the Superintendent of Schools, original and revised courses of study and statistical data on commercial education. These two sources furnished the background for the development of this history of commercial education.in the Boston Public Schools.



## THE COMMERCIAL COURSES IN GENERAL HIGH SCHOOLS

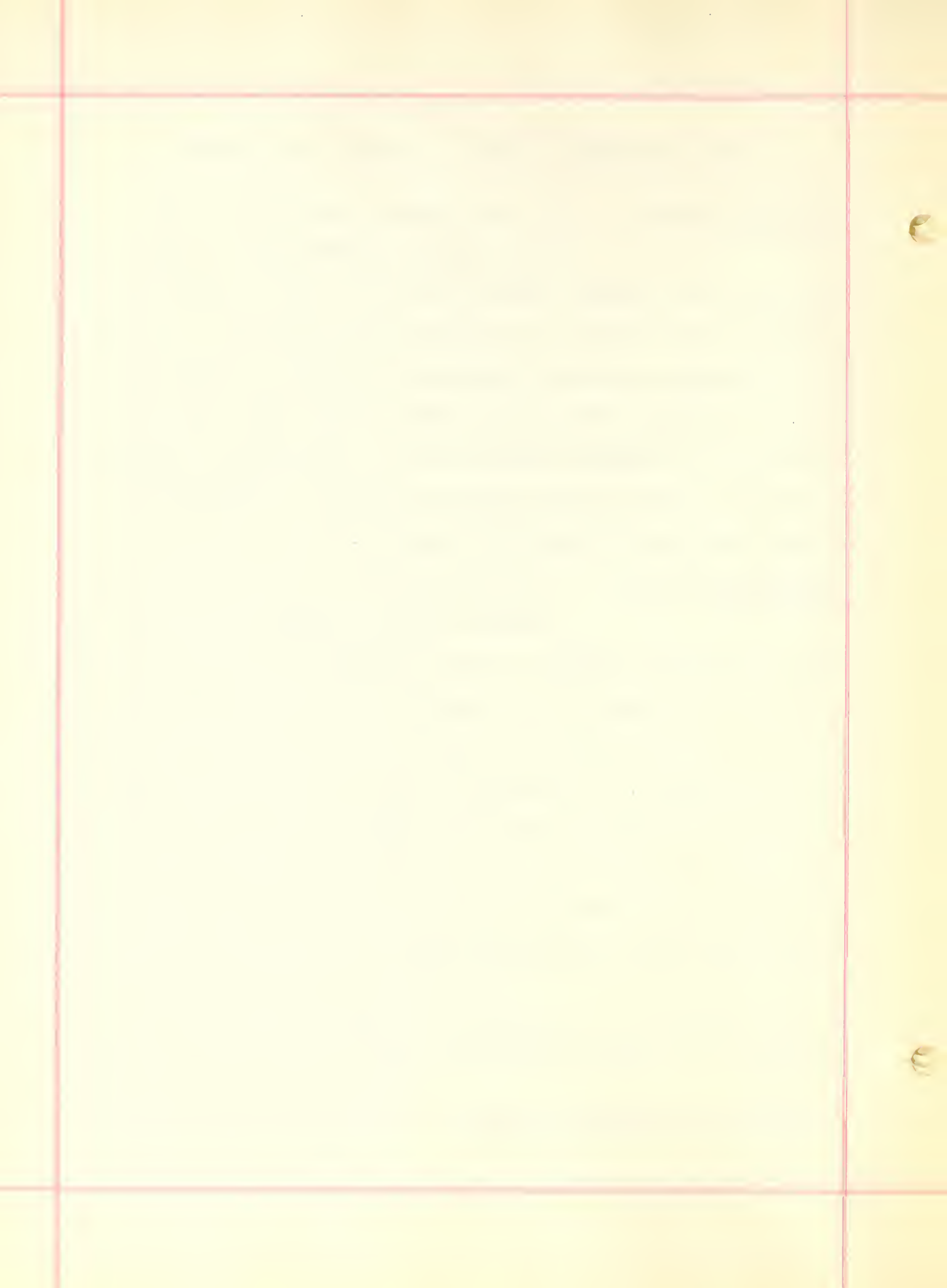
First High School in Boston      The first public high school in the United States, established in Boston in 1821, was the "English Classical School", which in 1824 appeared in the records as the "English High School". Its program of studies included Commercial Arithmetic and Book-Keeping.<sup>1</sup> The English High School aimed to give boys "thorough culture in all English branches, and in some modern languages, as shall fit them for the higher departments of mechanical, manufacturing and 'commercial' business."<sup>2</sup>

Commercial Courses Introduced      The advisability of establishing a commercial course of study in the high schools "for the benefit of those desiring to fit themselves as well as possible for the requirements of modern business life"<sup>3</sup> came in response to a large and urgent need for commercial instruction. In September, 1897, a carefully prepared two-years' commercial course was adopted, and put into effect with the beginning of the term in September 1898. At that time the regular course of study in the high schools was for three years, with an advanced course of one year more in the

<sup>1</sup>Semi-Centennial of the English High School, 1921.

<sup>2</sup>Report of the School Committee, Boston Public Schools, 1857, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup>Report of the School Committee, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 19, 1897, p. 30.



central high schools. The new course was designed to afford full equipment for pupils who desired to fit themselves for active business life, and special teachers of recognized ability and long experience were added to the corps of instructors.<sup>1</sup>

The commercial course adopted September 24, 1897, was as follows:

"First Year.--English language and literature, ancient history, phonography, penmanship and commercial forms, commercial arithmetic and bookkeeping, botany, drawing, music, physical training.

"Second Year.--English language and literature, mediaeval history, modern history, phonography and typewriting, elements of mercantile law, bookkeeping, commercial geography, zoology, physiology and hygiene, drawing, music, and physical training."<sup>2</sup>

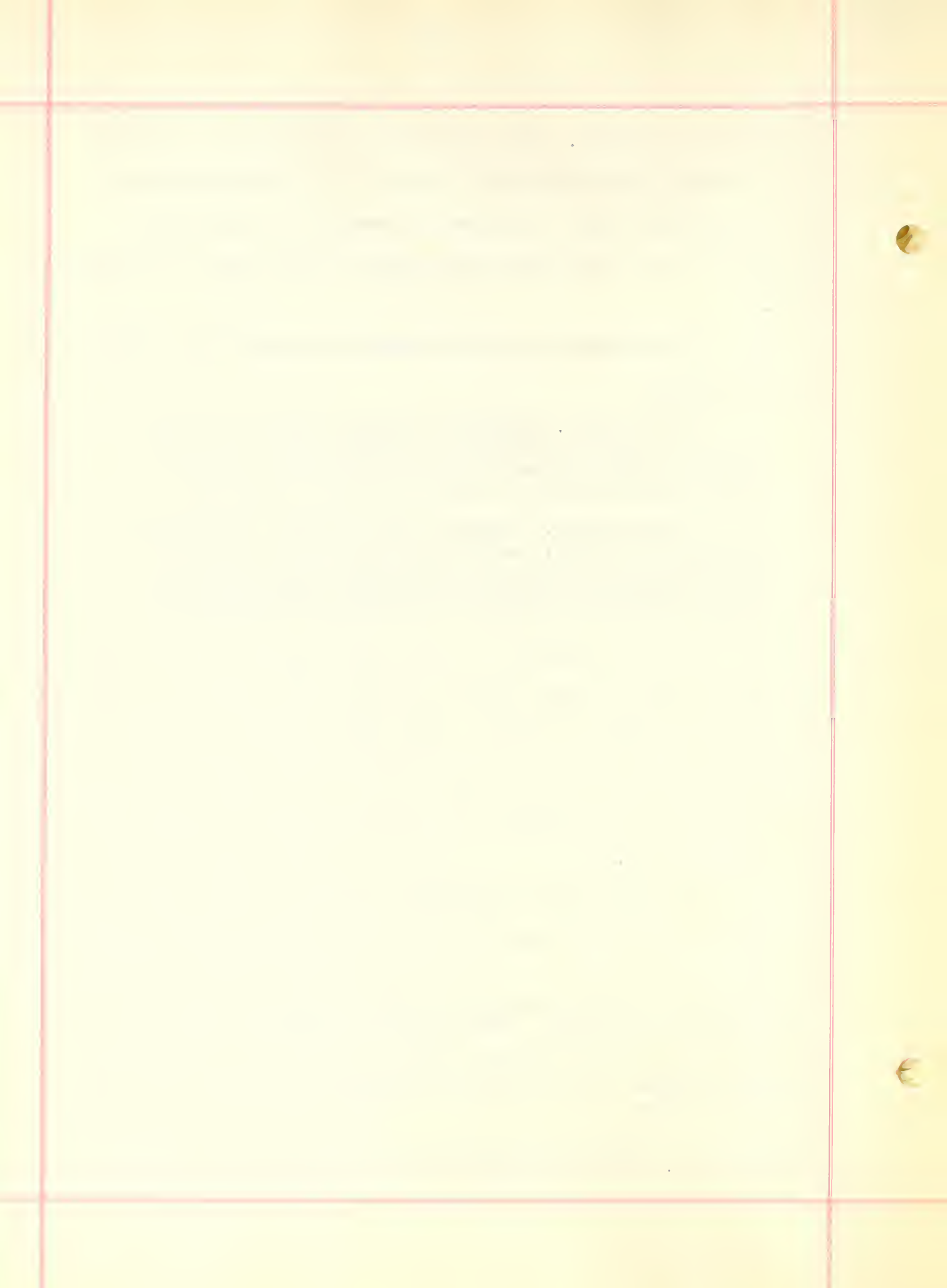
It is interesting to note the number of pupils who took this course in the several high schools during the first year it was offered in 1898: "Charlestown High School, 45; Dorchester High School, 60; East Boston High School, 63; English High School, 72; Girls' High School, 146; and Roxbury High School, 100."<sup>3</sup>

This so-called commercial course was constructed by taking the first two years of the regular course, cutting out

<sup>1</sup>Report of the School Committee, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 15, 1898, "High School Commercial Course", p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 11, 1928, "Commercial Education in Retrospect", p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Report of the School Committee, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 15, 1898, "High School Commercial Course", p. 18.

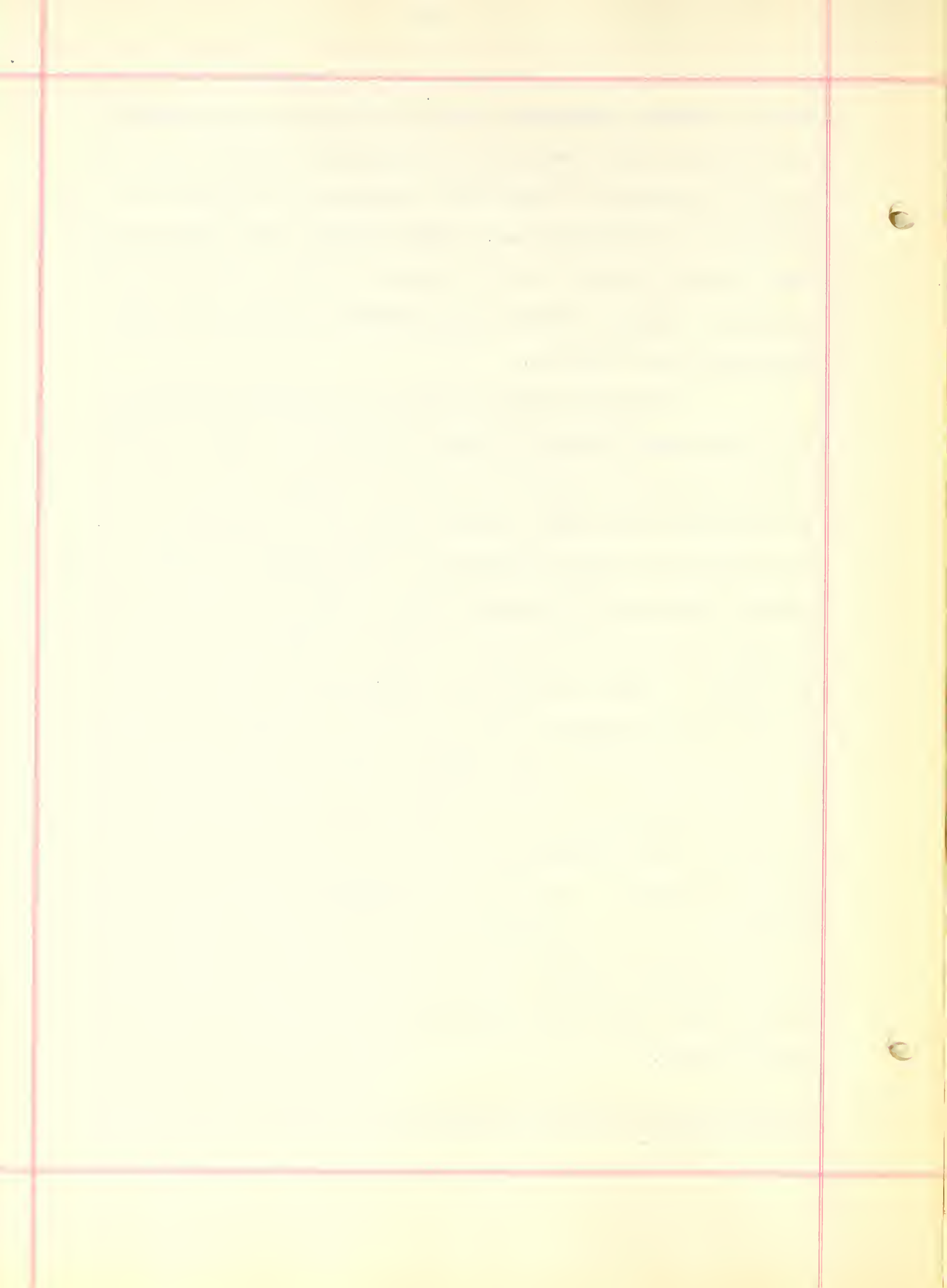


all the foreign languages and all the algebra and geometry, and filling their places with phonography, typewriting, commercial arithmetic, bookkeeping, commercial geography, and the elements of mercantile law. These studies were combined with the remaining studies of the regular course, namely, English language, history (ancient and medieval), botany, zoology, physiology, and drawing.

Two years later in 1900 it was questioned whether the high school course of study afforded the "best" preparation for the duties of life that could be offered to the boys and girls whose school days usually ended with the high school. Accordingly the superintendent was instructed to report to the School Committee "a revised course of study for high schools, provided that all the studies pursued in said schools may be elective."<sup>1</sup> Such a course was prepared, but the Board of Supervisors suggested that, in view of the experiments going on in several of the high schools, further time was necessary for the consideration of the whole subject in the light of the results of these experiments.

Elective System            the result of various modifications and  
Adopted                        changes in the old high school course of  
study adopted in 1891, was the adoption of a purely elective  
system which went into operation at the beginning of the school  
term of 1901.

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston,  
May 22, 1900.



The three- and four-year courses later instituted in the Boston High Schools existed side by side until 1907-08, when the commercial courses were placed on a four-year basis in all the high schools.

Need of Business Education

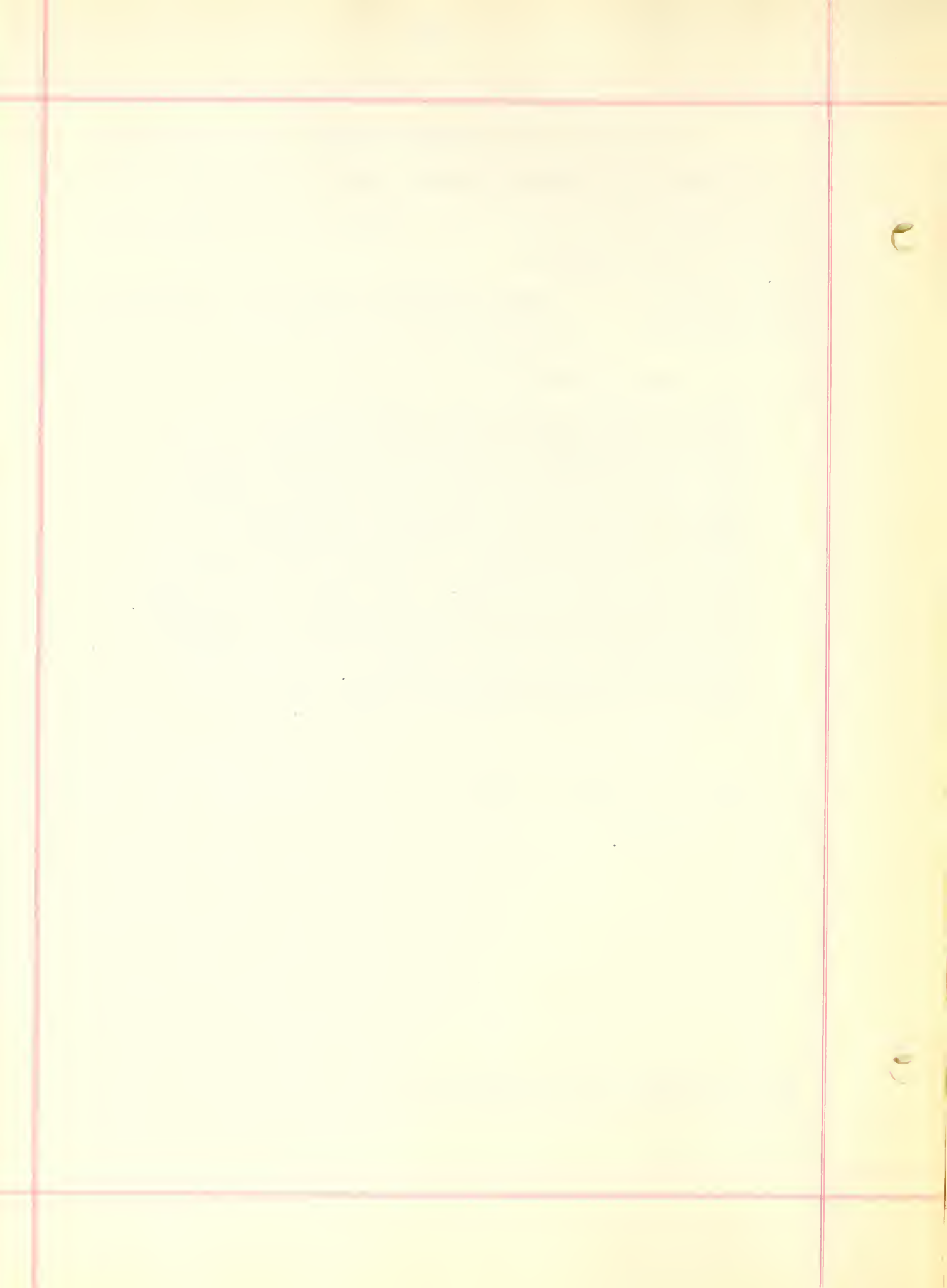
In 1905 the Special Committee appointed to investigate the establishment of a commercial high school reported that "business education, or com-

mercial training, is instruction which aims to inculcate the principles governing trade and mercantile transactions. It does not mean the turning out of an experienced banker or an expert commission merchant, but to help young men and women to master correctly those essential rudiments of commercial education which will make them more capable to fill any position in the business world to which they may be called. It is not a narrow training, in the sense of confining itself to set industrial subjects, but is broad enough to recognize the leavening influence of such properly adapted liberal studies as are necessary to the ultimate aim of the pupil pursuing it, and which can be carried *pari passu* through the course."<sup>1</sup>

The same committee also issued a statement showing the number of pupils in each of the high schools pursuing commercial courses:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School Document No. 4, 1905, "Report of the Special Committee on Establishing a Commercial High School," p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 7.



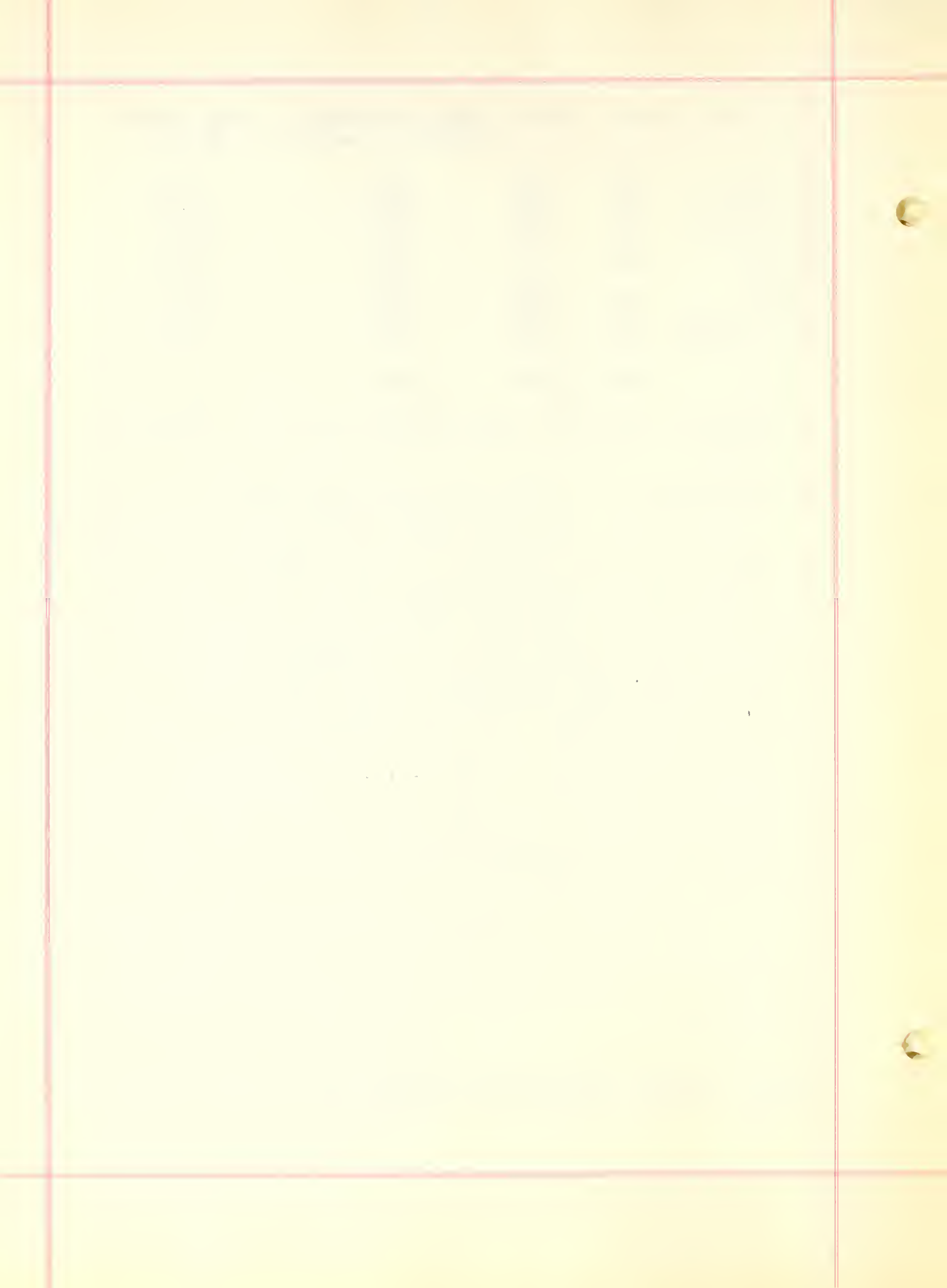
High School	Boys	Girls	Total Commercial Pupils* in School	Total Pupils in School
Brighton	56	74	120	332
Charlestown	54	126	180	245
Dorchester	159	287	446	1,160
East Boston	72	144	216	387
English	331		331	904
Girls'		465	465	1,129
Roxbury	58	207	265	691
South Boston	89	157	246	557
West Roxbury	28	119	147	372
Total	837	1,579	2,416	5,777

\*A commercial pupil is a pupil taking one or more commercial subjects.

Intensified Clerical Course                      In 1911 an attempt was made to return to a two-year course of study, and an intensified clerical course was introduced into the Roxbury High School "to afford special vocational training to those pupils who desire to become stenographers and bookkeepers and to give them as good training and preparation as they could obtain in the best business colleges. It can be completed in two years or less by able and faithful pupils . . . ." According to the report of the Educational Statistician a large number of girls of widely varying background flocked into the new short course but a small number survived.

The following assignment of subjects and points was authorized for Intensified Commercial Courses in the Roxbury High School:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Course of Study for General High Schools, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 11, 1911, pp. 13, 14.



Phonography			Bookkeeping		
First Year			First Year		
	Periods	Points		Periods	Points
English I	10	10	English I	10	10
Phonography I	8)		Bookkeeping I	4	4
Typewriting I	6)	10	Commercial Arithmetic	4	4
Physical Training I	2	2	Penmanship	4	2
Office Hour	1		Physical Training I	2	2
Study	3		Office Hour	1	
	<u>30</u>	<u>22</u>	Study	5	
				<u>30</u>	<u>22</u>
Second Year			Second Year		
English II	7	7	English II	7	7
Phonography II	8)		Bookkeeping II	8	7
Typewriting II	4)	8	Commercial Arith. II	4	4
Commercial Arithmetic	3	3	Mercantile Law	3	3
Mercantile Law	3	3	Physical Training II	2	2
Physical Training II	2	2	Hygiene	1	1
Hygiene	1	1	Office Hour	1	
Office Hour	1		Study	4	
Study	1			<u>30</u>	<u>24</u>
	<u>30</u>	<u>24</u>			

Commercial  
Electives, 1911

The following represent the commercial  
studies included in the electives of the

general high school for the respective years:<sup>1</sup>

First year--Bookkeeping I, including commercial arithmetic, penmanship, and commercial forms; second year--Bookkeeping II, Phonography and Typewriting, Commercial Geography, Civil Government; third year--Bookkeeping III, Phonography and Typewriting II, Commercial Law, History of Commerce and Industry; fourth year--Phonography and Typewriting III, Economics, Civil Service.

<sup>1</sup>Course of Study for General High Schools, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 11, 1911, pp. 10, 11, 12.

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1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions.

2. It is essential to ensure that all entries are supported by appropriate documentation.

3. Regular audits should be conducted to verify the accuracy of the records.

4. The second part of the document outlines the procedures for handling discrepancies.

5. Any errors identified during the audit process should be promptly investigated.

6. The findings of the audit should be reported to the appropriate authorities.

7. The third part of the document provides a detailed explanation of the accounting principles.

8. These principles are fundamental to the preparation of financial statements.

9. The fourth part of the document discusses the role of the auditor.

10. The auditor's primary responsibility is to provide an independent opinion on the financial statements.

11. The fifth part of the document outlines the scope of the audit.

12. The scope of the audit is determined by the terms of the engagement letter.

13. The sixth part of the document discusses the importance of communication.

14. Effective communication is essential for the success of the audit process.

15. The seventh part of the document provides a summary of the key points.

16. The eighth part of the document discusses the future of auditing.

17. The ninth part of the document provides a list of references.

18. The tenth part of the document discusses the importance of ethics.

19. The eleventh part of the document provides a list of appendices.

20. The twelfth part of the document discusses the importance of transparency.

21. The thirteenth part of the document provides a list of footnotes.

22. The fourteenth part of the document discusses the importance of accountability.

23. The fifteenth part of the document provides a list of glossary terms.

24. The sixteenth part of the document discusses the importance of integrity.

25. The seventeenth part of the document provides a list of index entries.

Curricula for General High Schools, 1917<sup>1</sup>

## First Year

Required Subjects	Points	Elective Subjects	Points
Physical Training I	2	History I	3 or 5
Choral Practice	1	Foreign Language I	5
Hygiene	1	Biology I	3 or 4
English I	5	Introductory Science	3
Bookkeeping I	4 or 5	Drawing I (Freehand)	3
		Domestic Art I	3

## Second Year

Physical Training II	2	Choral Practice II	1
English II	4 or 5	History of Commerce	3
Bookkeeping II	4 or 5	Foreign Language II	4 or 5
Commercial Geography	3	Mathematics I	5
		Biology II	3 or 4
		Drawing II (Freehand)	3
		Domestic Art II	3

## Third Year

## Accounting

Physical Training III	2	Choral Practice III	1
English III	3 or 4	Phonography I	5
Bookkeeping III	4 or 5	Typewriting I	3
		Merchandising I	4 or 5
		Civics	3
		History III	3,4 or 5
		Foreign Language III	4 or 5
		Chemistry I	3,4, or 5
		Physics I	3,4 or 5
		Drawing III	3
		Domestic Art	3

## Secretarial

Physical Training III	2	Same electives as Accounting
English III	3 or 4	curriculum, except Bookkeeping III offered in place of
Phonography I	5	Phonography and Typewriting.
Typewriting I	3	

<sup>1</sup>Curricula for General High Schools, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 9, 1917, pp. 12, 13.

The first part of the report deals with the general conditions of the country, and the second part with the details of the various districts. The first part is divided into three sections: the first section deals with the general conditions of the country, the second section with the details of the various districts, and the third section with the details of the various districts.

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The second section deals with the details of the various districts, and the third section with the details of the various districts. The second section is divided into three parts: the first part deals with the details of the various districts, the second part with the details of the various districts, and the third part with the details of the various districts.

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## Curricula for General High Schools, 1917, (con.)

Third Year  
Merchandising

Required Subjects	Points	Elective Subjects	Points
Physical Training III	2	Same electives as Accounting curriculum, except Bookkeeping added.	
English III	3 or 4		
Merchandising I	4 or 5		

Fourth Year  
Accounting

Physical Training IV	2	Choral Practice IV	1
English IV	3,4 or 5	Phonography II	5
Commercial Law	3	Typewriting II	3
Bookkeeping IV	4 or 5	Merchandising II	4 or 5
Office Practice	2 or 3	Economics	3 or 4
		Foreign Language IV	4 or 5
		History IV	4 or 5
		Civil Service	3
		Drawing IV	3
		Domestic Art	3

## Secretarial

Physical Training IV	2	Choral Practice IV	1
English IV	3,4 or 5	Commercial Law	3
Phonography II	5	Bookkeeping IV	4 or 5
Typewriting II	3	Office Practice	2 or 3
		Merchandising II	4 or 5
		Economics	3 or 4
		Foreign Language IV	4 or 5
		History IV	4 or 5
		Civil Service	3
		Drawing IV	3
		Domestic Art IV	3

## Merchandising

Physical Training IV	2	Same electives as Secretarial curriculum, except Phonography and Typewriting offered in place of Merchandising.	
English IV	3,4 or 5		
Merchandising II	4 or 5		

The two-year commercial course met all the requirements for the commercial certificate. "At least one elective in the third and fourth year must be a 'controlled option' (a related vocational subject taught in a homogeneous division.)"



Office Practice Course Added      By 1926 an Office Practice Course was added to those already offered. It emphasized general clerical training in the eleventh grade leading up to more specialized training in the twelfth grade for such initial positions as junior clerk, dictation machine operator, bookkeeping machine operator, file clerk, etc.

There were at this time thirteen general high schools besides two large special schools that offered courses in commercial education. Enrollment by subjects in the high schools of the city gave a fairly accurate idea of the relative importance of commercial subjects:<sup>1</sup>

	Enrollment by Subjects	
	Boys	Girls
Commercial branches	6,549	12,249
Other subjects combined	49,978	51,252

The assistant superintendent in charge of commercial education wrote in his report for 1927:<sup>2</sup>

"Commercial courses are constantly being re-organized to provide instruction that insures basic general education, right attitudes between worker and employer, sufficient information to properly relate a definite occupation to the economic series of occupations of which it is a part, together with a degree of technical skill that will enable the pupil to make an appropriate beginning in the field of his choice. As a part of such a program, the choice of a vocation is not left to chance but is the result of wide exploration and preliminary study of occupations and expert guidance through-

<sup>1</sup>Report on Age and Progress of Pupils in the Boston Public Schools, 1927.

<sup>2</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 12, 1927, "Commercial Education", pp.186,187.



out the pupil's entire course. Proud of his work in the past, and of the generous endorsement of it by the public, the teacher of commercial subjects cannot take much time to meditate thereon. He must use the incidents of progress to date as guide posts but not as hitching posts. Retaining the knowledge gleaned from the experience of yesterday his concern will be of today and tomorrow."

Clerical Training        Because investigations showed in 1927 that short-

hand training did not function for more than twelve per cent of the clerical workers, provision was made for commercial training on a strictly vocational basis with the needs of general and special office clerks in view.

Commercial pupils were provided with office practice equipment such as duplicating machines, calculating machines, bookkeeping machines, dictating machines, and filing equipment.

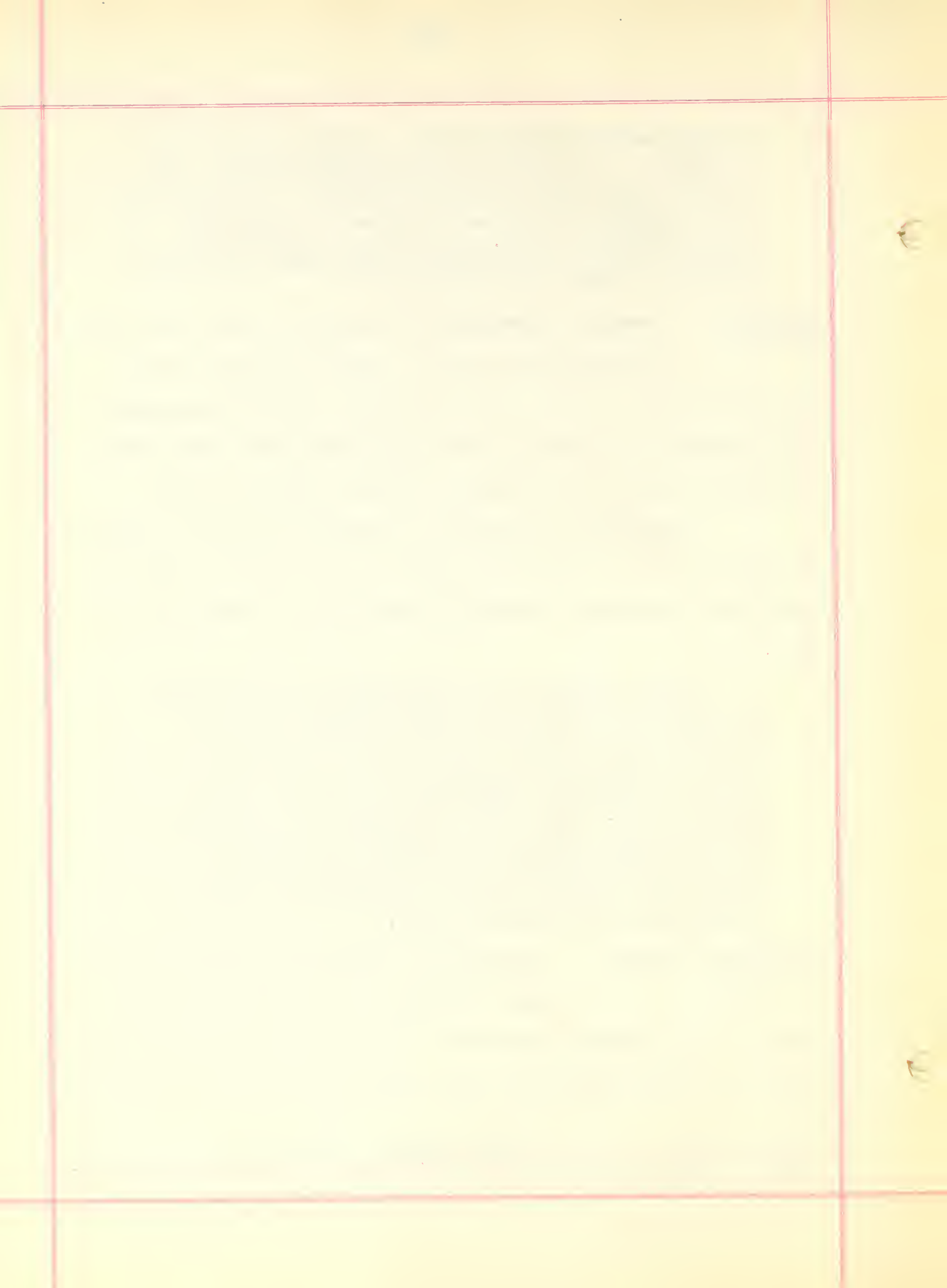
"Such equipment is indispensable, not because the school aims to train 'key-punching' machine operators, but because machine operation is perhaps the most suitable vehicle for developing interest, stimulating thought and for giving the pupil an effective combination of subject matter and practice. Interests developed in connection with the achievement of the technical requirements for employment furnish innumerable connecting links with important social and economic problems with which the pupil must be familiar to win a satisfactory employment status."<sup>1</sup>

Commercial Courses        Commercial courses are now offered in  
at Present

the following Boston high schools:

Brighton High School, Charlestown High School, Dorchester High School for Boys, Dorchester High School for Girls, East Boston

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 12, 1927, "Commercial Education," p. 188.



High School, English High School, Girls' High School, Hyde Park High School, Jamaica Plain High School, Roxbury Memorial High School for Boys, Roxbury Memorial High School for Girls, South Boston High School, and High School of Commerce.

The subjects assigned for study in Grades IX and X are planned to provide a background for intelligent work in the special commercial subjects elected in the last two years. Upon graduation the student of the commercial course is prepared for employment as a junior worker in one of the following branches of business: accounting, bookkeeping, clerical work, office machine work, stenography, typing.

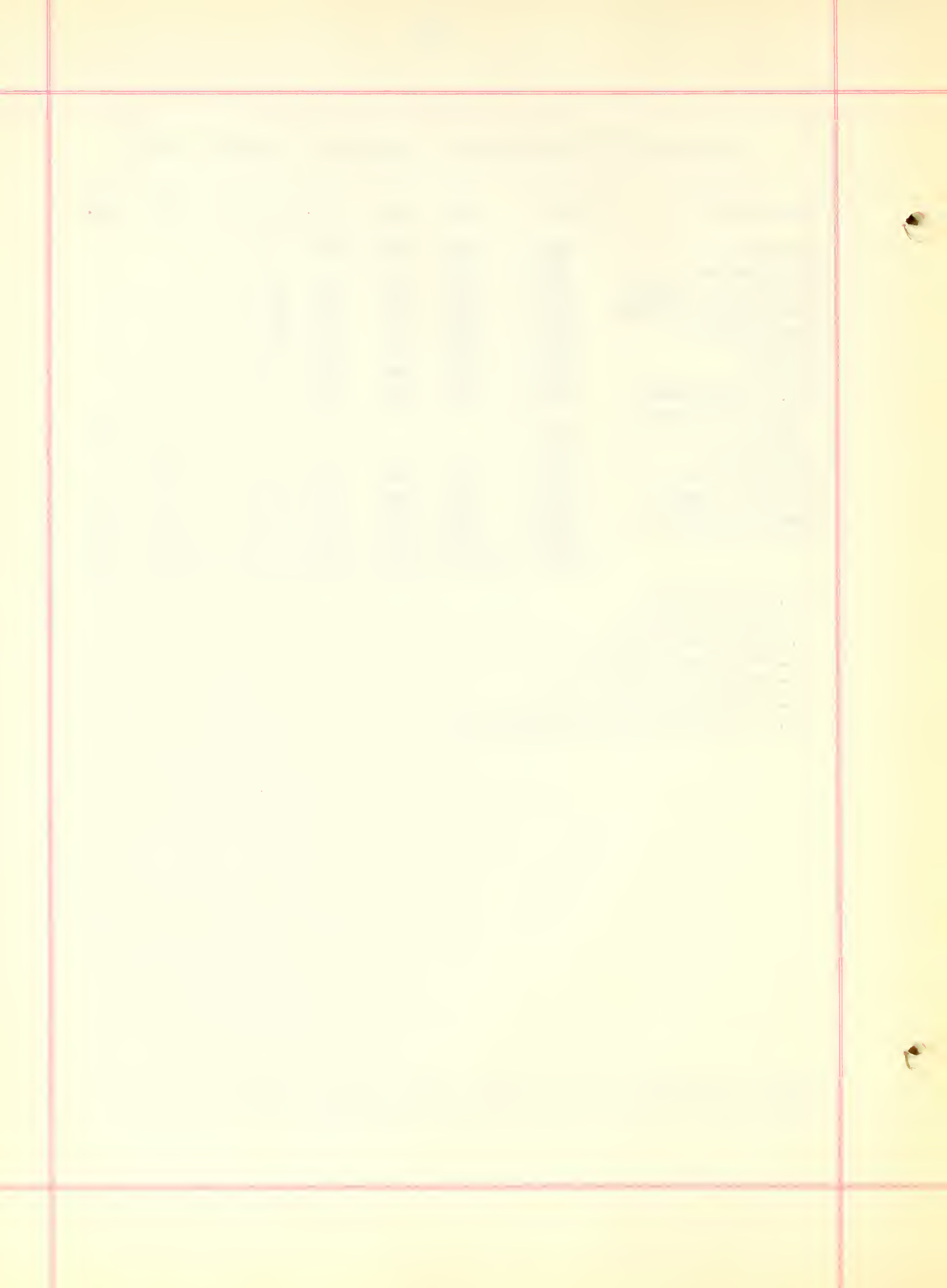
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Graduates of High Schools, Commercial Courses, 1933<sup>1</sup>

High School	Total	Sh.	B.	M.	OP.	S.	GC.	CS.*
Brighton	309	90	21	29	5			
Charlestown	153	50						
Dorchester (boys)	309	45	31	43	15			
Dorchester (girls)	547	251	37	73	57	9		
East Boston	287	85	3	66	44			
English	635	34	67	49				
Girls'	385	198	24	35	1			
H.S. of Commerce	240	85	60	57				
H.S. of Practical Arts	152							26
Hyde Park	349						178	
Jamaica Plain	346	125	34	65				
Roxbury (boys)	345	12	36	51	24			
Roxbury (girls)	645	223	112	48			75	30
South Boston	219	35	14	46	50			
	4,921	1,233	439	562	196	9	253	56

\*Sh.--Shorthand  
 B.--Bookkeeping  
 M.--Merchandising  
 OP.--Office Practice  
 S.--Secretaryship  
 GC.--General Commercial  
 CS.--Cooperative Salesmanship

<sup>1</sup>School Document No. 6, 1933, Boston Public Schools, "Annual Statistics of the Boston Public Schools, p. 73.



HIGH SCHOOL OF COMMERCE  
(For Boys)

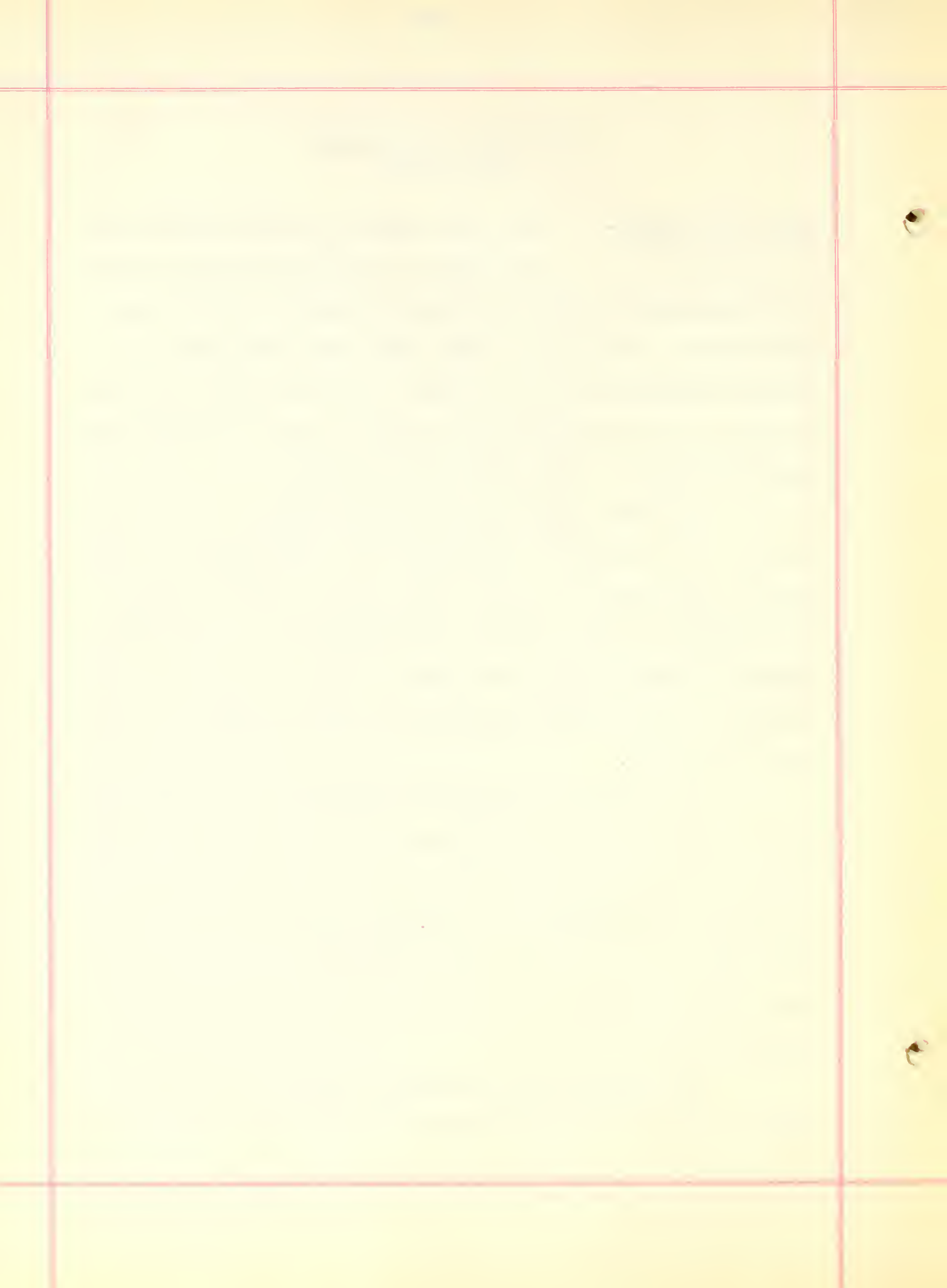
Need for a Commercial High School

The first school in Boston devoted exclusively to teaching business subjects was established in 1840 by private enterprise. After that time numerous schools of a like nature were organized and operated successfully in the city. Not until about 1900 had any part of the school funds been used to pay for teaching any commercial branch in the public free schools.

In order that the pupils might obtain instruction in subjects which should be embraced in the curriculum of a commercial high school, they not infrequently left the public high schools to enter private institutions at a considerable expense to their parents, and many parents who desired their children to receive such instruction could not afford to procure it for them.

The pupils were greatly handicapped by the arrangement of courses, in which classical and commercial were combined. The experience of Boston was the same as that of other cities which experimented in like manner; and it seemed that Boston might profit by the past experiences of other cities where this department of the school system had been given serious study.

The condition of the Boston schools, as shown by actual figures in the annual report for the year 1905, was



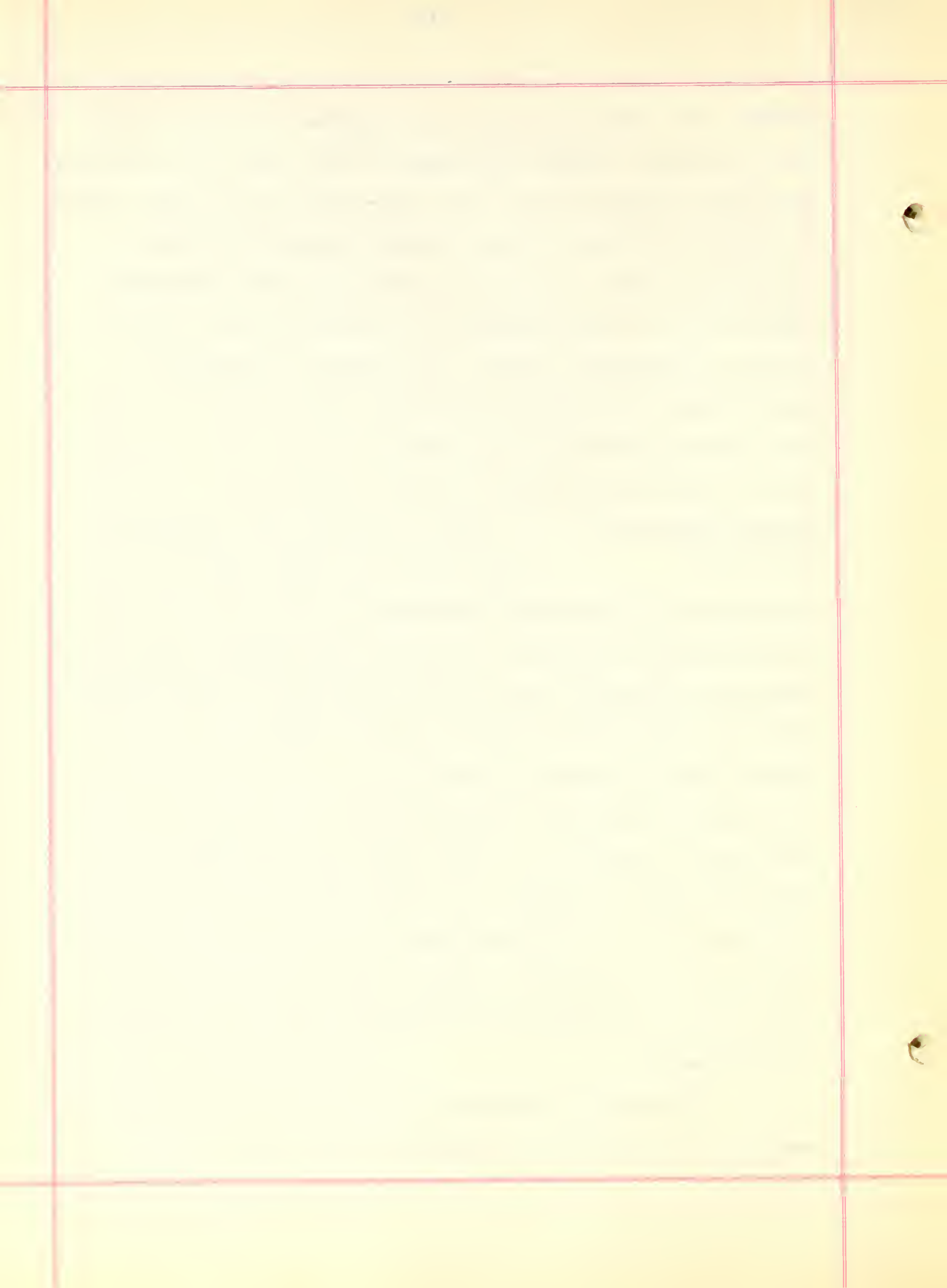
crowded, and sooner or later this congested condition, which would doubtless increase from year to year, had to be relieved. Statistics showed that more than two-fifths of the total number of pupils in the high schools pursued commercial courses.

The students taking the general curriculum were undoubtedly hampered by the over-crowding of the schools with a large percentage of commercial pupils. The proposed arrangement of establishing a commercial high school would result in giving more time and attention to the wants of each group of pupils, and in better fitting them for their chosen work.

Proposed Commercial  
High School

In 1905 the subject of a Commercial High School for Boston under the jurisdiction of the School Committee to aid those pupils who at the time were taking an incomplete and indefinite commercial course was suggested, and to assist those whose circumstances would not permit them to pay for private schooling of the desired kind; to retain in school many of those pupils who did not progress beyond the grammar grades; and, finally, to train young men and women so that they might enter business life with some degree of ability and confidence. Although it was not claimed that the high schools at that time had been wholly indifferent to commercial subjects such a school could well lay claim to the attention of the School Board and its educational experts.

The special committee appointed to consider the expediency of establishing a commercial high school stated in



its report:

"In these days of commercial prosperity and industrial activity the question is frequently asked what is responsible for the tremendous successes that are achieved in the business world, and the answer invariably is the training received by men in the shop of experience, assisted by the elementary or self-obtained schooling of their younger days. What has been achieved is the result of training and opportunity but without the necessary training and work opportunity would go for naught."<sup>1</sup>

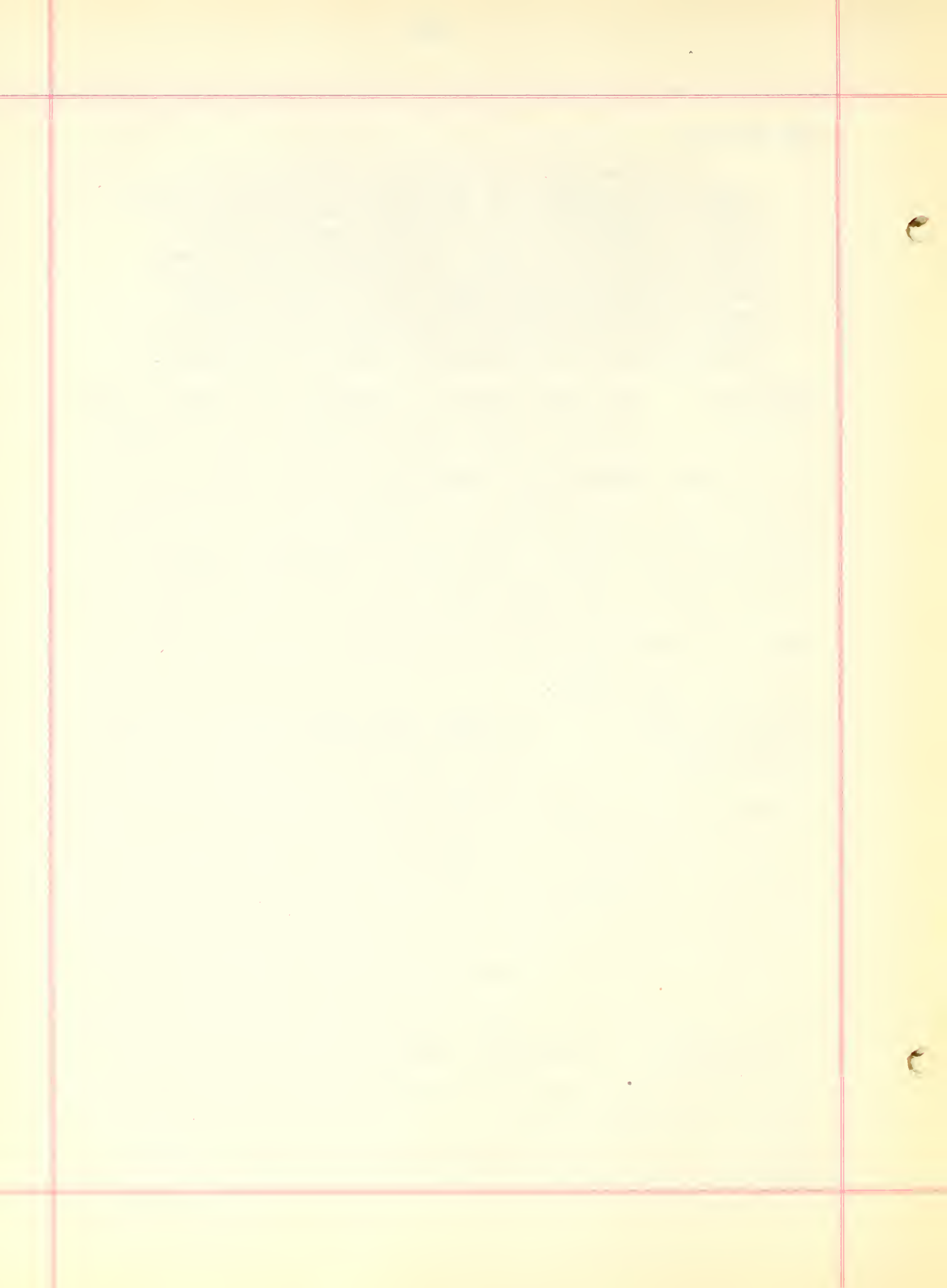
Schools of Commerce      The "high school of commerce" had been in existence for some years previous to the founding of the Boston institution. Washington, D. C., Philadelphia and New York had had schools of commerce for some years before Boston made the venture. Interest in specialized schools of commerce spread until there are now in the United States about twenty such schools, many of which have come into existence within the last decade.

Preparation for the New High School of Commerce      In 1905, when the movement in Boston became vigorous, the school committee of twenty-four appointed a sub-committee of five which visited the New York High School of Commerce and published a special report upon the project.<sup>2</sup> A sub-committee of assistant superintendents likewise made an investigation and strongly recommended the founding of a special commercial school.<sup>3</sup> This

<sup>1</sup>School Document No. 4, 1905, "Report of the Special Committee on Establishing a Commercial High School".

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, January 24, 1905, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, January 9, 1905, p. 8.



latter committee proposed that the logical curriculum to be adopted at that time for such a school appeared to be that recommended by the National Education Association at its session in Boston in 1903.

The sub-committee of five began the work as one of the innovations of the new regime. The whole committee visited the New York School of Commerce, inspected the work in that school, and was so favorably impressed that shortly afterward it took preliminary action which resulted in the founding of the Boston High School of Commerce.<sup>1</sup>

Early in April, 1906, the head master of the institution was appointed.<sup>2</sup> Before the opening of the school, the head master was given a leave of absence for some months, which he devoted to a careful study of schools of commerce both in this country and abroad.<sup>3</sup> Both New York and Philadelphia were visited and a great deal of practical help and encouragement was the result. The European field was next sought out, where there were a number of old and celebrated institutions. Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Belgium, France, and England were visited on the trip. Special attention was given to the German schools which had achieved a widespread reputation as strictly vocational institutions. Dresden, Leipsig, Berlin,

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, March 26, 1906, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., April 2, 1906.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., April 16, 1906 and September 17, 1906.



Frankfort, and Cologne contained representative types of commercial schools, and from them were secured ideas very useful to the Boston experiment. The fact that the German schools had been established so long, with such distinguished success, and with constantly growing influence and power, seemed especially significant and encouraging to those entrusted with the new project in Boston. Boston, like the large German cities, needed wider markets. The similarity of conditions was so striking that the means of success found efficacious in the older country gave strong promise for the new.

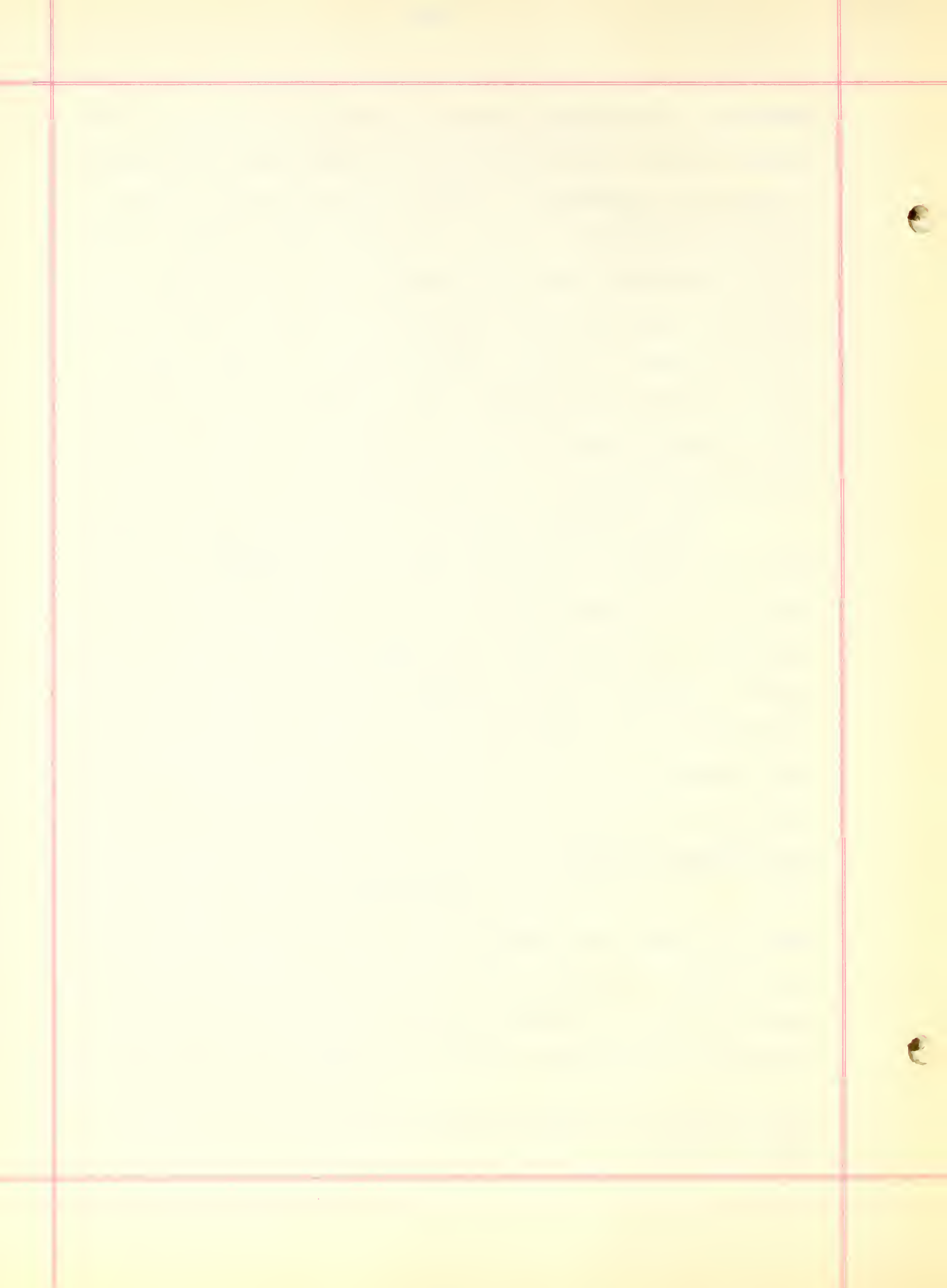
As the Boston school was not open to receive pupils until the following September considerable opportunity was given for the investigation and study of the problem. The opinions of local business men relative to the idea were first sought. A circular letter, asking pertinent questions, was addressed to many prominent business representatives. The data derived from this inquiry was utilized in determining the character of the school and the course of study.

Establishment of the  
High School of Commerce

The new High School of Commerce  
established by vote of the Board,

March 26, 1906, was organized at the beginning of the term in the following September, and temporarily occupied a primary school building on Winthrop Street, Roxbury.<sup>1</sup> When the Mayor took an aggressive stand in its favor the assurance that

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, April 2, 1906.



it would receive such support from those high in authority as would eventually secure for it a suitable building rendered it desirable that the school be put into operation."<sup>1</sup> It was provided that in September, 1907, the school would be transferred to a new building in the Back Bay, forming a part of the so-called "Normal and Latin School group" of buildings. It was the intention of the School Committee to surround it with quarters, teachers, traditions, and a course of study such as would attract and train a worthy group of young men preparing for entrance into the commercial life of the city.

The first class admitted to the school consisted of 140 pupils, and the teaching staff comprised a head master and five teachers.<sup>2</sup> The limited accommodations available did not permit the admission of a larger entering class,<sup>3</sup> and as the school was designed to be of a special type, the final character of which could not be determined at once, it was considered well to avoid at the beginning administrative difficulties connected with a larger school. Pupils were admitted to this school on substantially the same conditions as to other high schools, preference being given to graduates of Boston elementary schools in the order of their application.

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 9, 1906.

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, June 25, 1906.

<sup>3</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, April 16, 1906.

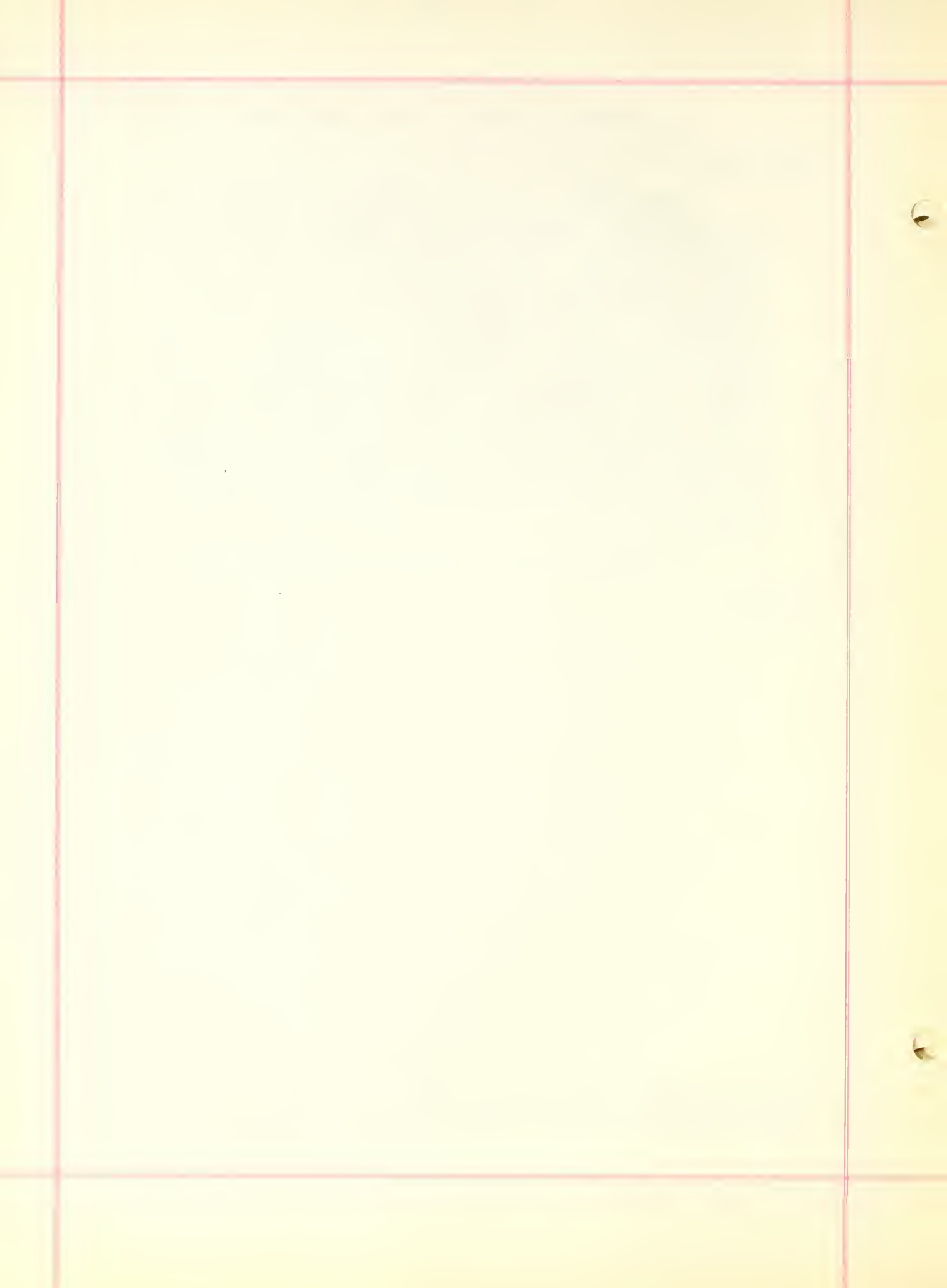


The course of study in 1906 contained the following description of the aims and character of the school:

"The object of the High School of Commerce is to provide for boys a type of education which will be a suitable preparation for entrance into commercial activities. The course of study has a two-fold aim, namely to give instruction in those studies which are usually comprised in the terms general knowledge, and commerce that are adapted to the secondary stage of education. The program is sufficiently general to possess the quality of liberality. The larger aim is that the program shall effect an application of subjects towards a specific end. This aim is vocational, and seeks to prepare for effective participation in commercial pursuits, but the student will find the course broad enough to enable him to enter those higher institutions that do not demand the ancient languages for admission."<sup>1</sup>

The program of the school arranged by years was as follows:

<sup>1</sup>Course of Study for the High School of Commerce, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 11, 1906, p. 5



High School of Commerce, Program of Studies, adopted 1906<sup>1</sup>

<u>First Year</u>	Periods	Third Year (con.) Electives	Periods
English	4	One subject required. Two may be taken by dropping starred subject.	
German	4		
Penmanship, first half )		Bookkeeping	4
Business Knowledge and Practice, second half )	4	Stenography (con.)	4
Physics, one-half year )		Freehand Drawing	3
Physical Geography, one-half year )	4	#Not taken by pupils pursuing advanced Business Technique.	
Algebra (with commercial application)	4		
General History, Ancient and Medieval	3	<u>Fourth Year</u>	
	23	Required	
<u>Second Year</u>		Commercial English, )	
Required		Advanced Correspondence, )	4
English	4	English, second half )	
German	4	German	3
*French or Spanish	3	*French or Spanish	3
Bookkeeping	4	Algebra, one-third year )	
Commercial Geography, one-half year )		Plane Geometry, two-thirds year )	4
Local Industries, one-half year )	4	#Typewriting	1
Observational Geometry first half year )		Commercial Law, 1st half )	4
Commercial Arithmetic second half year )	4	Civil Government, 2nd h.)	
	23	Electives	
Elective		One subject required. Two may be taken by dropping starred subject.	
(Drop starred subject)		Bookkeeping, Accounting, Typewriting	6
Stenography (to be pursued 3 years)	5	Stenography and Type.	6
		Mechanical Drawing	3
<u>Third Year</u>		Commercial Design	3
Required		Chemistry, Application	5
English	4	Economics, Application, first half )	5
German	4	Political Economy, second half )	
*French or Spanish	3		
Chemistry	5		
#Typewriting	1		
Modern History, 1st half )			
Economics, 2nd half )	4		
	21		

<sup>1</sup>Course of Study for the High School of Commerce, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 11, PP. 7, 8, 9, 10.



Revision of Course  
of Study, 1907

In 1907, the Observational Geometry course, required for the first half of the second year, was dropped, and Commercial Arithmetic substituted, making a full year course of Commercial Arithmetic carrying four points.<sup>1</sup>

The outline followed rather closely the proposed four-year commercial high school course recommended by the National Education Association and presented at the Boston meeting in 1903.<sup>2</sup>

Weekly Talks by  
Boston Business Men

During the first year of the school, the business men of Boston, cooperated by giving weekly talks to pupils. These talks were generally devoted to explanations of the demands made by mercantile establishments upon young men entering their employ. They were supplemented during the second half of the year by a course of lectures upon the local industries of Boston, delivered by an associate editor of one of the large daily papers, who had made a careful study of the subject for the benefit of the municipal authorities.<sup>3</sup> Carefully prepared courses of lectures based on accurate investigations of conditions in Boston and elsewhere have been presented each year.

<sup>1</sup>Course of Study for the High School of Commerce, Boston Public Schools, School Document, No. 7, 1907, p. 9

<sup>2</sup>Addresses and Proceedings of the National Education Association Boston, 1903, pp. 751, 752.

<sup>3</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, School Document No. 17, Boston Public Schools, 1906, p. 29.



It was hoped by such means as these (and by others developed later) to send pupils of the school into the business world of Boston well informed upon local needs and opportunities, and with minds well trained to grapple successfully with the problems that might come before them for solution. It was also intended that the pupils should acquire a "talking" knowledge of foreign languages, and not merely the literary knowledge which characterized so much of the foreign language study.

Advisory Council  
of Business Men

One German idea, rather closely followed, was the formation of an advisory committee of business men. At a gathering of representative business men held in the autumn of 1906, the new high school was the subject of discussion. The consensus of opinion was that a successful school of commerce should be developed by means of some definite scheme of cooperation between the school and the business men. On December 3, 1906, the School Committee passed an order inviting the president of the Chamber of Commerce, the president of the Merchants' Association, and the president of the Associated Board of Trade to formulate a plan to secure the cooperation of business men in the work of the school.<sup>1</sup>

In response to this invitation, the plan proposed by these men, and adopted by the School Committee, provided for the formation of a general committee of twenty-five business

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, December 3, 1906.



men, composed chiefly of members of the three organizations and representatives of the various business activities of the city. This large committee at its first meeting selected from its number an executive committee of five, whose duty it was to examine in detail the various problems concerning the school and make recommendations to the larger body. The larger body met twice a year, in May and October, and the executive committee met once a month at the convenience of the chairman. In this way a close and definite relationship was established between the business men of Boston and the school.

At the meeting of the Business Men's Committee, May, 1907, a series of recommendations was proposed to the School Committee concerning such questions as the permanent site of the school, the employment of technically trained teachers, and summer employment for students. The recommendations were adopted by the School Committee,<sup>1</sup> and were of vital assistance in the development of the school. So far as is known this is the first time that such cooperation between school authorities and business men had been attempted in this country. It resulted in a practical cooperation between the men who can say 'what should be done,' and the Board of Superintendents, whose business it is to say "how it shall be done." It is generally admitted that the committee of business men has been of substantial value in promoting the development of the school.

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, June 3, 1907.



Travelling  
Scholarships

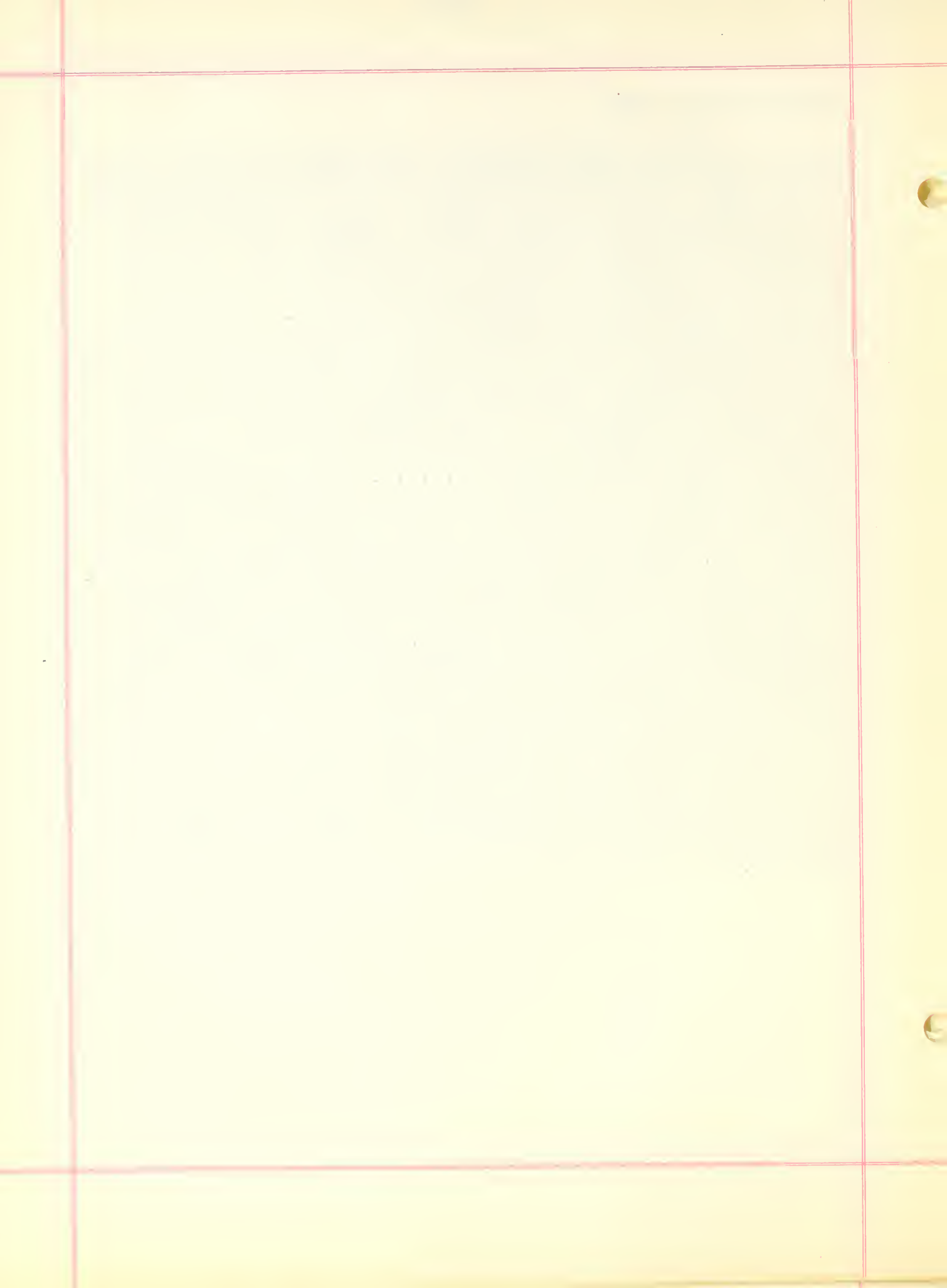
This advisory committee issued in May, 1910,  
in printed form its fourth annual report.

Each of these reports is interesting and instructive, and together they furnish a complete recital of the progress of the school. The committee was largely instrumental in making possible a new and permanent home for the school, and in the creation of travelling scholarships to Central America, South America, and Europe. The purpose and scope of these scholarships may be learned from the following extracts from two reports of the advisory committee, one taken from the report of 1909 and one from the report of 1910.



## Report of May, 1909:

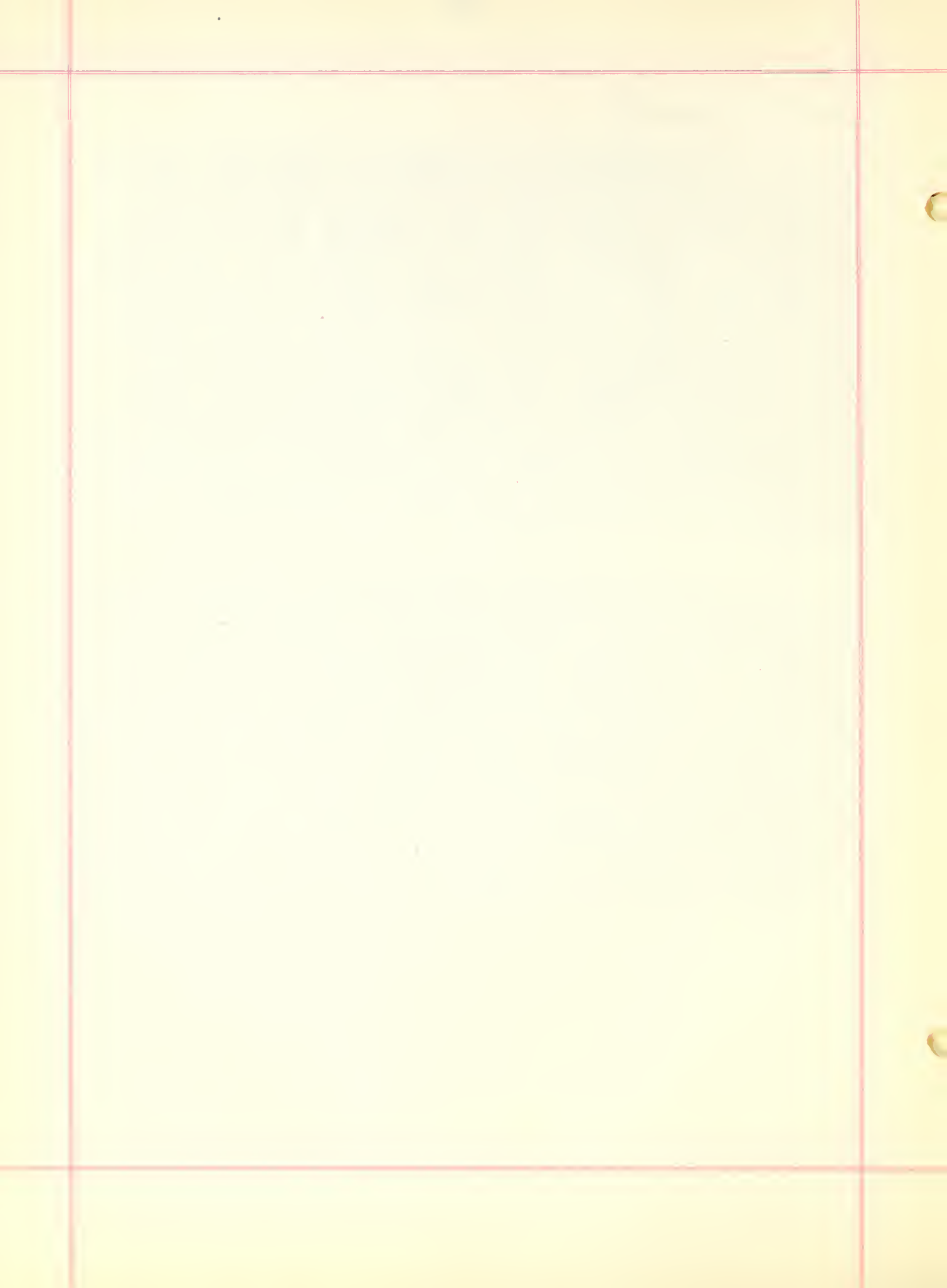
"The two South American scholarships outlined in last year's report were duly awarded to two young men of the graduating class. They visited several of the most important parts of the eastern coast of South America, making their headquarters at Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Ayres. Adequate facilities for investigating trade conditions were afforded them. They were provided with numerous letters of introduction and the representatives of American business interests in the countries visited extended them every courtesy possible. After their return to this country last fall they spoke before the Business Men's Committee, and gave several talks before the school. The trip of these two young men has been an inspiration to them and to the whole school. While the results of their observation can hardly be considered of large immediate value to the business interest of Boston, it is undeniable that the interest aroused in the community was stimulating, and that the school profited largely by the example . . . . On the whole, the trip will be of greater importance than could possibly be the purely technical report of an expert. It is a pleasure to be able to state that two scholarships are also available for the coming summer. Mr. Andrew W. Preston of the United Fruit Company has given the sum of \$10,000, \$2,000 a year for five years, to the Harvard School of Business Administration and the High School of Commerce, to be expended in the study of trade conditions in Central America and the West Indies. The holders of these scholarships are not only an incentive to the serious minded students of the school, but also show on the part of the Boston business men a realization of the fact that if we are to gain ground in foreign markets they must give those who are to represent them not only a business training but also the opportunity to prepare themselves in a definite way for the specific work before them. Thus, also, is recognized the fact that the High School of Commerce is endeavoring to do its share in preparing its graduates to enter a field which is destined to occupy an increasingly greater amount of the attention of American business men."



## Report of May, 1910:

"The travelling scholarships to Central America were carried out as announced in the report of a year ago. Two fifth-year pupils were chosen, and the following places were visited: Berlize Puerto-Varrios, Guatemala, Antioqua, New Orleans, Colon, Panama, Port Limon, Cartage, San Jose, Bocas del Tror, Port Antonio, Kingston and Montego Bay. These young men made an interesting report to the Business Men's Committee in December. They have given several talks, illustrated with lantern slides from views taken on the spot, to the students of the school. These young men, as is customary for all fifth-year students, spend half of the day in school and half of the day in business houses. Both boys are connected with large local business concerns. The Business Men's Committee feels that the project of maintaining these scholarships for the students of the school is a practice which should be commended. The scholarship is a stimulus to the students of the school and to the community in general. Widespread public interest is manifest, and a nucleus of young men with some notion of trade conditions in the Latin countries south of us is being established.

"For the forthcoming summer a double travelling scholarship is offered to two young men of the graduating class. These young men will be selected as heretofore, i.e., by reason of scholarship and general desirability. The trip will be to Germany. One month the young men will spend in the "Kolonial Institut," in Hamburg, an institution designed to train young Germans for service in German colonial possessions. The two students of the school will have an opportunity to be under the influences which the young Germans enjoy who are preparing for their country's colonial trade. It is expected that the two young men will join a party of students from the Berlin Commercial University and travel for a month's trip of investigation and study of textile and iron industries in the Rhine-Westphalian district and in Belgium. The journey is in no way a junket or a frivolous excursion. It is a trip of observation and serious study, and the young men will be expected to render a definite and valuable account of their experience."



Buildings        The High School of Commerce, organized in the old and abandoned Winthrop Street School-house in September, 1906, with a registration of 140 boys, moved in October, 1907, to the new Patrick A. Collins School-house in the Fenway.<sup>1</sup> This building, originally designed as a model school in connection with the Normal School, was adopted in its interior arrangement of classrooms and laboratories to serve the purpose of the High School of Commerce so far as its limited size permitted. In September 1909 the school outgrew its quarters and an annex was established for 178 boys in rooms hired in the Mechanics' building on Huntington Avenue. Even with this annex, the room provided was inadequate, and a building was needed to accomodate 1,000 pupils. There were 588 applicants for admission to the school in September, 1910, but a large number were rejected on account of lack of room. Had all of these been admitted the enrollment for that year would have been 1,138. The School Committee secured the passage of an act by the Legislature of 1910 authorizing the erection of a new building to provide for approximately 1,000 pupils,<sup>2</sup> but progress towards its completion proceeded slowly.

The new building on Avenue Louis Pasteur was occupied for the first time in 1915. It was the most expensive school constructed in Boston up to the time, having cost over \$700,000.

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, October 21, 1907.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., June 6, 1910.



During the first year it was filled to capacity, accomodating 1800 students.

Through the financial assistance of the Business Men's Advisory Committee, the school was equipped with a commercial museum and a commercial library, to which yearly additions were made until they have become highly important features to which pupils refer for assistance in their work.

From a first graduating class of 19, the numbers have increased to present graduating classes of about 275.

Admission Requirements Pupils are admitted to the High School of Commerce, by action of the Board of Superintendents, as follows:<sup>1</sup>

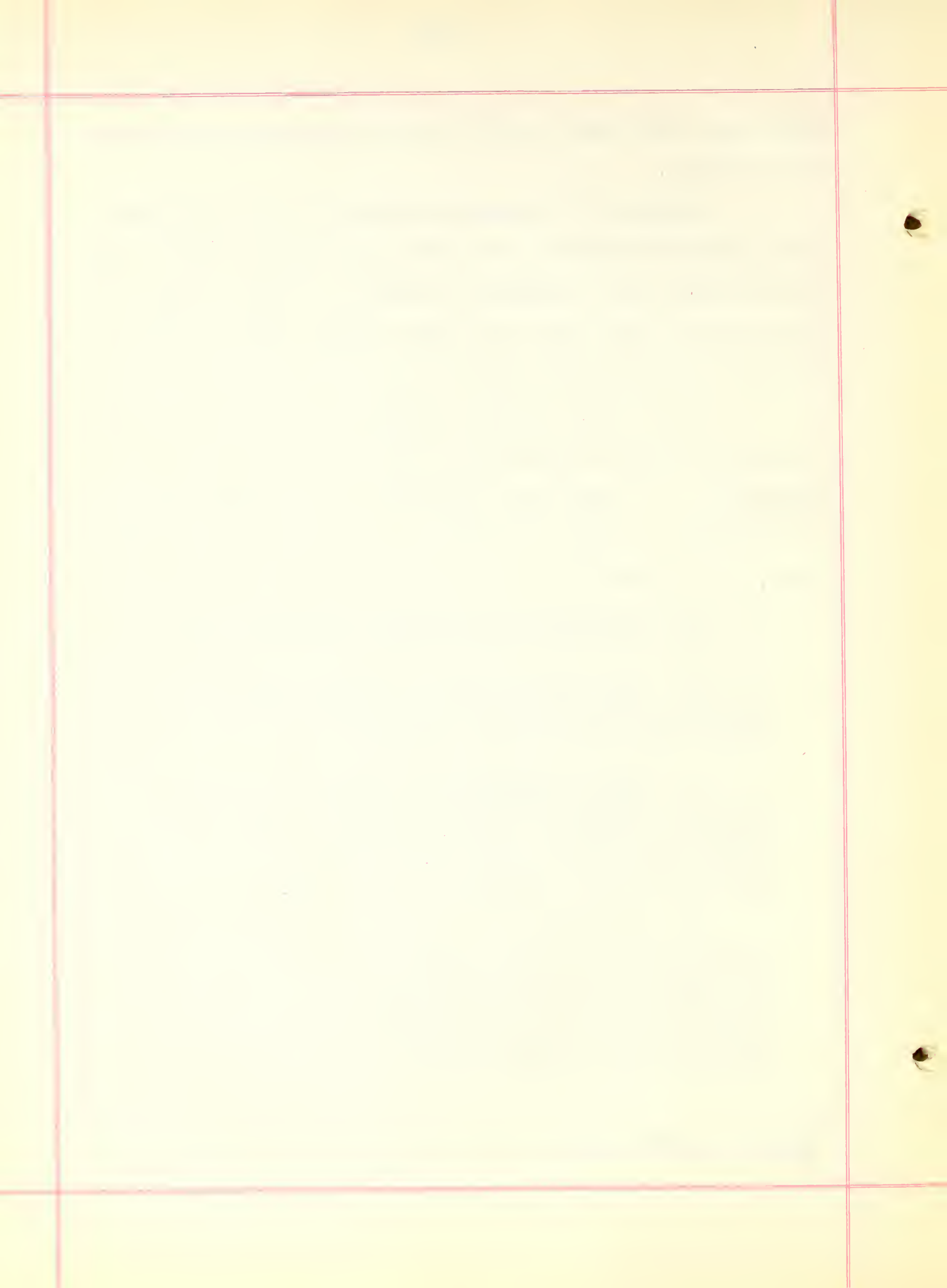
(a) Graduates of the Boston elementary schools are admitted in the order of their application.

(b) Graduates of private schools whose standards are satisfactory to the Board of Superintendents may be admitted on presentation of certificates signed by the proper authorities.

(c) Other candidates are admitted on examination equivalent to that required for graduation from the elementary schools of Boston. These examinations are held on the second Friday and the preceding Thursday in June, and on the second Wednesday and following Thursday in September.

(d) Candidates for admission from other secondary schools should apply to the headmaster of the school, and should be recommended by him to the Board of Superintendents for admission. On presentation of satisfactory evidence, which may consist of certificates signed by the proper authorities or of examinations, the headmaster will determine the subjects and the number of points

<sup>1</sup>Course of Study for the High School of Commerce, Boston Public Schools, School Document, No. 11, p. 5.



for which advanced standing may be given, and will issue certificates therefor.

(e) Graduates from a four years' course of a Boston high school, or graduates from other secondary schools of equal grade, approved by the Board of Superintendents, are admitted to the special course.

School Session           The school is in session six hours per day for five days in the week. Of this time, ten minutes are given to opening exercises and forty-three minutes to recess and passing. The rest of the time is divided as follows: Seven periods of forty-one minutes each; a period of ten minutes for setting-up drill. The school session is one hour longer than that of general high schools, this extra hour being devoted to gymnastic exercises, the meetings of foreign language associations, and debating societies. Students who desire additional assistance in their studies may at this time find teachers who are at liberty to help them. The period effects two valuable purposes: the bright pupil has opportunity to do additional work and the slow pupil has a chance to get the assistance necessary to enable him to keep abreast of his class.

Purpose of the School           The High School of Commerce was created to give boys a specific preparation for commercial life. However, the school is not narrowly vocational. Here, as in the general high school, the pupil is taught to appreciate the higher ideals and developments of modern civilization; he is trained to be not only a business man but an educated and useful citizen.



"Since the school is free from college entrance requirements or other limiting agencies, it can make its chief concern the best interests of the individual. The school is regarded as made up of individuals, not classes. The course of study is flexible, and at the same time so comprehensive that a serious minded boy can find himself assisted into almost any field of useful work without loss of time or motion."<sup>1</sup>

In general the course of study may be said to be divided into two parts:

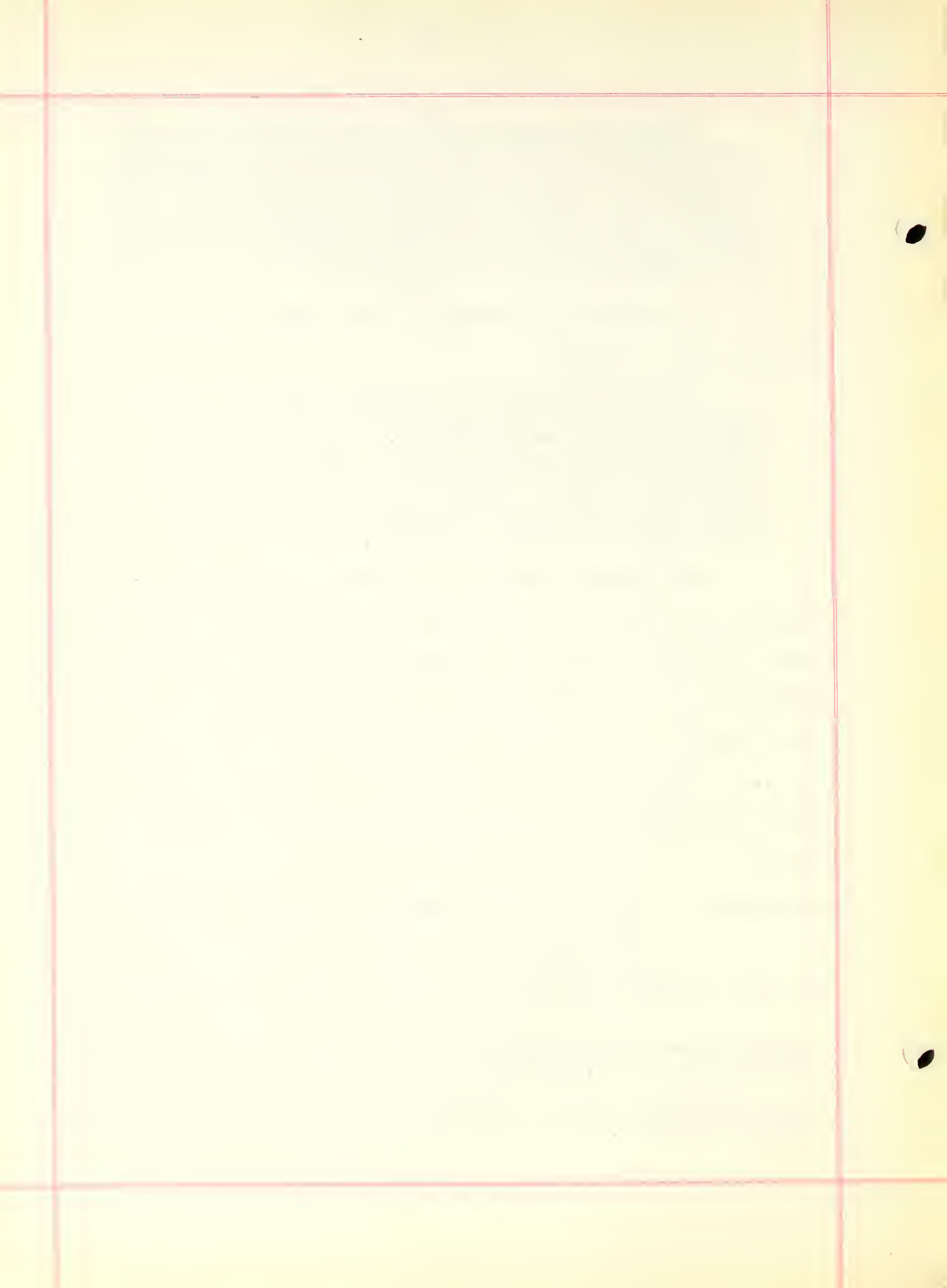
"First, instruction in general high school subjects; second, instruction in high school grade in the specific subject--commerce. The first sort of instruction is intended to supply the indispensable elements of general knowledge or liberal culture. Instruction of this kind is provided in the general groups of studies usually pursued in high school, except that of ancient languages."<sup>2</sup>

The general subjects are offered with the view of preparing the pupils to use them in business life. Thus, English, the modern languages, history, commercial geography, commercial law and science are to serve as instruments of general culture, with an eye to their special commercial applications. In like manner all instruction in the school is to serve the special, vocational purpose for which the school exists.

Curriculum        The curriculum permits of a choice of subjects that will enable a pupil to prepare for one of the three larger divisions of the commercial field, namely,

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 12, 1927, p. 31.

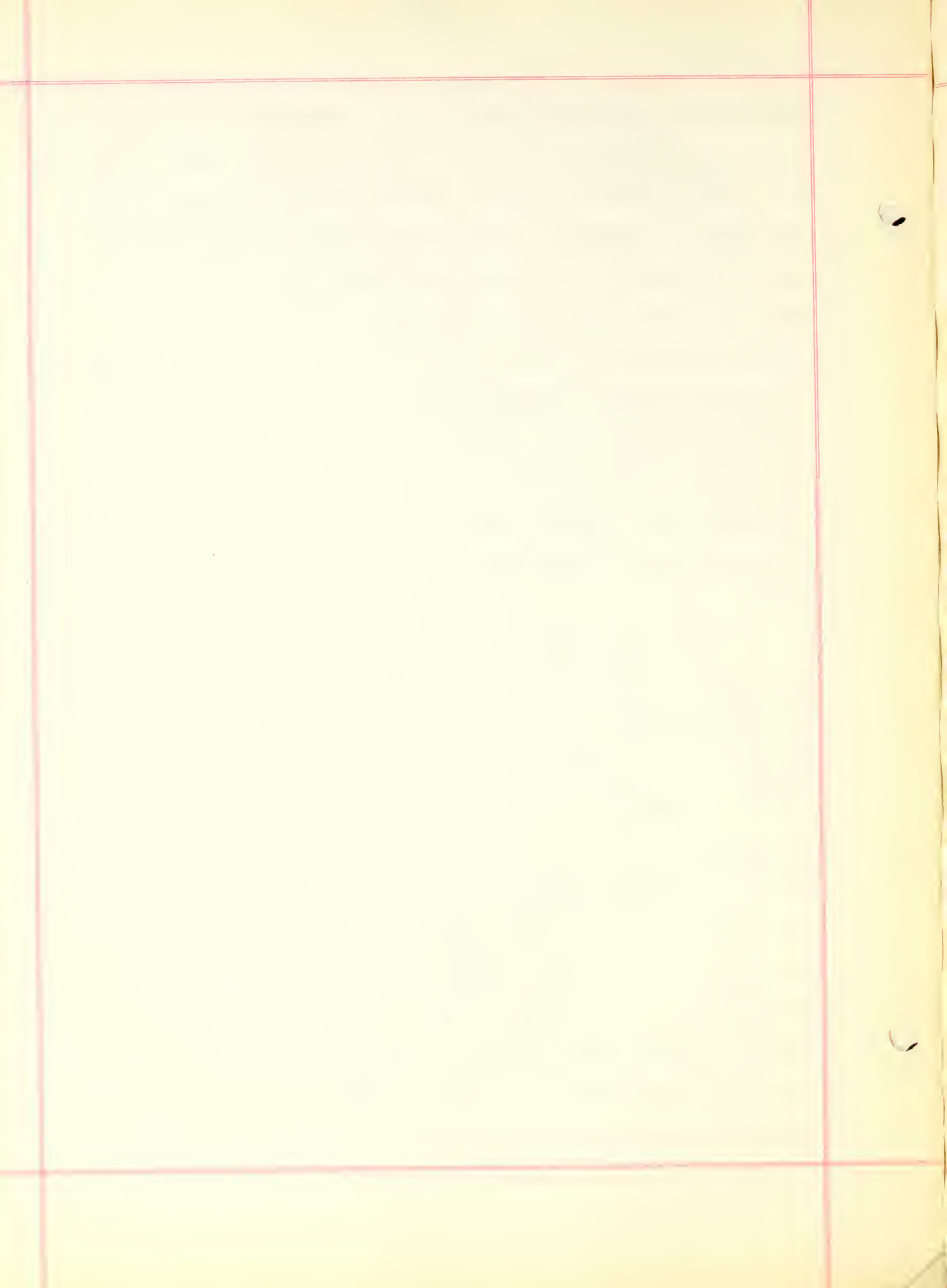
<sup>2</sup>Course of Study for the High School of Commerce, Boston Public Schools, 1925, p. 5.



secretarial, buying and selling, and accounting. The first two years are prescribed for all. During the first year the studies are the following: English, modern language (German, Spanish or French), elementary bookkeeping, general science, and mathematics (commercial arithmetic and algebra). During the second year all these studies are continued with the exception of general science. In its place is economic history and geography. In order that each individual may be specially fitted to take a definite place in the world of commerce, the pupil is asked to choose, at the end of the second year, one of three courses: merchandising, clerical (emphasizing stenography) or accounting. Separate curricula have been provided for these different objectives.

Diplomas are awarded to those who satisfactorily complete the four-year curricula. Certificates are given to those who satisfactorily complete the special course.

Special Course      Opportunity for still more specific technical work is offered in a special course open to graduates of secondary schools. This special course, in so far as the High School of Commerce pupils are concerned, amounts to a fifth year along the lines they have been following, but for the graduates of other high schools, it is the equivalent of a specializing post-graduate course. It is designed for boys who intend to enter business, and yet desire a more specific training than is afforded by the regular high school course. It includes many features which have a cultural value, while at



the same time preparing for business life. The work is organized on a part-time scheme; boys work at the school in the morning, and downtown in the afternoon. Combined in this way with practical business experience, the school work takes on new significance. This fifth year work includes courses on money and banking, corporation finance, transportation, labor problems, business organization, accounting, modern language, industrial chemistry, and English. Boys coming from other high schools can also take several regular courses of the fourth-year work, such as economics, industrial history, accounting, commercial use of modern languages, and industrial chemistry.

**Extra-curriculum Activities**      Extra-curriculum activities form the backbone of the undergraduate life of the school. The worthy use of leisure time, with the opportunity for the exercise of the pupil's initiative, gives him a most healthy start in his life's career.

**Practical Experience**      The school tries not only to prepare each boy to meet the world with a well-trained mind, but it goes out into the world with him, helping him place himself where he can work to the best advantage of himself and of the community. It has been the purpose of the school to develop the vocational side of education, and to that end the work is supplemented by employment during the Christmas season, the summer vacations, and at various other periods of the year. A sufficient number of merchants have been found who were willing to give employment to boys sent them from the school. In this



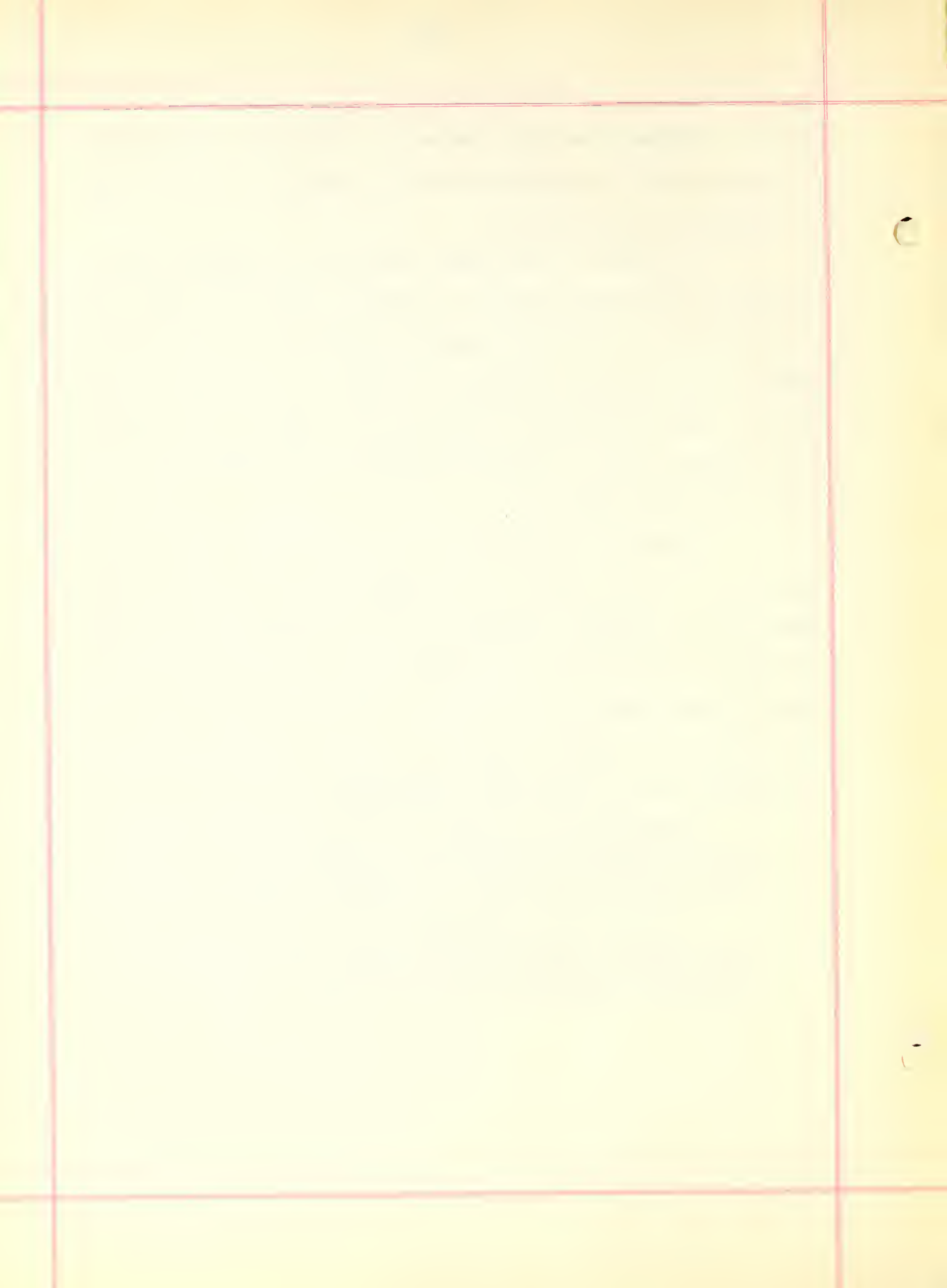
way the business house has become the practical laboratory of the school, and the pupils are given a chance to serve a kind of business apprenticeship.

The plan of employment was put into operation in a simple and effective manner. A circular letter was sent out to a number of business houses asking cooperation. The boys were sent to the employment managers of those firms offering assistance. All boys engaged in occupations return to the school with reports from the employer covering the records made in their temporary positions.

Thus at the end of four years a boy knows a great deal about the essentials of business--he knows enough about some side of business activity to be of immediate use to his employer, and he has had sufficient practical experience to enable him to make an intelligent choice of the type of career for which he is best fitted, thus guarding against the mistakes so likely to attend complete inexperience.

"Although the school was started as an experiment in education in Boston, its usefulness has long since been demonstrated. Its graduates are in demand when vacancies occur in the business houses of Boston.

"The following statistics, collected during the year 1922-23, concerning the class which graduated in June, 1922, indicate what is typical of lines of work followed by graduates of this school:



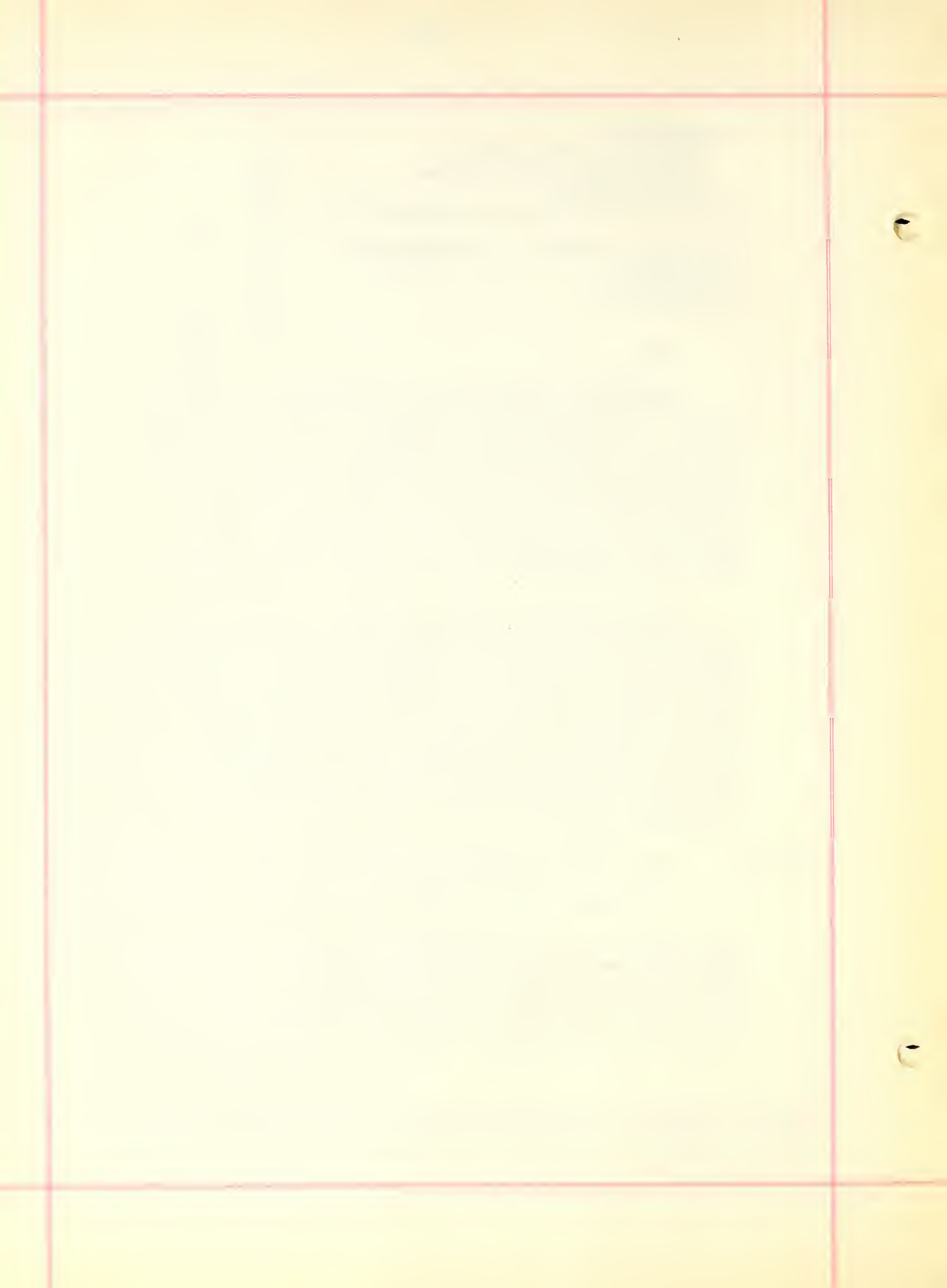
Commercial:		
Sales and stock work	61	
Bookkeeping and clerical	77	
Stenographic	23	
College of Business Administration	<u>15</u>	176
Colleges, Academic and Technical	20	
Mechanical	7	
Miscellaneous	3	
Unknown	<u>26</u>	
		<u>56</u>
Total		<u>232</u>

"The greater part of the graduates are placed in positions in June of the year that they graduate. A 'running list' is kept at all times, however, and graduates are frequently placed in new positions. The 'placement' supervisor visits a large percentage of the graduates at their jobs within the first year after graduation. It is interesting to note that a large percentage of calls for placements comes directly or indirectly from the graduates.

"The fact that the percentage of survival is constantly increasing is evidence that the first concern of the school is bearing fruit. The number of boys placed in permanent positions, their continuance and success in those positions, the large percentage of graduates and nongraduates who continue their educational endeavor after leaving school, are evidences that the second concern of the school is giving its administrators encouragement to continue and broaden this phase of their work."<sup>1</sup>

Summary      The Boston High School of Commerce, established in 1906, was the result of a "growing demand for a separate school specializing in commercial education. This high school has maintained a high standard of scholarship in commercial work, and has enlarged its sphere of usefulness so that its graduates are filling positions of responsibility in business leadership in the city of Boston. Five per cent of the certi-

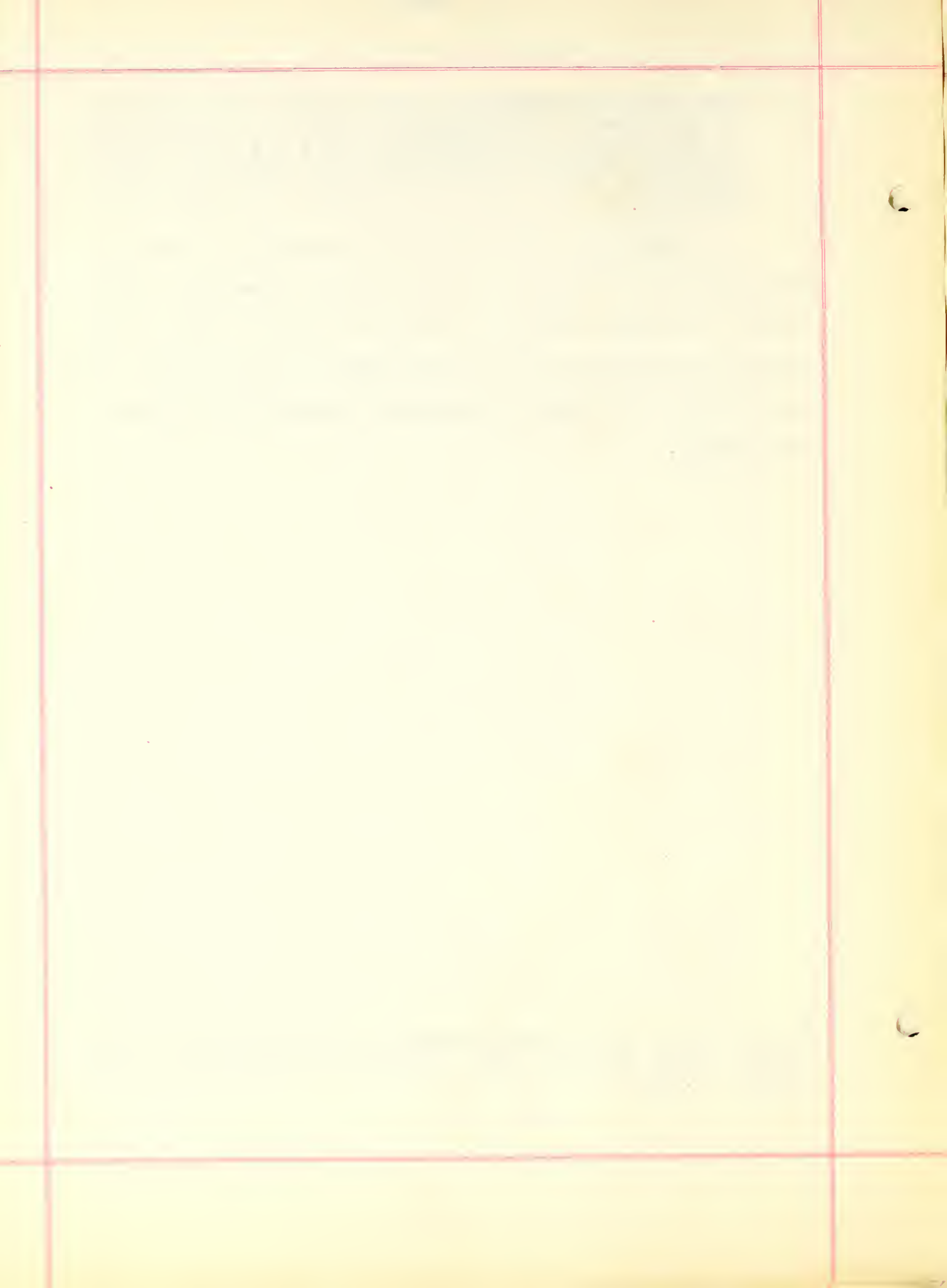
<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, School Document No. 9, 1925, Appendix--"Report of a Survey of the Boston Public School System by a Council of Classroom Teachers", p. 115



fied public accountants of Massachusetts are graduates of this school." The "graduate division consisting of one full year of post-graduate work . . . . is of such a quality that it is recognized and credited as a complete first year's work in a college of business administration."<sup>1</sup>

The school, started as an experiment in Boston, has developed an individuality, a clientele, a prestige, a school spirit, and alumni loyalty, a course of training, and a going organization that has put it far beyond the experimental stage and well into the realm of permanent institutions that are worth while.

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, School Document No. 11, Boston Public Schools, 1928, "Commercial Education in Retrospect," p. 46.



THE BOSTON CLERICAL SCHOOL  
(For Girls)

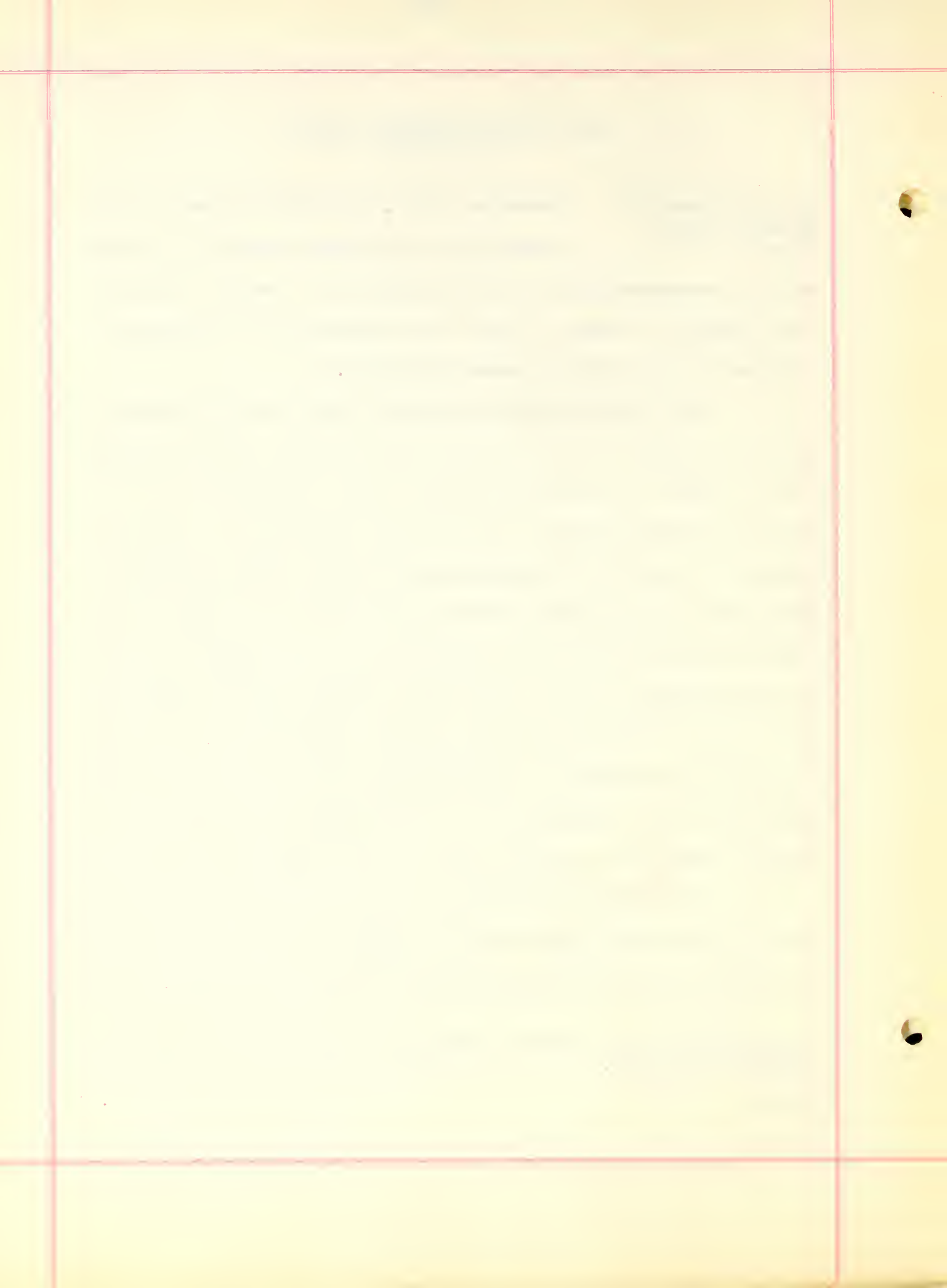
Proposed Central Clerical High School      February, 1910, the School Committee received from the Superintendent a communication "recommending the establishment of a Central Clerical High School, in order to make the instruction in commercial branches in high schools more effective."<sup>1</sup>

The Superintendent proposed that the requirements for admission should be one or more years of high school instruction as might be determined later, this "instruction to be devoted to sound training in subjects essential to success in clerical lines."<sup>2</sup> He recommended that the Central Clerical High School be in session from nine until five o'clock during twelve months in the year, and that no fixed general course be established, but that each pupil be given highly specialized work in the lines chosen, and be advanced as rapidly as his ability permitted. Thus graduation from the school would depend upon the attainment of a high degree of proficiency in certain specified subjects, and not upon length of attendance.

The Superintendent was of the opinion that such a school would enable many pupils studying bookkeeping and stenography in the general high schools to secure a degree of pro-

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, February 7, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



iciency that would aid them to obtain positions of greater importance and at higher salaries than they could otherwise secure. The establishment of such a school also would tend to relieve to some extent the overcrowding in high schools, and it was probable that the saving in the cost of instructing these pupils in high schools would in a large measure, if not entirely, counterbalance the cost of the new school.

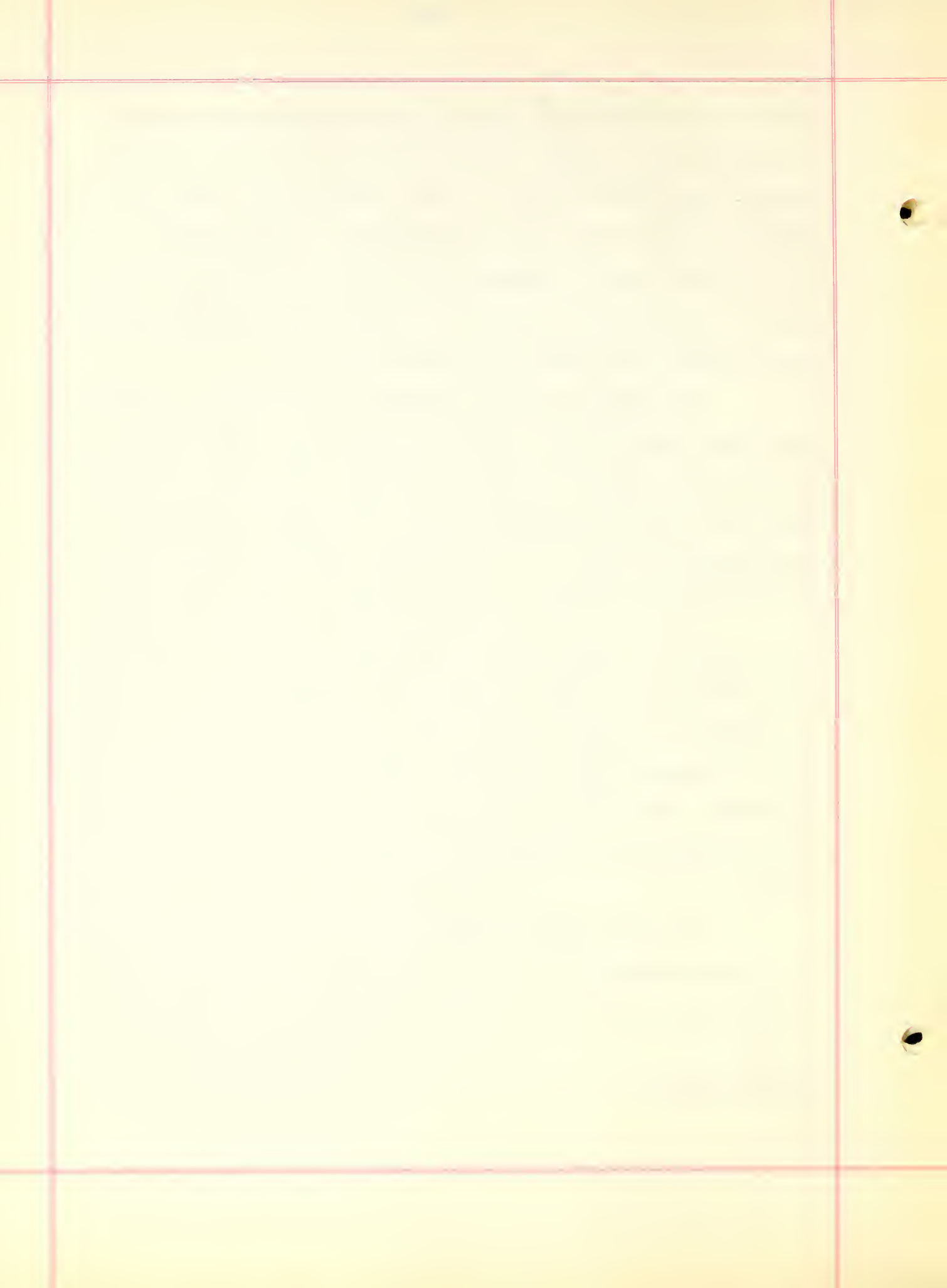
The result of this communication was that the School Committee ordered that a Central Clerical High School be established to begin July 11, 1910; but four months later the order was rescinded because of lack of funds.

Establishment of the  
Boston Clerical School

Four years later the embodiment of this attempt to found a clerical high school was found in the establishment of the Boston Clerical School for girls.<sup>1</sup> To meet the specific needs of girls who desired to prepare intensively for office service the Boston Clerical School was established in May and opened in September, 1914. Four rooms, including one of unusual size, were set apart in the Roxbury High School for the Clerical School.

The plan designed embodied the principles recommended by the superintendent with regard to the distinction between liberal and vocational training, as well as other procedure

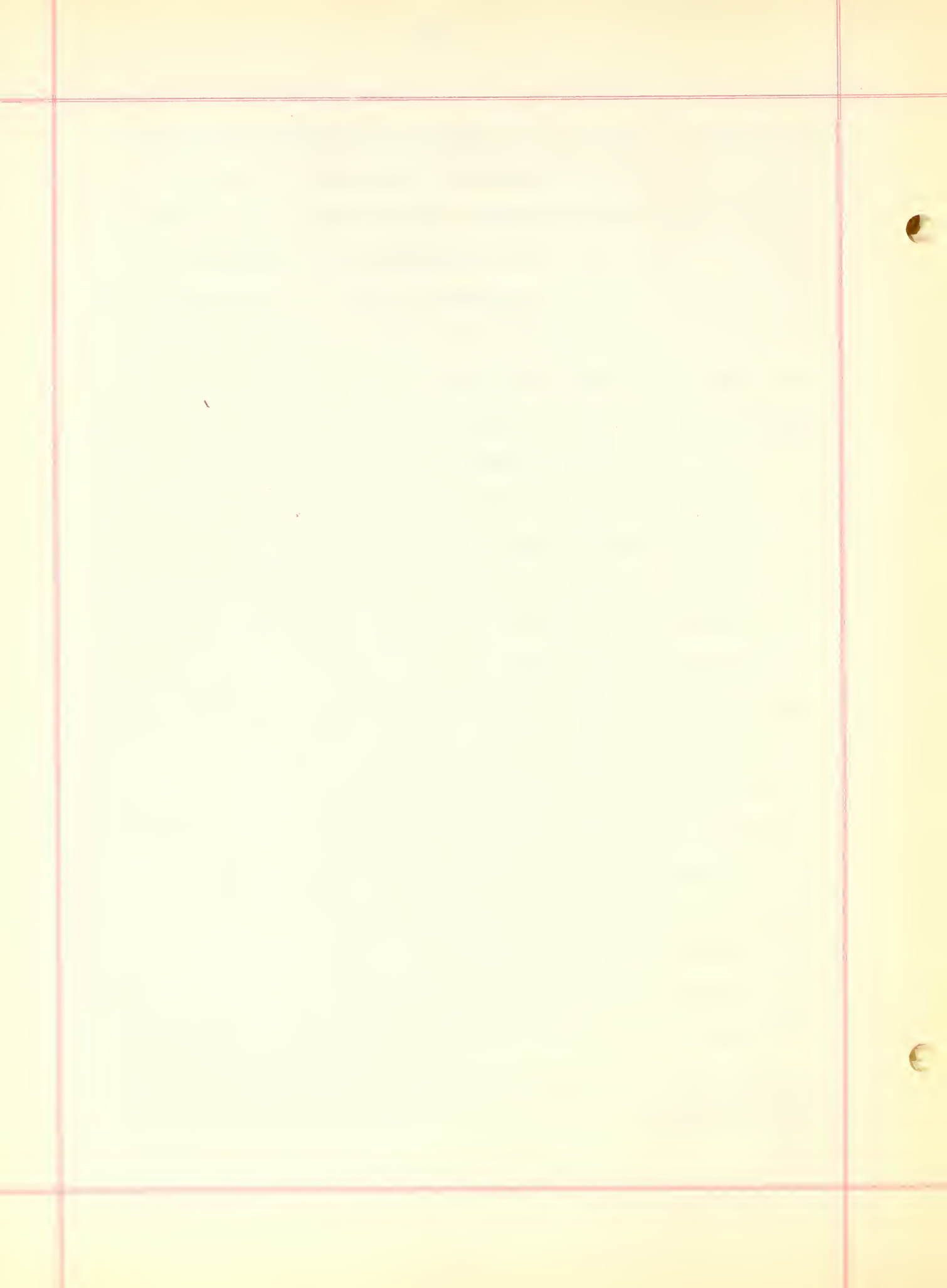
<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, May 18, 1914.



commended as proper in the creation of special commercial schools. This special school was designed to round out a system of commercial education which already comprised commercial courses for boys and girls in general high schools and a special high school of commerce for boys. The new school was intended to serve primarily the needs of girls by offering specialized and intensified training in clerical vocations.

First Course When the school opened, two courses of study of Study were offered: one, a course for office service, available for girls who had completed successfully two years of high school work, not necessarily commercial in character, the course to consist of bookkeeping, office practice, commercial arithmetic, commercial law, penmanship and business English; the other, a course for stenography and higher clerical work, available for girls who, successfully completed three years of high school work, without designation of kind, the course to consist of shorthand, typewriting, penmanship, business arithmetic, English, bookkeeping, political geography and office practice.<sup>1</sup> It was expected that some students with preliminary commercial training in other schools would complete the work in half a year, others of slower rate of achievement in a year or even longer. There were about ninety pupils enrolled the first year.

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, May 18, 1914.



Course for High  
School Graduates

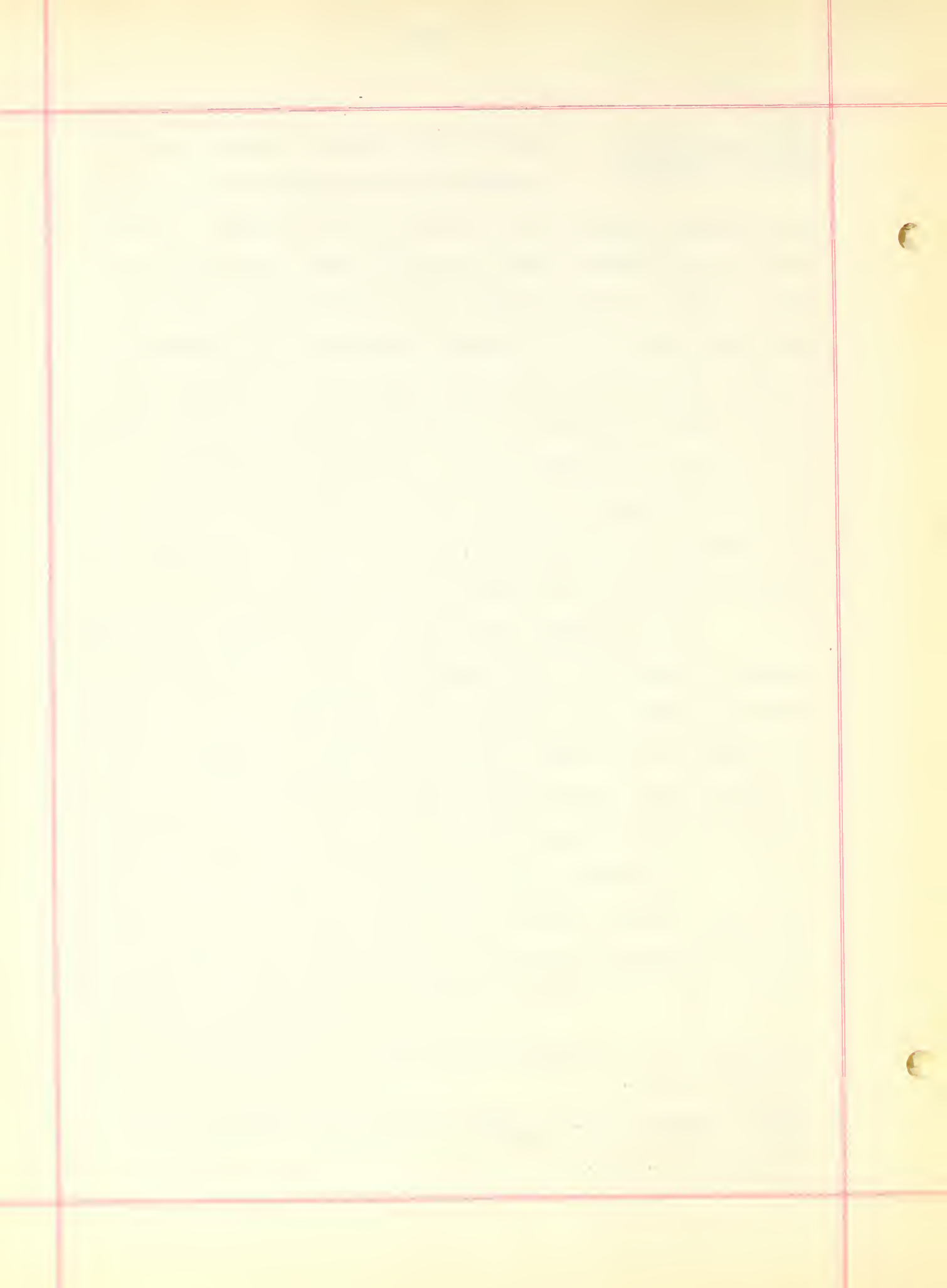
A year later, 1915, in addition to the two courses authorized, courses open to high school graduates were established as follows: "A business and accounting course for young women who wish to prepare to enter similar fields, and a secretarial course for young women who wish to prepare themselves for secretarial work."<sup>1</sup> College graduates were admitted upon special action of the school committee. The course consisted of the following subjects: For secretaries, stenography, typewriting, business correspondence, office practice, commercial procedure; for bookkeepers, bookkeeping, use of office machinery, filing devices, commercial arithmetic, commercial law.

The students in each of the above courses advanced as rapidly as their progress permitted, and they were given certificates when they satisfactorily completed the courses without regard to the length of time required for completion. In 1925, it was reported that "most students complete the work in from one and one-half to two years."<sup>2</sup>

In offering the course for high school graduates the Boston Clerical School fulfilled its highest mission in making the greatest possible contribution to commercial education. It is not of the character of a post graduate course

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, March 22, 1915.

<sup>2</sup>School Document No. 9, 1925, "Report of a Survey of the Boston Public School System by a Council of Classroom Teachers," p. 121.



but an intensive business course, taking students who have completed their high school education in any high school and giving them technical training until they are thoroughly well qualified. At the time the school was instituted a great many students who took the general high school or commercial high school course found themselves without a position at the close of their course. They also found themselves in need of business education, thus many of them went to business colleges to get the technical training. Many others continued through their high school course and took their specialized training afterwards.

It was hardly expected that if the Clerical School was confined to those who were willing to leave the other high schools at the end of the second or third year that it would ever meet a large need. It was possible that high schools would not willingly give up their good students at a middle period in their education. Consideration was given to the students in that they also were unwilling to transfer from one high school to another or a school of a different type, but all high schools would gladly recommend their students upon graduation to go to a specialized public school where they could train for life occupation. Those students who took the commercial course in the ordinary high school would be somewhat at an advantage in the intensive after-high-school course and the more competent ones could probably go to positions without the additional course. In secretarial work



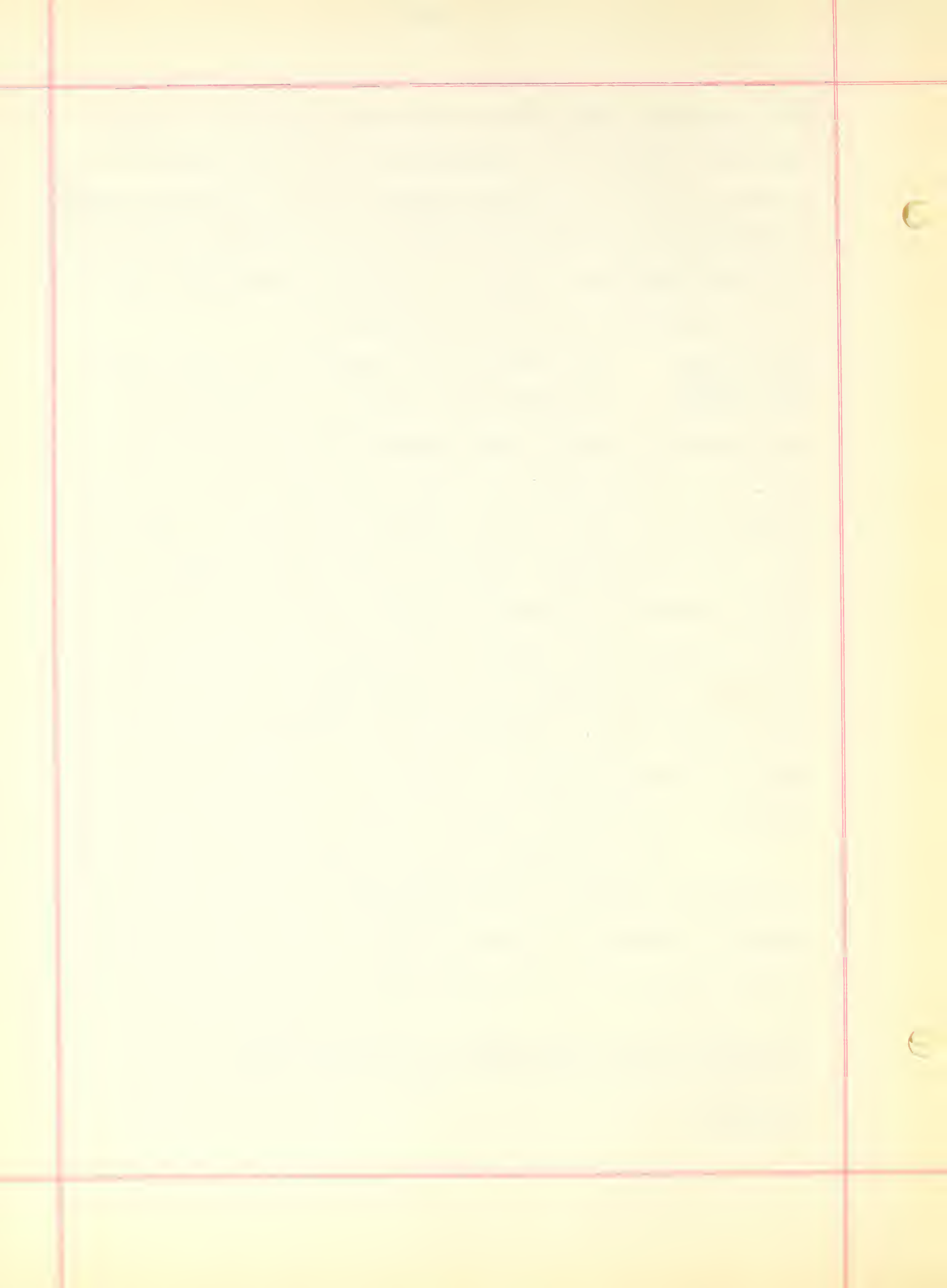
the awards were high and well worth the extra years of preparation. It was well demonstrated in the investigations conducted in 1914 by the Women's Educational and Industrial Union<sup>1</sup> and the Chamber of Commerce<sup>2</sup> that next to teaching, stenography and secretarial work offered to capable and educated women the most attractions of any of the occupations.

**Aims of the Boston Clerical School**            The purpose of the school is to make better stenographers, typists, accountants and business office clerks. The standard for the girls is set high. No one may begin the course unless she has first completed two full years in the ordinary high school. Once she is in she must average ninety per cent in all branches. The special system of instruction enables a girl to advance as fast as her abilities permit. Attainments are not measured by length of attendance but by proficiency as shown in speed and accuracy tests. Punctuality and persistence count for much in the rapid advance of students.

**Methods**            The clerical school attempts no liberal training. The applicants for the various courses come with an academic equipment, which presumably constitutes the essential elements of general education necessary for successful entrance into the specialized work in the vocation

<sup>1</sup>The Public Schools and Women in Office Service, Women's Industrial Union, Department of Research, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>A Workable Classification of Office Jobs, Boston Chamber of Commerce.



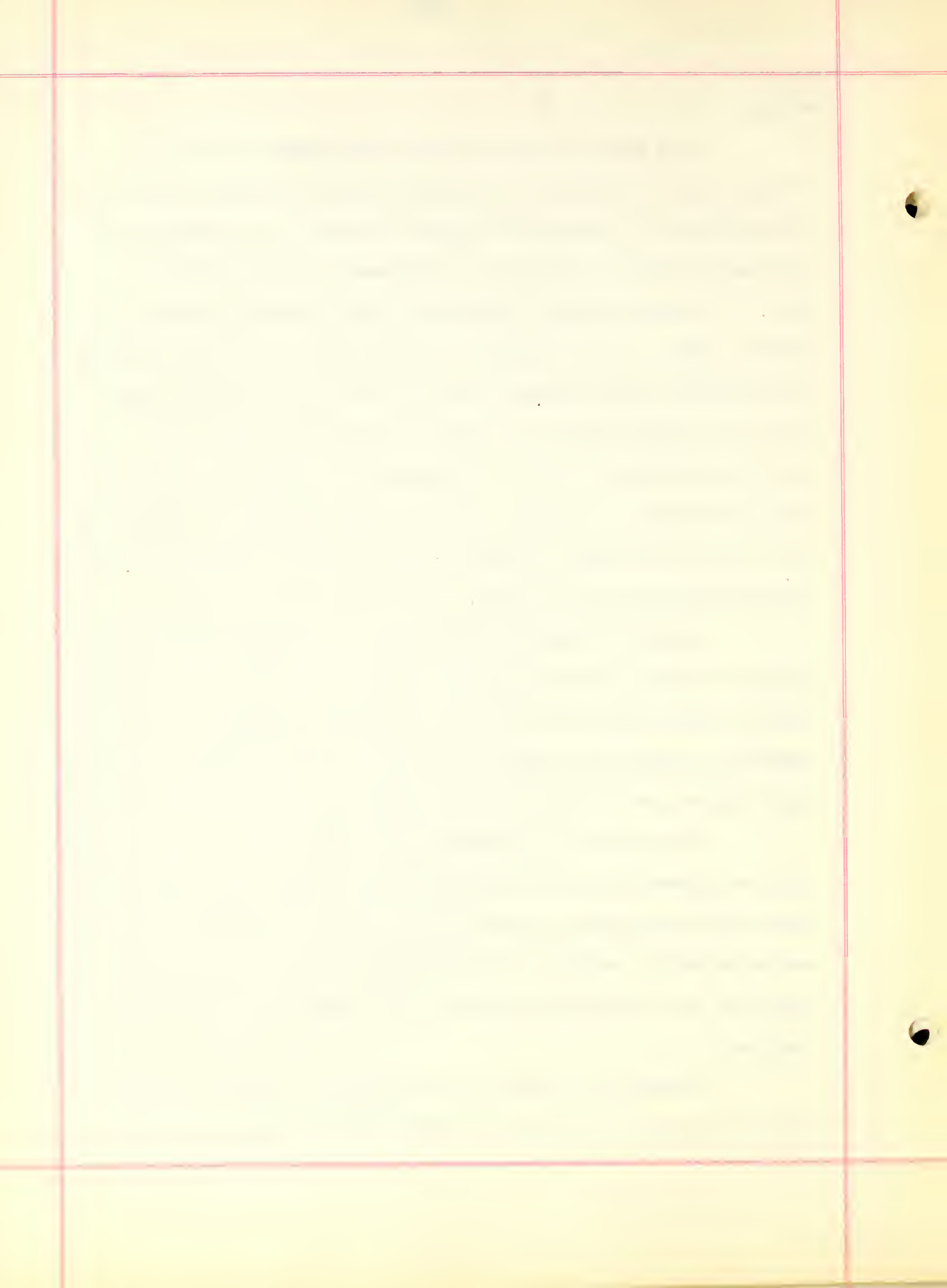
sought.

The school has a business department or set of offices, with counters, iron grill work and other fixtures. One section is a wholesale office, another is a jobbing and commission house, another is a railroad office, another a bank. In each, through cooperation with business schools in various parts of the country, the girls actually buy and sell commodities, handle checks and invoices and keep the books. The pupil enters first as a clerk and works through the various positions to that of a manager, and then is promoted from one office to another. This method enables a student to learn how to transact business other than the routine of the ordinary bookkeeper or clerk.

A set of books illustrating a system for business offices is kept and such special features as the use of modern posting and bookkeeping, billing machines, calculating machines, bookkeeping machines, filing systems, card and loose leaf ledgers are illustrated and used in the offices.

The school is equipped with modern office appliances, such as typewriters of standard makes, filing cabinets, by which eight different systems of filing can be used, adding and calculating machines, bookkeeping machines, billing machines, multigraphing machines, and card and loose-leaf ledgers.

Practice is given the students in actual work connected with the department of educational investigation and



measurement, and also as clerical assistants in elementary schools.

Every year a considerable number of young women who complete the academic, normal, or general curriculum of the high schools find it necessary or desirable to enter business instead of continuing along the lines of their original aims. The commercial field offers little to those without specialized training, so these girls are either obliged to accept employment in the humblest capacity with consequent tedious promotion, or to take technical training for business in some private school. These conditions are not peculiar to Boston for they exist in all the cities, but Boston is the only city that made ample public school provision for the reshaping of the educational equipment of these young people by providing them with the opportunities of a training for business meant to fit them for the higher types of office positions, and to enhance their promotional possibilities during employment.

Also, it was known that many graduates of the high school commercial curriculum, for one reason or another, were not sufficiently skilled to render acceptable service or a service equal to the measure that might be expected from their natural ability, unless it were augmented by further training adapted to their individual needs.

Besides, there were some who while completing two or three years in high school preferred to devote themselves to intensive training for business.



Present Course of Study      To meet these demands the Boston Clerical School now offers four courses: business, shorthand, secretarial, and accountancy.

The business curriculum, open to pupils who have completed at least two full years above the eighth grade, prepares those who desire a thorough training for bookkeeping and general office employment or a good foundation for advanced work in accounting. It contains bookkeeping, business arithmetic, business English, commercial law, office practice, penmanship, rapid calculation, spelling. The minimum admission requirement is sixty points. In this department a set of banks and offices is operated by the pupils, in which orders, merchandise, invoices, correspondence, and settlements are sent to and received from students of several schools in distant cities, through the medium of the United States mail.

The shorthand curriculum, open to pupils who have completed at least three full years above the eighth grade, and to pupils who have completed the business curriculum, prepares for general stenographic positions and embraces all the subjects necessary to the equipment of a good business stenographer. It contains shorthand, typewriting, business English, spelling, penmanship, rapid calculation, and office training. The minimum admission requirement is eighty points.

The secretarial curriculum, open to four-year high-school graduates and women of higher education, is intended to provide a training that not only fits for the most exacting

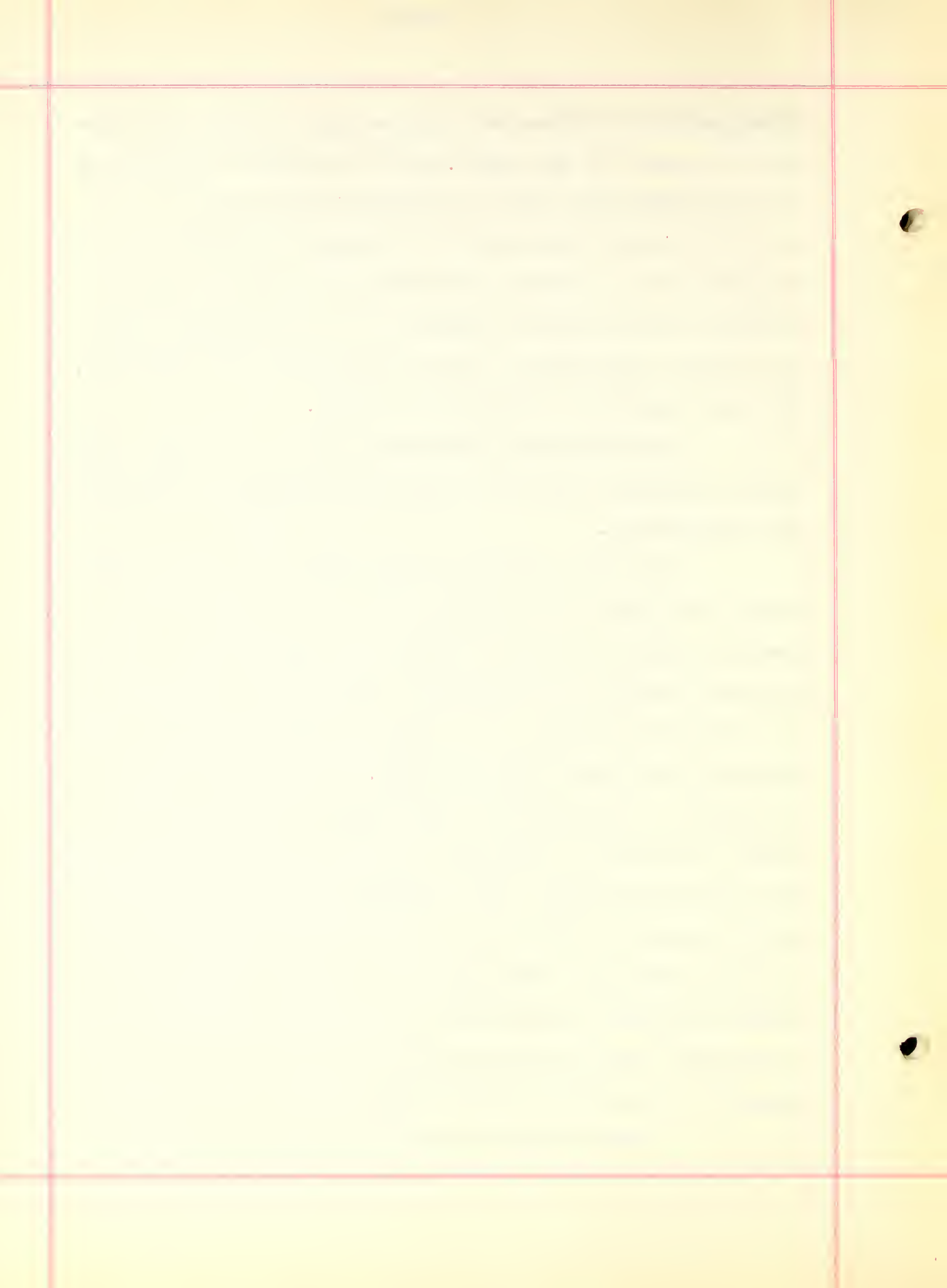


stenographic positions, but includes such studies and training as prepare for the wider and more important functions of the secretary where there are greater responsibilities and opportunities for initiative. It contains in addition to the subjects of the shorthand curriculum, secretarial accounts, business correspondence, commercial law, economics, lectures on business organization, office management, and psychology. The time required is two years or longer.

The accountancy curriculum, open to four-year high-school graduates, trains for responsible positions in accounting and auditing.

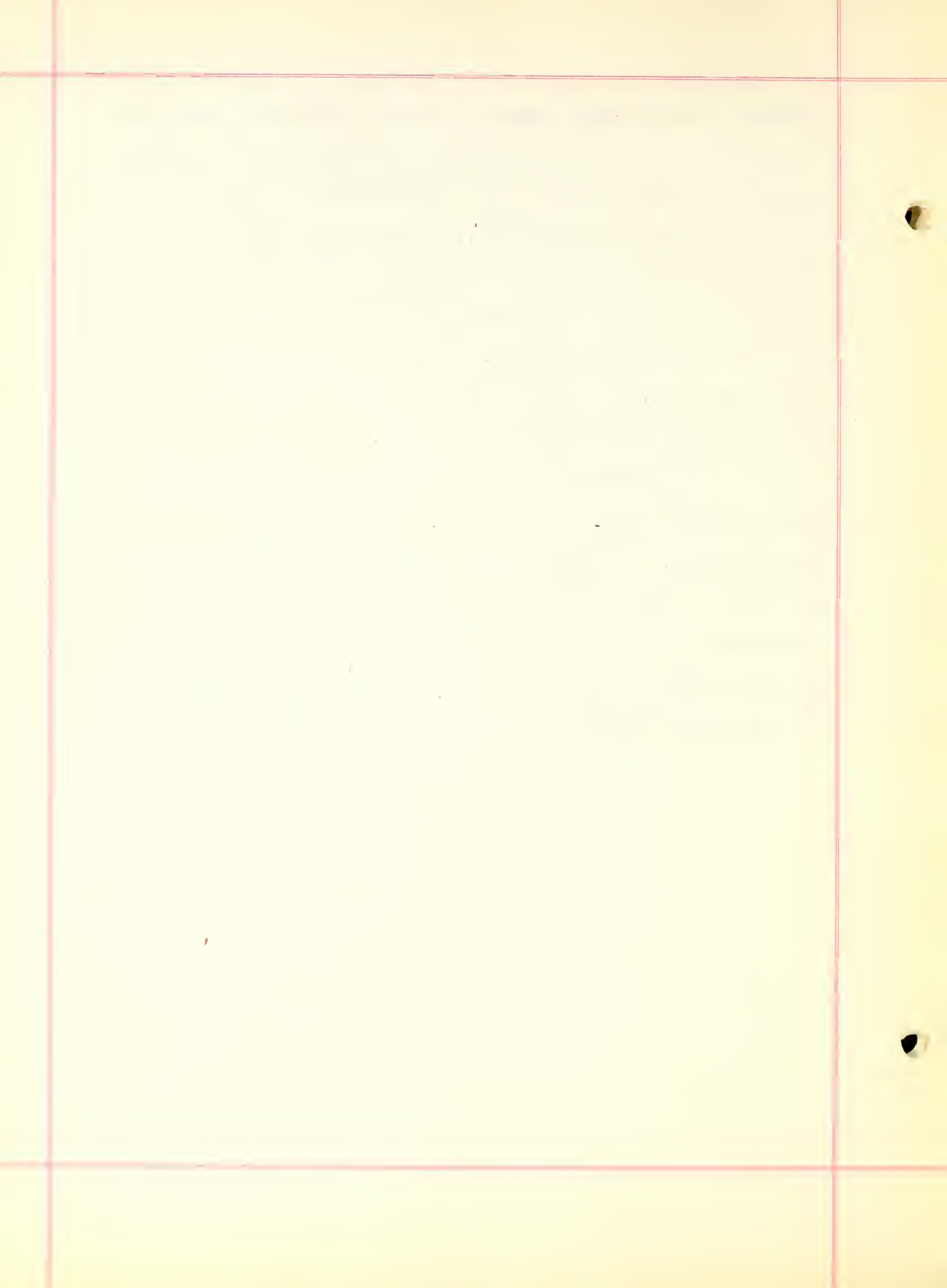
Since the progress of each pupil is largely individual, the length of time required for completion of any group of subjects cannot be definitely predicted, as the educational foundation of the pupil, her ability, application, and regular attendance are important factors in determining when she will finish any curriculum. The pupils find encouragement and assistance towards rapid advancement, and credit is given for any similar phase of work that previously may have been learned. The approximate time required for completion applies to those who have not studied the subjects of these curricula: Business, a little more than a school year; shorthand, a school year; secretarial, two school years; accountancy, two and one-half school years.

Summary        The Boston Clerical School offers to girls of Boston without expense to them, courses pre-



paratory to the higher types of office positions, where the responsibilities and requirements demand unusual character, capability, and training. To a considerable extent, the pupil's progress is individual. Pupils may enter at various times during the year with almost equal advantage and are graduated when the work of a particular course is completed, regardless of the time of the year. Formal commencement exercises are usually held in April. For the school year ending June 30, 1933 the total registration was 1,485.

Established as a municipal business college, the Boston Clerical School has shown continuous growth since its establishment. Like all other educational institutions the standards of the school have been raised since 1914. This is attested by the fact that nearly all the young women attending are high school graduates of an approved high school. The institution has veritably become a junior college.



## EVENING COMMERCIAL HIGH SCHOOLS

First Commer-  
cial Subjects

The program of studies at the Evening High School for the session of 1875-76 included three commercial subjects: Elementary Bookkeeping; Advanced Bookkeeping, (the requirements for entrance to this class being "some acquaintance with bookkeeping by double entry";<sup>1</sup>) and Commercial Arithmetic.

By 1895 the list of standard subjects of the curriculum for the Evening High School included phonography and bookkeeping. "The standard in arithmetic was raised, and more study was given to what is commonly called commercial arithmetic."<sup>2</sup>

By 1901 the stipulation was made that those who desired "to enter the class in typewriting must be acquainted with shorthand."<sup>3</sup>

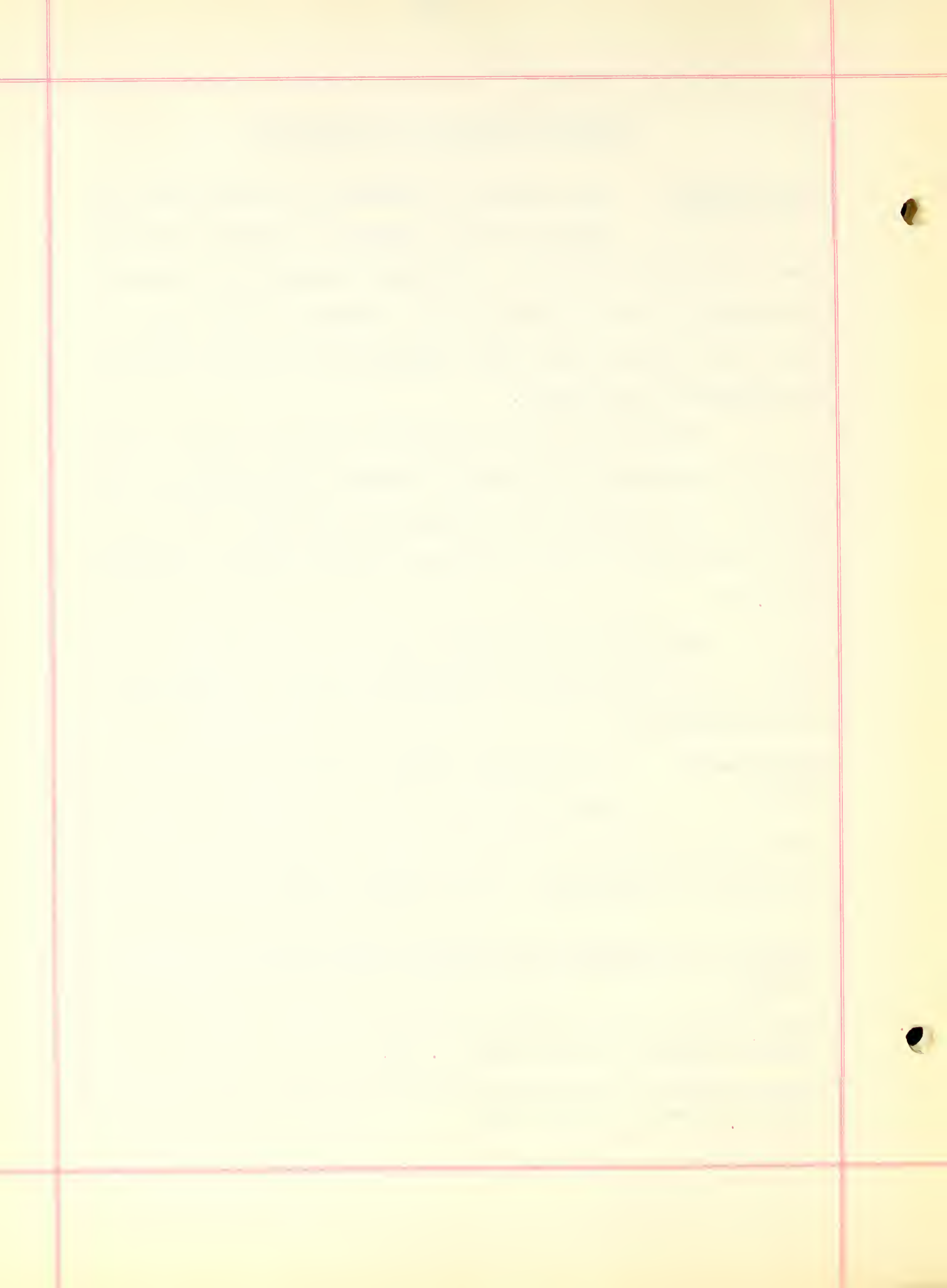
Salesmanship  
Course

In September, 1906, an order was passed by the Board providing that the class in salesmanship, which had previously been maintained by a number of Boston merchants, be continued in the Sigelow Evening School at the

<sup>1</sup>Report of the Committee on Evening Schools, 1876, Programme of Studies at the Evening High School for the Session of 1875-76, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup>Annual Report of the School Committee, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 15, 1895, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup>Annual Report of the School Committee, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 15, 1901.

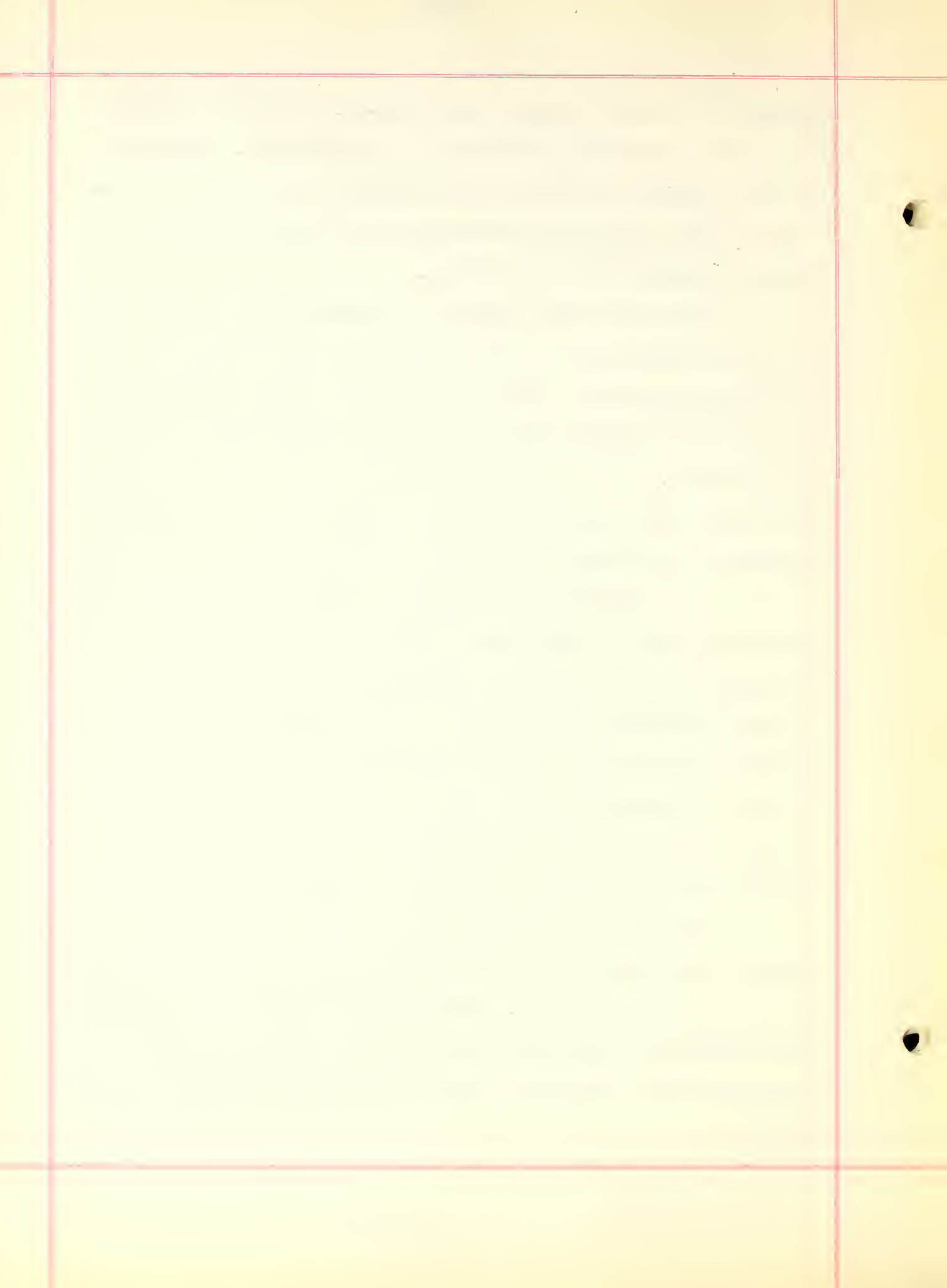


expense of the city for the term 1906-07. A course covering twenty-four nights was organized by the principal. Following the plan pursued in former years, lectures were given by members of firms and by superintendents employed by some of the leading business houses of Boston.

These lectures treated of various phases of the subject of salesmanship, and were given under such titles as "Old and New Salesmanship", "Success", "Store Policy", "Essentials to Successful Salesmanship", and "How to Handle Various Types of Customers". At the close of each talk the pupils of the class were given opportunity to ask questions, which were answered on the basis of practical experience.

The demonstration lesson alternating with the lectures were given by salespeople sent by various business firms interested in the course, fully equipped with various lines of goods and accompanied by one or more assistants, who impersonated the different sorts of customers. Talks were given on the facts concerning the manufacture of such textiles as linens, woolens, and gloves; and the broader subjects of commercial relations of New England to Europe, and commercial training.

The class consisted of fifty regular and many occasional attendants, representing forty-eight different stores, both wholesale and retail. Certificates were granted to those whose attendance had been regular and their names were forwarded to their employers, thus calling attention to ambitious clerks.



Evening Commercial  
High Schools

The evening high schools constantly grew in numbers and in influence and their growth was accompanied by a distinct change in character. In 1910 the evening high schools, which numbered five, were changed, with the exception of the Central Evening High School, from general high schools to commercial high schools. The Central Evening High School offered both academic and commercial subjects until 1924 when it became a general high school with emphasis on academic subjects.

Revised  
Course, 1912

The revised course in 1912 of the Evening Commercial High School included Bookkeeping I, II, and III; Business Organization and Salesmanship; Civil Service; Commerce and Industry; Commercial Arithmetic; Commercial Law; English Composition I, and II; Literature I, II, and III; Merchandise; Penmanship I, and II; Phonography I, II, and III; and Typewriting I, and II.<sup>1</sup> Diplomas were awarded to pupils who had won twenty-four diploma points, which usually required attendance at school two or three evenings a week for four years.

The director of the night school reported in 1913 that the commercial high school course was the most largely attended, many applying for this course without the necessary qualifications. "They look upon stenography and bookkeeping

<sup>1</sup>Evening Commercial High School Revised Course, Boston Public Schools, 1912.

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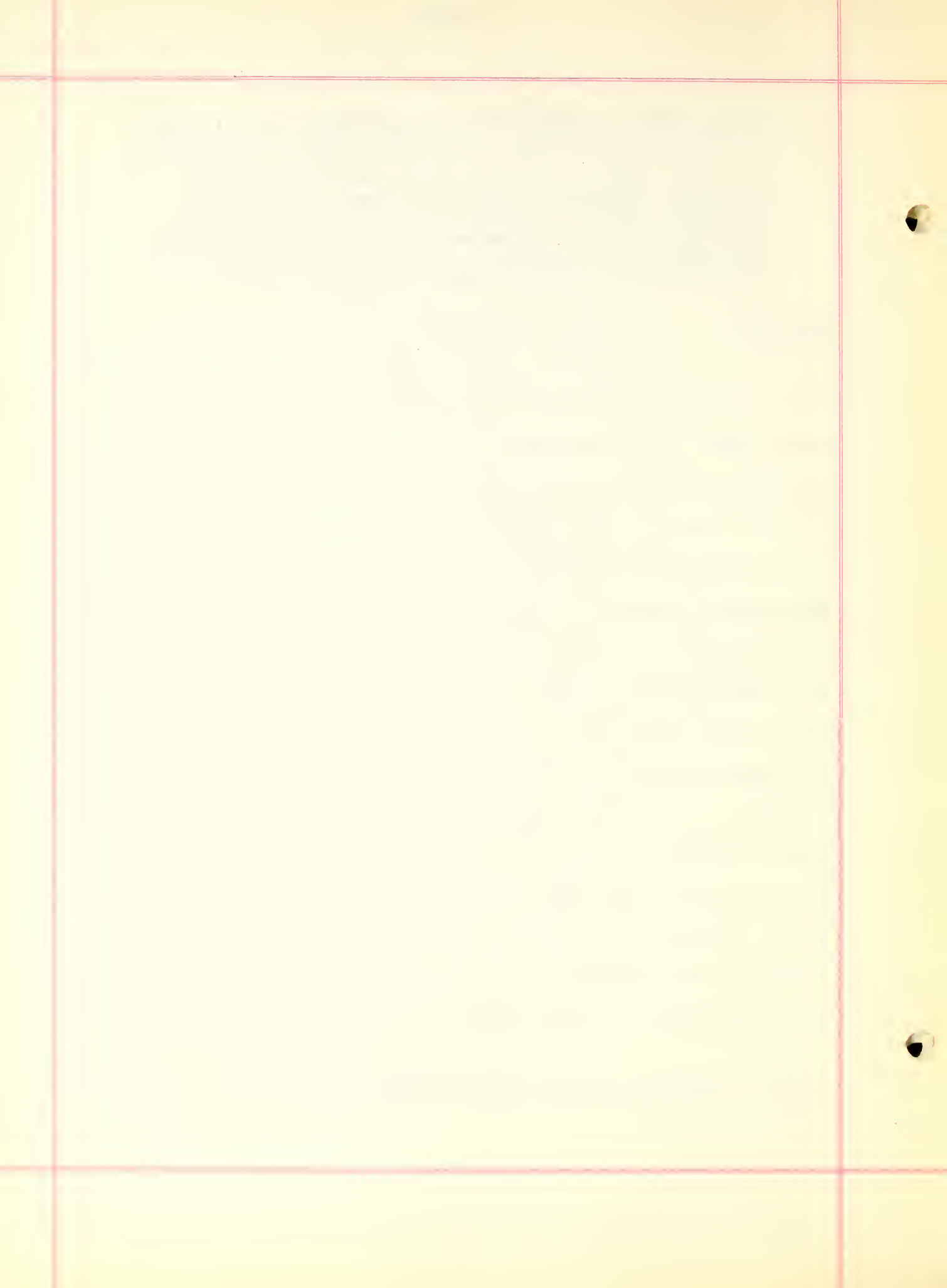
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as all that is essential to a business career, when in fact these subjects are hardly more than incidental. Not until, with the help of business men and an analysis of the elements of success in commercial pursuits, suitable courses have been devised and developed will our schools meet the need of those entering business. Courses in business organization, salesmanship, merchandise and advertising have been added, but this simply marks a beginning."<sup>1</sup>

Intensive Courses      In 1916 the commercial character of these schools was further intensified, and specialized commercial courses with definite requirements for graduation were authorized. In consequence of the changed character of the evening high schools the course of study was revised in keeping with the change in the needs of the community. The revised course of study offered pupils an opportunity to attempt specialized commercial courses with a view to receiving intensive training for particular types of commercial work. Among the specialized curricula offered were the secretarial curriculum, which emphasized a mastery of phonography and typewriting; the accountancy curriculum, which included the principles and practices of advanced bookkeeping; the merchandising curriculum, which included principles of business organization, selling and service to customers; and the office practice curriculum, which included the principles and methods of adjusting one's self to modern business office conditions, and familiarity with the principles of filing systems and labor-saving routines and

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 10, 1913, "Evening Courses," p. 102.



devices. Commercial Spanish was authorized as a subject in all evening high schools in 1917, and in 1921 the subject of American government was authorized.

Present Curriculum            A thorough testing of these curricula in the class rooms for seven years showed the need of certain modifications in courses and graduation requirements.

The present curriculum is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

"Diplomas are granted in each of the following courses: Accountancy Course, Merchandising Course, Office Practice Course, Secretarial Course, General Commercial Course, General Academic Course.

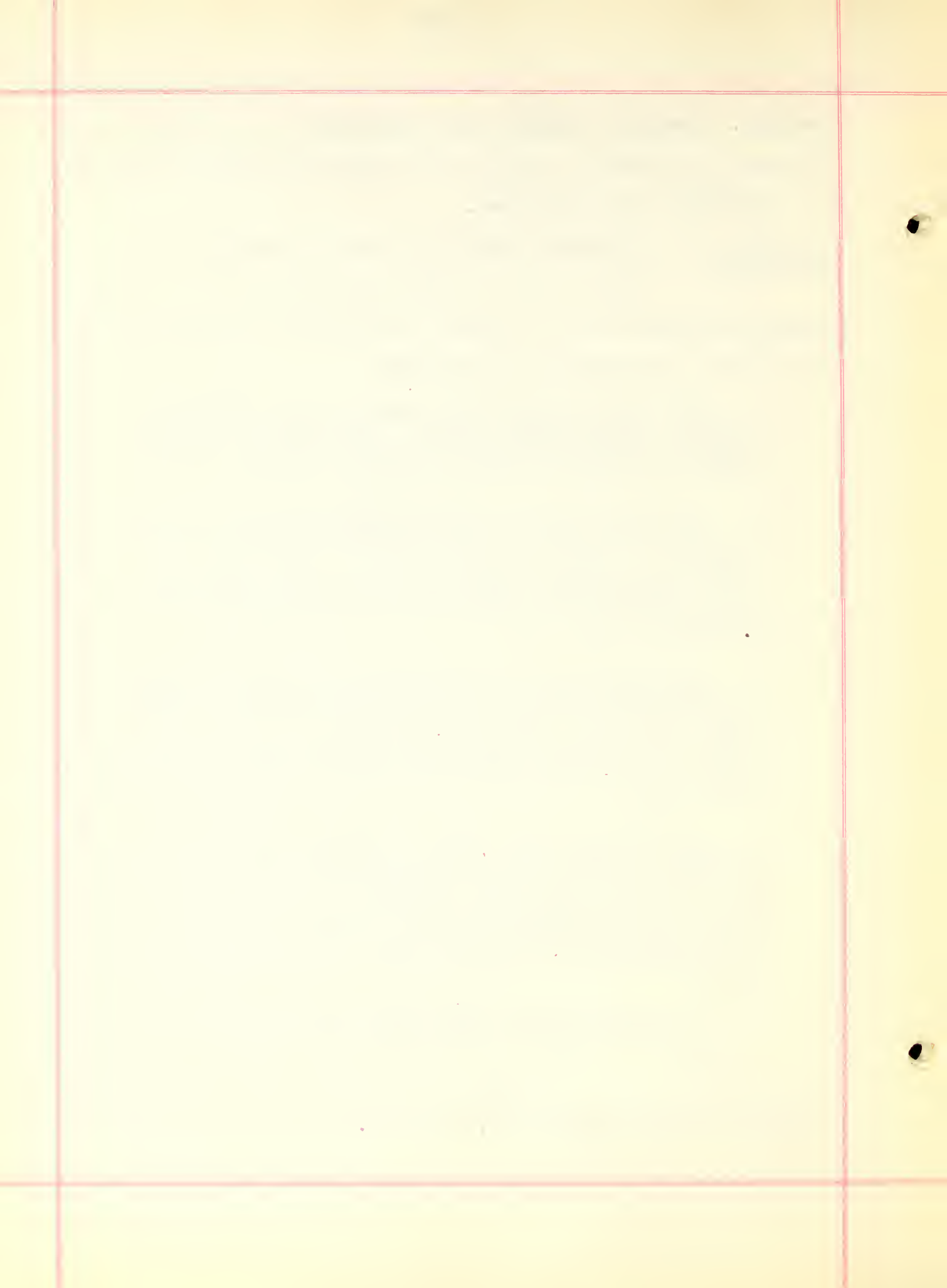
"A diploma in the Accountancy Course is awarded to pupils who have won three diploma points in Bookkeeping III and twenty-one diploma points in the following subjects: Bookkeeping I, II; Civil Service; Commerce and Industry; Commercial Arithmetic; Commercial Law; English I, II, III; Penmanship; Spanish I, II.

"A diploma in the Merchandising Course is awarded to pupils who have won three diploma points in Merchandising and twenty-one diploma points in the following subjects: Advertising; Civil Service; Commerce and Industry; Commercial Arithmetic; Commercial Law; Economics; English I, II, III; Penmanship; Spanish I, II.

"A diploma in the Office Practice Course is awarded to pupils who have won three diploma points in Office Practice and twenty-one diploma points in the following subjects: Bookkeeping I, II, III; Civil Service; Commercial Arithmetic; Commercial Law; Economics; English I, II, III; Penmanship; Phonography I, II, III; Spanish I, II; Typewriting I, II.

"A diploma in the Secretarial Course is awarded to pupils who have won three diploma points in Pho-

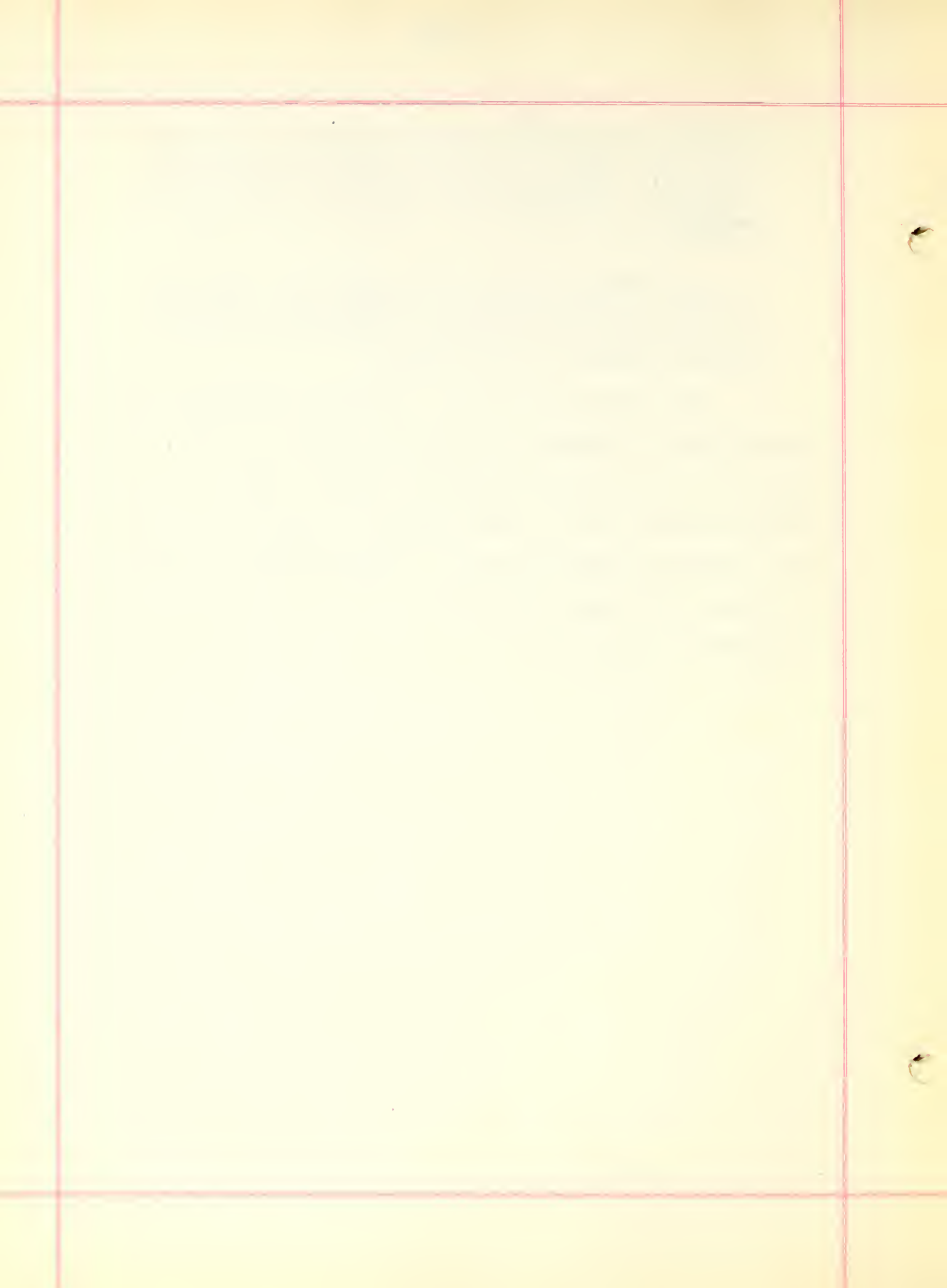
<sup>1</sup>A Course of Study for the Evening High Schools, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 12, 1924.



nography III and three diploma points in Typewriting II and eighteen diploma points in the following subjects: Advertising; Civil Service; Commercial Arithmetic; Commercial Law; English I, II, III; Penmanship; Phonography I, II; Spanish I, II; Typewriting I.

"A diploma in the General Commercial Course is awarded to pupils unable to qualify for a diploma in the above-named courses who have won twenty-four diploma points in the subjects authorized in the evening commercial high schools."

The evening high school, started in 1869 with one, numbered five in 1910-11, and are now eleven in number. The number of pupils pursuing so-called cultural subjects is comparatively small, most of them taking the academic subjects with a strictly vocational view. In other words, the evening high schools are today vocational schools, with the emphasis on commercial subjects.



## COOPERATIVE COURSES IN SALESMANSHIP

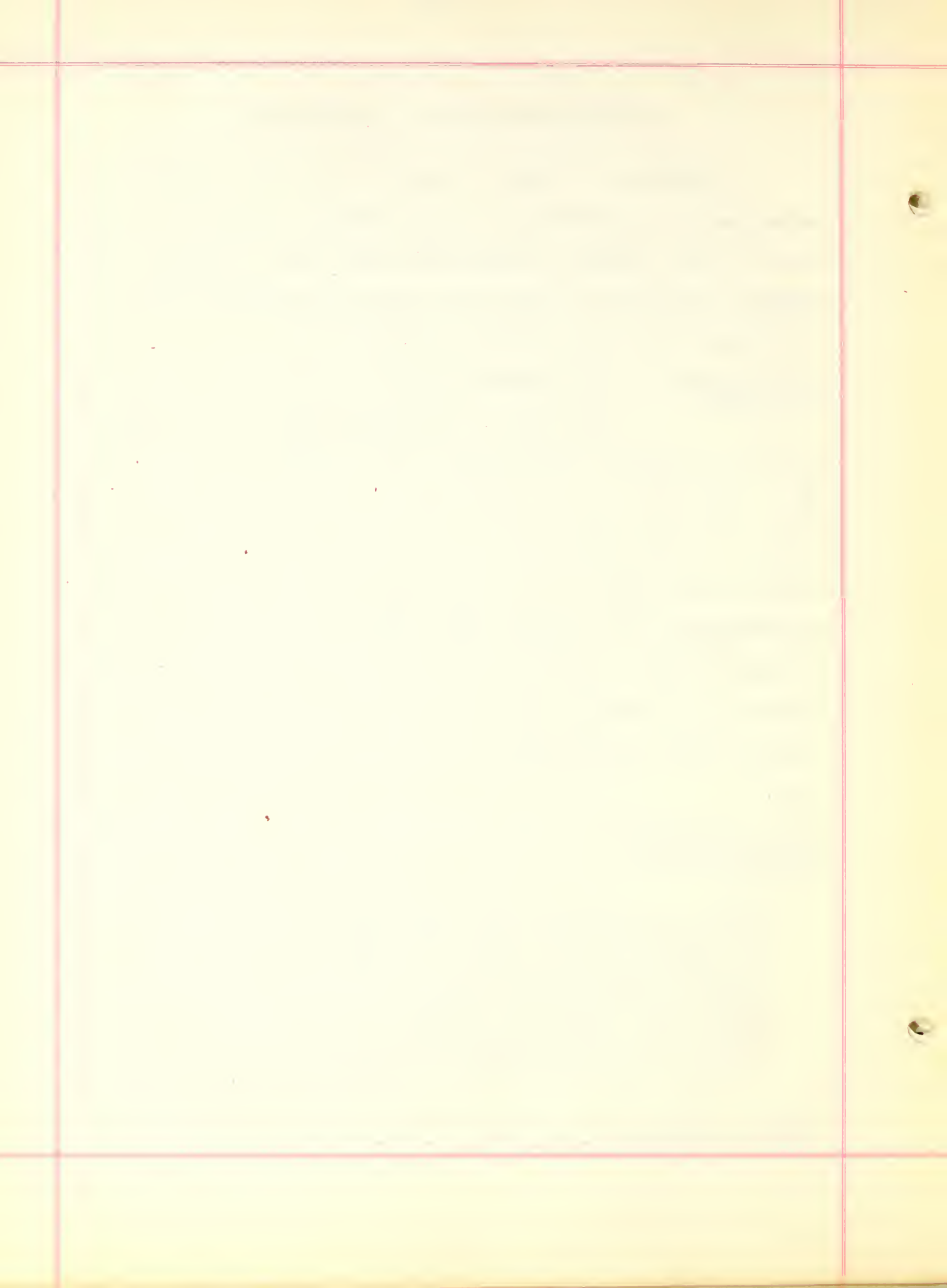
Previous to 1913, in order to give the students in salesmanship an opportunity to get practical training in commercial work, students occasionally were sent to stores. The interest resulting was such as to show the possibilities of the schools using the stores as laboratories.

Establishment of Courses      The School Committee secured the services of the head of a private school of salesmanship in Boston, who had trained most of the teachers of salesmanship. She was to act as coordinator between school and store, to see that the school course was the best possible, that the teachers were adequately trained, and that the stores provided opportunities for practice under skilled supervision. While a class of store employees were receiving instruction in the continuation school, their places were to be taken by the students from the high schools who would thus get store practice.

Need of Cooperation Between Business and School      Mr. Thompson, Superintendent of Schools, wrote in 1914 "that commercial edu-

cation as practised quite generally to-day shows points of serious discrepancy between the aim of the school and the needs of the business house. Generally speaking, the school emphasizes one thing and business emphasizes a totally different thing. Commercial education to-day is clerical, and business competitive. The school is turning out stenographers and bookkeepers, while business needs sales people and submanagers."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 10, 1913, p. 95.



Organization  
of Courses

In 1914, courses in salesmanship for girls of the senior class were organized in nine of the high schools. An arrangement was effected with twelve of the leading stores whereby girls could get store experience on Saturdays, Mondays, and holidays. The course of study included not only salesmanship, but also textiles, color and design, commercial arithmetic, and English. During the first year there were about 300 girls enrolled. The placing of so many students and the follow-up work was so important and arduous that an assistant coordinator was hired.

In one year the teaching of salesmanship in high and continuation schools had been extended until it embraced classes in nine high schools, in six stores and in both the LaGrange and the Boylston street buildings of the continuation school. Courses were offered in the Brighton, Charlestown, Dorchester, East Boston, Girls', Practical Arts, Roxbury, South Boston, and West Roxbury high schools. Three groups of girls 14 to 16 years of age who were at work in small stores scattered over the city met at 48 Boylston street for instruction twice a week. There were nine such classes and they assembled in their respective stores for instruction twice a week. There was one store in which two classes of girls 16 to 21 years of age who were members of the voluntary continuation school were given instruction four times a week. These store groups were all organized and taught as a part of the continuation school. In addition there was one group of salesmanship



pupils from miscellaneous sources that met in the continuation school at 25 La Grange street.

In 1915 the high school course was elective and was limited to seniors, except in the Girls' and Roxbury high schools, where it was offered in both the junior and senior years. In general, seven points were credited toward a diploma for the satisfactory completion of a year's work: three for salesmanship and general store subjects, three for the study of textiles and one for color and design as applied to clothing, furnishings, and other materials. No textbooks were used. Special reading and the study of merchandise papers together with homework on textile samples were required. The number of stores cooperating had increased to twenty and actual work was carried out on Saturdays, Mondays and during vacation periods. Pupils who were able to maintain an "A" or "B" grade in school were allowed to go to the stores for practice work on Mondays during school hours.

Content of Course                      Cooperation between school and store was stimulated by the follow-up work of the teachers, who observed pupils while at work in the stores. The value of store practice was enhanced by the class discussion of principles of salesmanship learned through actual practice. Emphasis was placed upon the value of the knowledge received from "doing something" and from the application of their knowledge of arithmetic and English to business use. The course pursued in high school was as follows:



## I. Salesmanship (3 points)

## a. General Salesmanship subjects.

Department store organization and system.  
Demonstration in selling in class with class criticism.

Class conference on important salesmanship subjects:  
care of stock; service; waste in business, etc.

Practical experience in stores.

Store experience discussions; application of basal principles.

Individual conferences as a result of teachers' follow-up work.

## b. Arithmetic

Sales slip practice and store system.

Drill in addition, multiplication, fractions, percentage.

Business forms.

## c. Economics

Meaning of capital and wages.

Relation of expenditure to income.

The spending of money.

The saving of money.

## d. Business Ethics

Relation of conduct, hygiene, clothing, recreation and use of leisure time to a business position.

## II. Textiles (3 points)

Intensive study of fibers: Wool, silk, cotton, linen.

Manufacture--factory visits.

Fabrics.

Transportation and industrial conditions in relation to cost.

## III. Color and design (1 point)

As applied to clothing, furnishings and other merchandise exhibits; display.



Store Practice During the year 1915 the stores afforded pupils in salesmanship classes an extended opportunity for practice. The pupils were paid at rates varying from \$0.75 to \$1.50 a day according to the hours and the kind of work in which they were engaged. The following table for the year 1915 shows the store practice of high school pupils for the year:

High School	No. of Girls in Class	No. of Days' Practice	Amount of Money Earned
Brighton	14	109	141.75
Charlestown	12	90	127.25
Dorchester	35	447	519.
East Boston	17	290	423.75
Girls' High (Seniors)	52	873	1,050.
Girls' High (Juniors)	63	407	514.
Practical Arts	35	175	131.25
Roxbury	32	426	479.
South Boston	17	210	276.50
West Roxbury	<u>17</u>	<u>282</u>	<u>350.50</u>
Total, 9 high schools	294	3,309	4,013.

Thus the ideal plan had its beginning.

"The proper economic and effective plan is for the two forces to unite, the school to teach related theory,--those aspects of business which can be organized into courses of instruction. Business on its side should guide and counsel the feature and offer the business house as a laboratory of practical experience. The business house cannot make the best and most permanent achievement with 'an-actual-school-in-the-business-house' any more than the school has been able to succeed with the idea of an 'actual-business-in-the-school' plan. Let us adopt the sounder principle of industrial education which might be stated as follows: 'Actual education in the shop and school'".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 10, 1913, p. 95.



Development        The development of this work in the city was so successful that it was an example to other cities, many of which added salesmanship to the curricula of their schools. The Federal Government issued a bulletin on department store education and many visitors inspected the work in the Boston high schools. As a result the subject was put into the schools of several large cities throughout the United States.

New Courses        By 1917 a new course outlined the work to cover two years, five periods weekly each year with five diploma points credit; also a minimum of 'fifteen days' (150 hours') practice in the third year and twenty-five days the fourth year for which credit was given.

In placing the girls after graduation the consideration of an adequate beginning wage became important. This was set in the past at \$8.50 a week, but by 1917 it was considered too low a minimum.

In 1921 a part-time, week-in and week-out retail selling course was started at the High School of Practical Arts in conjunction with the Retail Trade Board of the Chamber of Commerce. By this arrangement students worked one week in the store and attended school in the alternate week. Starting with a registration of forty pupils it increased to eighty-two in two years.

While the week-in and week-out course in retail selling featured salesmanship it also included English,



American history and citizenship, physical training, textiles, and color and design. Pupils were employed by the large stores and if they failed of employment, they reported to the high school for full-time instruction. The stores kept a record of attendance and reported the quality of the work done by the pupils. In order that their store experience might be an inclusive and continuing process, the pupils were routed through the stores according to the following schedule: Marking, 2 weeks; examining, 4 weeks; stock work, 2 weeks; cashiering, 4 weeks; selling, 8 weeks; total, 20 weeks in the store.

"The purpose of this course is not to take the place of academic instruction, but rather to afford a new opportunity for pupils who have a strong inclination to participate immediately in occupational activity. It is very often instrumental in keeping in school pupils, who, owing to a highly creditable desire to contribute to their own support, would otherwise leave school.

"Two objects have been kept clearly in view in preparing this course. First, the pupil must be thoroughly trained to do the tasks which fall to her lot as stock girls, examiner, marker, inspector or sales person. Most important of all, she must be trained in habits of promptness, neatness and accuracy. Absolute honesty must be held up to her as a sine qua non. Second, the pupil must be given the foundation on which to build if she rises to an executive position in the store. Such a pupil may fairly be expected to rise out of the ranks in the course of a few years, and any training offered by the high school should take this into account."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 17, "Report of the Commercial Coordinator," 1924, p. 176.



For two years, starting in 1921, the work in salesmanship was administered by a junior master on assignment from the High School of Commerce. In 1923 the School Committee created the rank of Commercial Coordinator, and made a permanent appointment to the position. The duties of the commercial coordinator were to have general supervision of the instruction in salesmanship in continuation and day high schools, except the High School of Commerce, and to act as coordinator between the schools and mercantile establishments in securing practice for the day high school pupils in salesmanship.

The salesmanship courses were then classified as (1) general salesmanship (also called merchandising) for the boys, (2) retail selling for the girls, (3) cooperative, week-in and week-out retail salesmanship, and (4) short-unit courses in salesmanship for store classes and for the continuation school. The first three were given in Grades XI and XII.

Agency of  
Cooperation

The merchants of Boston through the Retail Trade Board of the Chamber of Commerce cooperated with the school authorities for the success of the salesmanship courses. A committee of the personnel group from the stores and a committee of head masters from the high schools administered the courses under written agreement. Meetings were held frequently and problems discussed. The merchants appreciated the efforts made by the Boston schools



and gave the schools their time and knowledge of experience.

An outline of a course in Merchandising was prepared in 1924 under the leadership of Louis J. Fish, at that time Commercial Coordinator. In 1928 minor additions and rearrangements were made and the objectives in the teaching of merchandising stated as follows:<sup>1</sup>

1. To familiarize the student with the principles of salesmanship and to give practice in the application of these principles.
2. To fit the pupil for a gainful vocation.
3. To develop personality and character.
4. To cultivate high standards of ethics and help to apply them in personal and in business dealings.
5. To furnish fundamental training in store organization and management which will help the students to rise to a buying or executive position.
6. To familiarize the students with certain fundamental merchandise.
7. To familiarize the pupil with the sources of merchandise and the channels through which it passes in reaching the consumer.
8. To give the student an appreciation of values which will make him a better buyer of merchandise for personal use.
9. To appraise the student of the relations of employee, employer and customer.
10. To impress on the students the importance and need of adopting "service" as their ideal.

<sup>1</sup>Outline in Merchandising and Retail Selling, School Document No. 8, 1928.



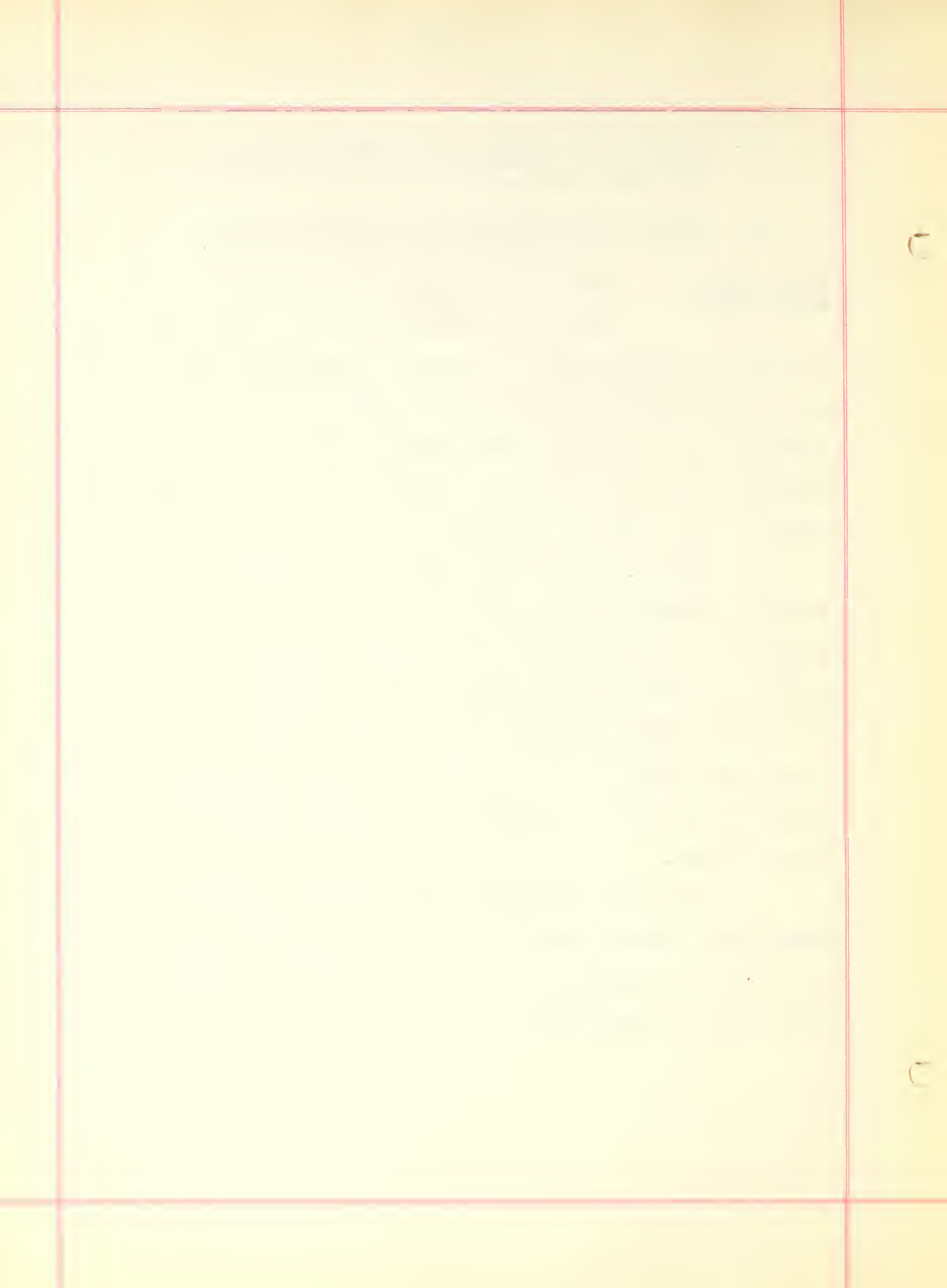
11. To teach the student to properly evaluate the position of the merchant and the salesman in the social order.
12. To provide financial aid for needy pupils, thereby enabling them to remain in school.

Three Cooper-  
ative Plans

Thus at the height of its success in 1930 there were three cooperative plans operating in Boston. Salesmanship was taught in twelve day high schools and in four evening high schools as well as the continuation school. Practical experience formed a part of the plan in all schools, though the manner and time of giving this experience varied in the different schools.

Plan I.--In the High School of Practical Arts a definite cooperative plan, operated since 1921, divided the pupils of the course into pairs. While one member of a pair was in the store the other member was in school. At the end of the week they exchanged places. This particular training began at the opening of Grade XI and continued through two years. The pupil was assigned to the same store during the entire period.

The class instruction of these pupils in Grade X before they started working in the store, as well as for the two years of cooperative study and training, is indicated in the following curriculum:



## Salesmanship Curriculum, 1930

Grade X

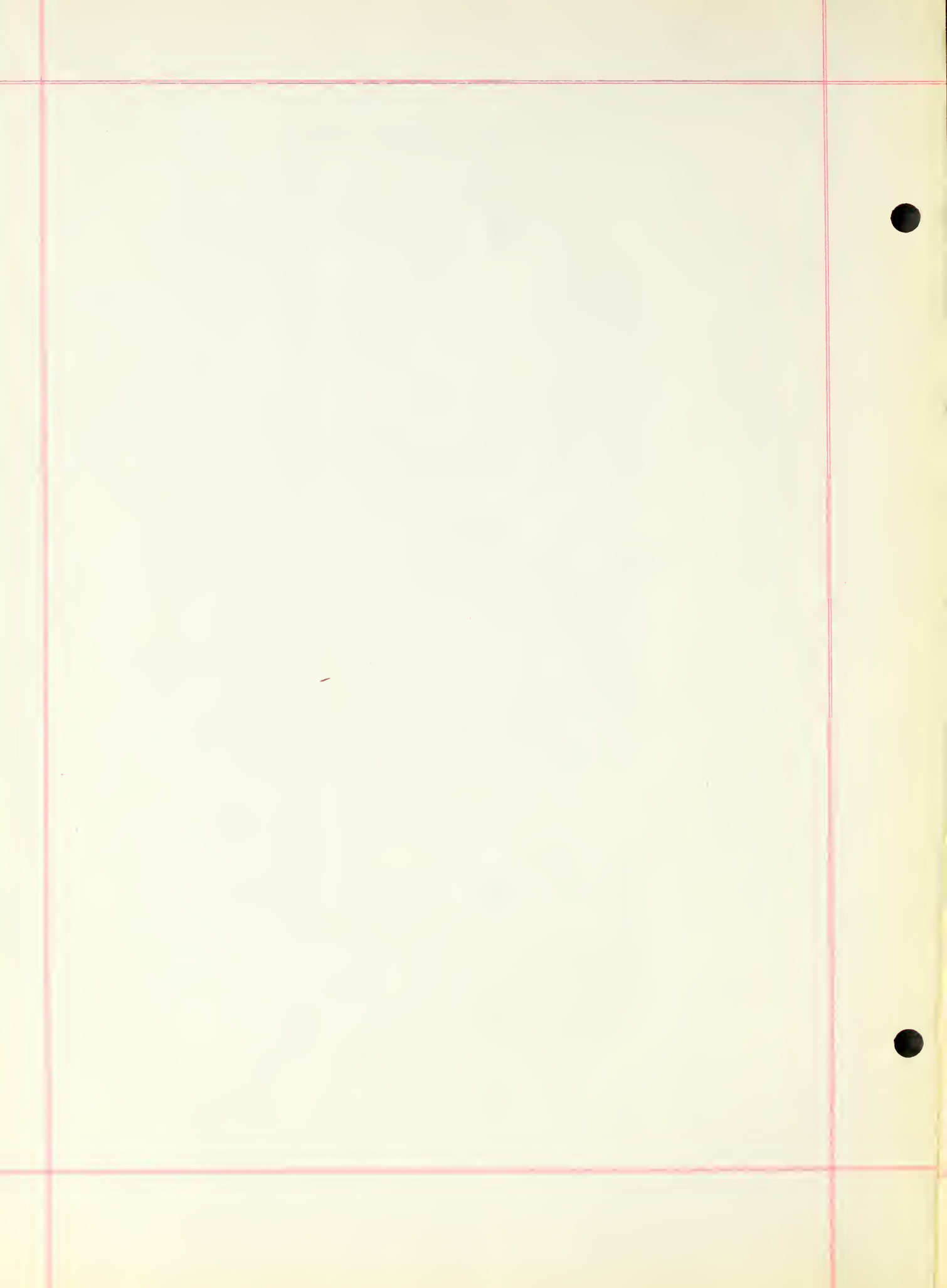
Subject	Periods	Points
Home Project Work		2
English	4	4
History	4	4
Chemistry	4	4
Art	4	2
Sewing	4	2
Cooking	2	1
Retail Selling	2	2
Textiles	2	1
Choral Practice	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
Physical Education	2	1
Total	<u>29</u>	<u>23<math>\frac{1}{2}</math></u>

Grade XI

Home Project Work		1
English	5	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
American History	5	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Physics	4	2
Art	4	1
Sewing	4	1
Salesmanship	5	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Store Practice		10
Choral Practice	1	$\frac{1}{4}$
Physical Education	2	$\frac{1}{2}$
Total	<u>30</u>	<u>23<math>\frac{3}{4}</math></u>

Grade XII

Home Project Work		1
English	5	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Civics and Economics	5	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Art	4	1
Sewing	4	1
Salesmanship	9	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Store Practice		10
Choral Practice	1	$\frac{1}{4}$
Physical Education	2	$\frac{1}{2}$
Total	<u>30</u>	<u>23<math>\frac{3}{4}</math></u>



Every effort is made to plan these courses so as to include material which will be of most value to the pupils as salespeople, and to interpret and apply the store experiences.

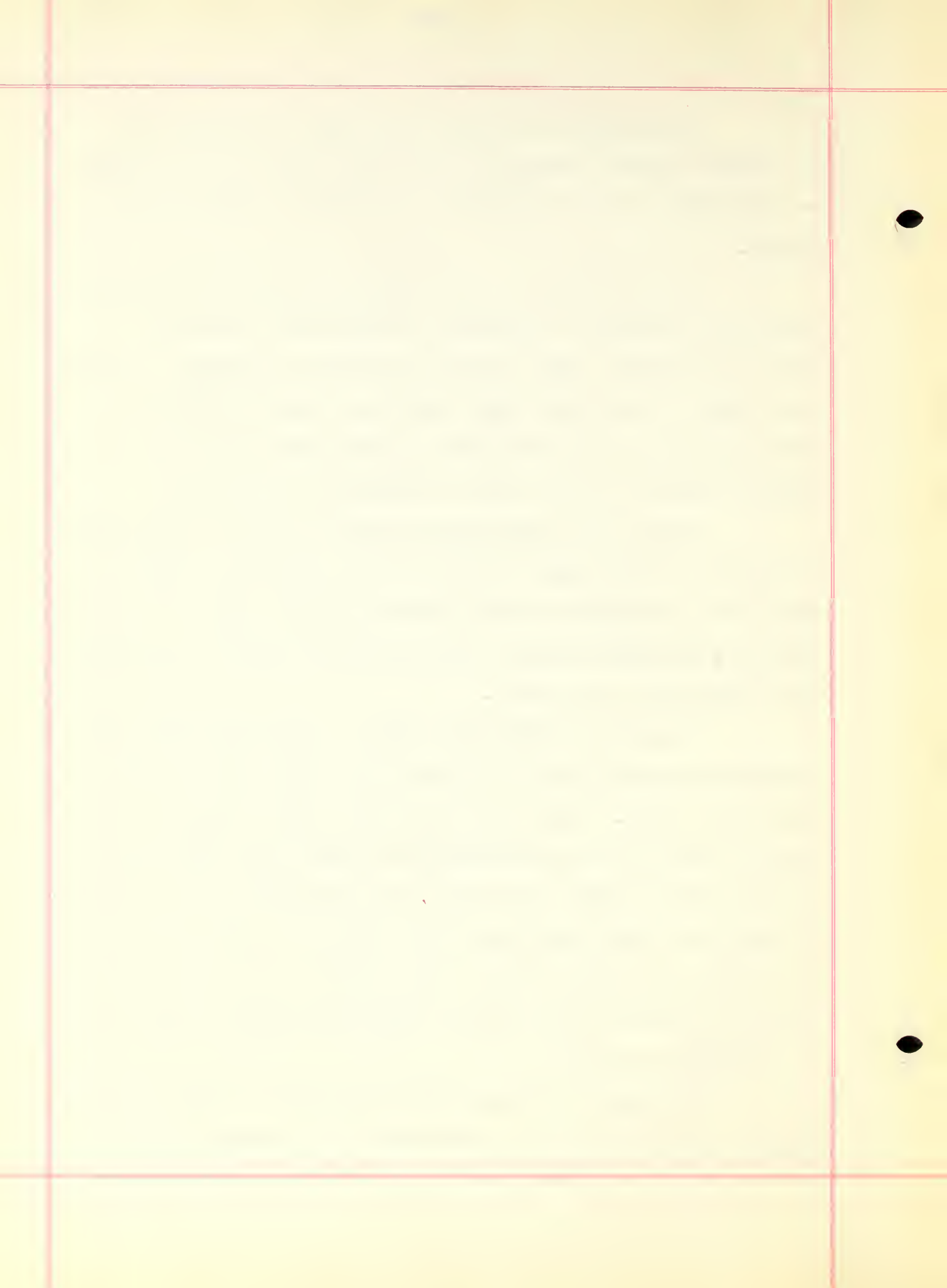
While in Grade XI, the students rotated through such positions as marking, inspecting, cashiering, and stock.

While in Grade XII, they acquired practical experience in selling. Thus, in two years they received a broad insight into store operation, and at the time of graduation they are on the regular pay-roll of the store as permanent salespeople.

There is an agreement through the Retail Trade Board that girls in each grade receive certain specified salaries. They also participated in the store's regular plans of vacation with pay, Christmas bonus, and employee's discount on merchandise purchased in the store.

Plan II.--In February, 1927, a second definite co-operative plan was put into operation at the Memorial High School for Girls. Girls from Grade XII, were assigned to the various stores where from 12:00 M. to 3:00 P.M. they acted as a daily release force for salespeople, cashiers, and inspectors. At graduation these girls were well trained in the methods of the store where they had been employed on a part-time basis during the school year, and the stores were glad to take them as permanent employees.

The school training during the senior year for these pupils consisted of four periods daily in salesmanship, also

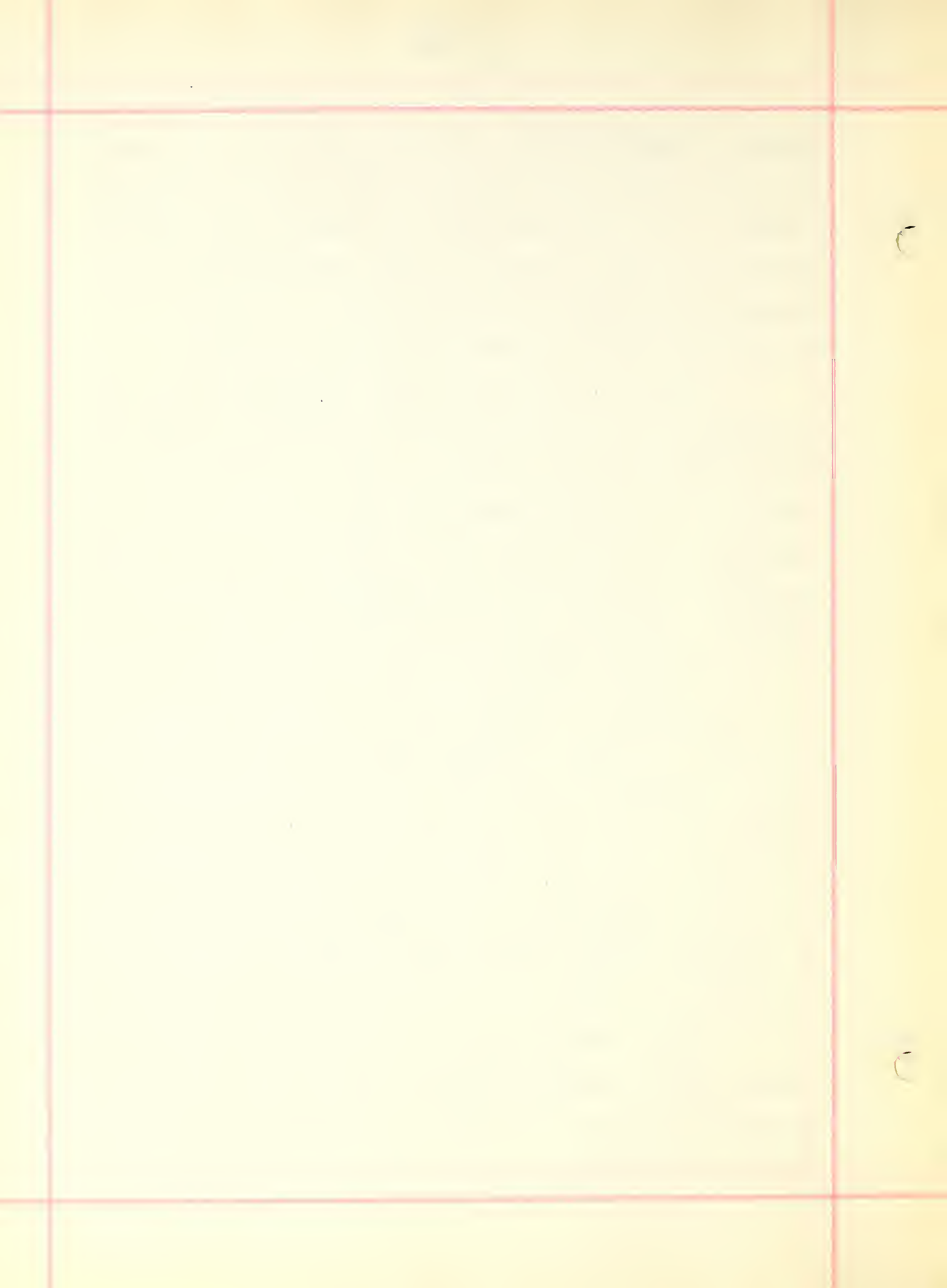


periods in English, science, history, economics, and commercial subjects. Of the total of twenty points required of seniors, a credit of six points was given for eighteen hours weekly of practice work done in the store under the supervision of the salesmanship teachers. Twenty-one stores cooperated in the practice training in connection with these two plans.

Plan III.--There were other salesmanship pupils in the Boston day high schools, and, for the purpose of getting the required practice in stores, a pupil was excused from school for a maximum of twenty-five days each year. The irregularity of retail trade made it possible to secure practice employment on special sale days throughout the year, on Saturdays, and during the month of December.

One store employed as many as 400 salesmanship pupils for a single day at a special sale, and five times during a single month in 1930 the schools were called on to furnish 40 boys and girls for a single day. One store had a regular monthly event for which they took the same 30 pupils for one or two days each month. Another store had 24 girls assigned to it in two groups of 12, each group reporting to the store on alternate Mondays. In this way a girl was absent for sales one day in two weeks.

Pupils were employed in a wide range of jobs, including selling, marking, checking, cashiering, inspecting, collecting, shipping, and stock. In some cases considerable preliminary job training by the store was necessary, which,



supplemented the school training.

Pupils of all salesmanship classes were visited while at work by the coordinating teacher. She learned the merits and shortcomings of each student. She kept in close contact with store procedure and was thus able to make school instruction supplement store experience. She helped the school to understand the store and the store to understand the school, so that these two training agencies worked together to the best advantage. She advised the student regarding the problems that arose out of the new relations in the store, and paved the way for full-time entrance into business.

Six months after graduation of the class of 1929, the members of the two cooperative courses were located as follows:

Number graduated	63
Number employed in store work	56
Number in college	1
Number removed from city	2
Number in other work (art and illustrating)	1
Number married	1
Number unemployed	2
Percentage in store work	89



## CONTINUATION SCHOOLS

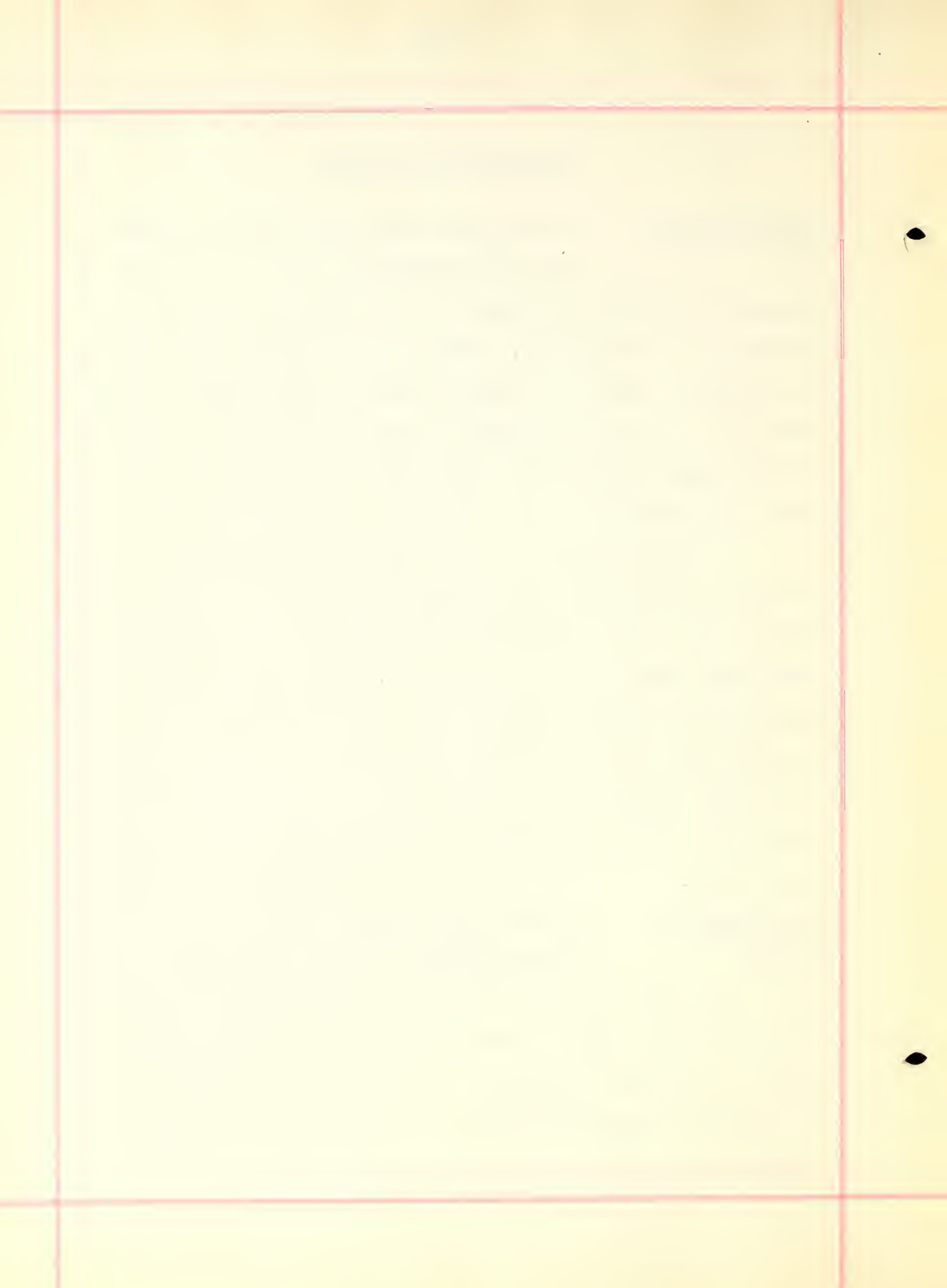
Opportunity for  
Youth in 1900's

In the early 1900's the youth of Boston who could devote his time up to the age of eighteen or twenty-one chiefly to his education found ample provision in high schools, technical and professional schools, and colleges, which were rapidly adapting themselves to his needs, but little or no provision had been made for the intellectual improvement of those who were compelled to devote those years chiefly to the earning of a livelihood.

Youths who had to go to work, or who failed to make the best use of their time in high school, upon entering industry at the age of fourteen were left intellectually at the same place when they became eighteen. Those first years of work, constituting a period of adjustment, were most difficult. It was felt that if the youth could be helped to make the transition from school life to a well placed industrial life easily and safely, better opportunity for life improvement would be open to him.

Development of  
Continuation  
Schools

At that time in England a large number of establishments excused employees a few hours during the day that they might attend classes. An attempt had been made in France to make day industrial instruction of adults compulsory. For many years Germany had maintained an organized system of continuation schools for working people and they had been a large factor in the



development of her commerce and industry. These schools represented all trades and put within the reach of young workers the opportunity for further education and training.

Many large firms in the United States were conducting schools for their employees, and the consensus of opinion was that these schools were a success, both from the standpoint of the pupil and the employer. But many smaller firms were not able to conduct schools and consequently there was a strong demand for public instruction along these lines.

Authorization of Vocational Education      In May, 1909,<sup>1</sup> the School Committee authorized the Superintendent to invite the cooperation of merchants and manufacturers for the purpose of establishing Continuation Schools, wherein working people should be given opportunity to improve their knowledge of the business in which they were engaged, and to increase their industrial efficiency. It was expected that under this authorization it would be possible, with the assistance of the merchants and manufacturers in the city, to establish schools similar to the continuation schools of Europe, wherein persons compelled to leave the regular day schools would receive instruction that would enable them to become more efficient in the stores and factories in which they were employed.

Several months were given to a general study of con-

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, May 3, 1909 and May 24, 1909.



ditions, and in February, 1910,<sup>1</sup> a special agent was assigned to this particular work and directed to report practicable ways for the organization of such schools. Vocational and trade schools, maintained by private enterprise, were visited and local employers were consulted. These conferences were followed closely by a request from the New England Shoe and Leather Association<sup>2</sup> that a continuation school for employees in the leather industry be established, and a request was made by several dry goods firms<sup>3</sup> for a similar class for employees in the dry goods houses.

Foreseeing the need of specialization the Superintendent reported:<sup>4</sup> "This is the day of specialized instruction where there is extensive preparation for activity in a single line, and the time is not far distant when youths will make preparation for different lines of business in the same manner in which preparation is made for different professions."

A room at 91 Bedford Street, a location convenient to the wholesale and retail districts, was rented and equipped for forty pupils with regular school desks, wall maps, and other school furnishings.

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, February 7, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 7, 1910.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., March 21, 1910.

<sup>4</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 10, 1910, pp. 107, 108.



Salesmanship  
Courses

At the request of several retail stores two classes in preparatory salesmanship<sup>1</sup> were also established at 91 Bedford Street; one for boys, opening on April 12, 1910, and one for girls, opening on April 13, 1910. Each of these classes was in session from 8:30 to 11 o'clock on two mornings each week. The course of study included: Commercial correspondence; facility in oral and written expression; store arithmetic; sales slip practice; sources of merchandise and its distribution; raw materials; textiles; penmanship; color and design; hygiene; practical talks on the fundamental principles of success; salesmanship. Pupils over eighteen years of age were not admitted to these classes.

The instruction was given principally by a teacher from one of the public schools, who was especially fitted for the work. This instruction was supplemented by frequent talks given by the heads of departments and other experts from the stores. The cost of instruction was assumed by the various business houses whose employees attended the school. The lecturers brought large quantities of material to the school for illustrating their talks, much of which was left for use with future classes.

On account of the scarcity of printed material on these subjects, the business houses furnished a stenographer

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, June 19, 1911.



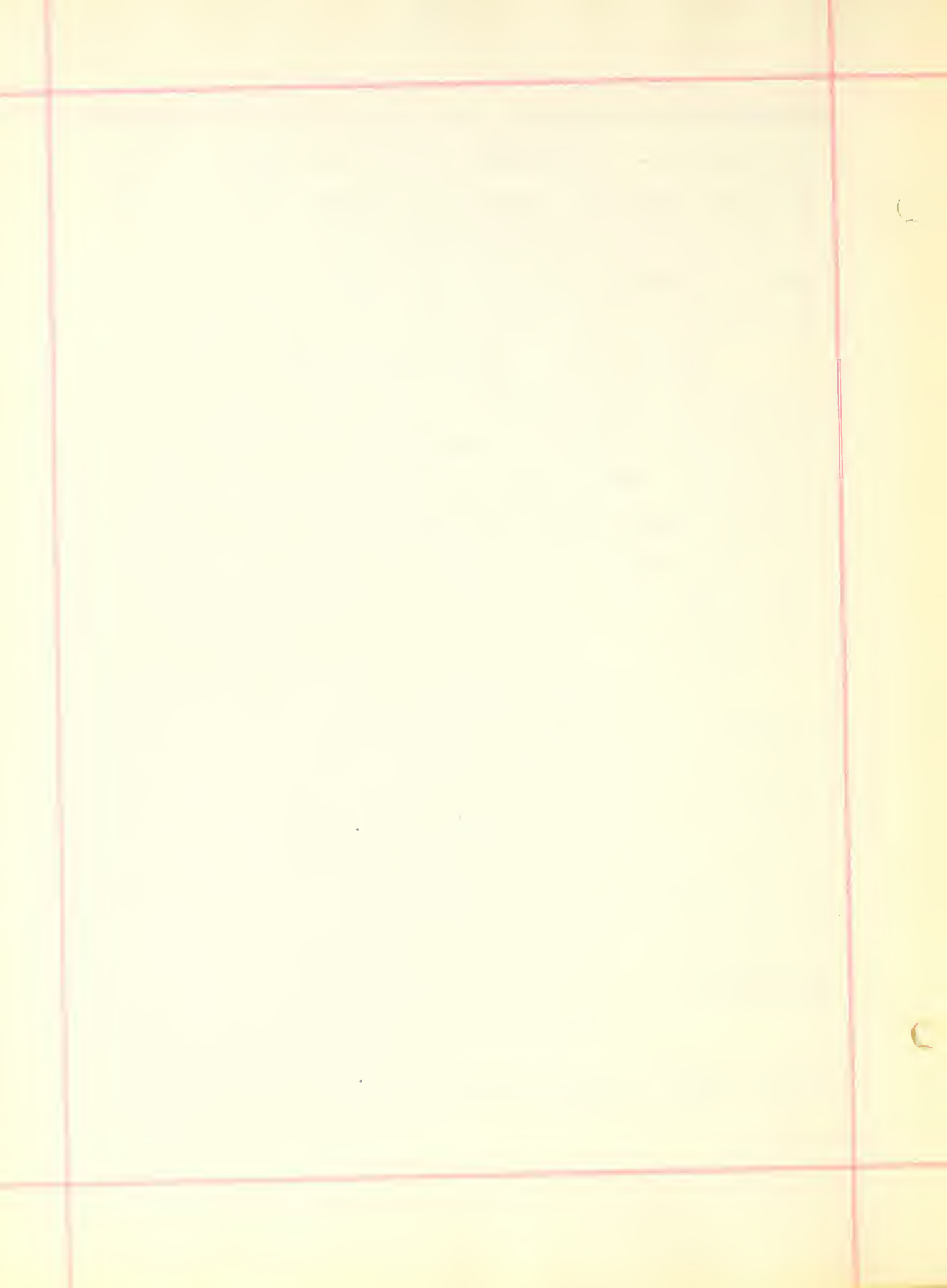
to take down and transcribe the lectures for use in instructing future classes. A remarkable interest was shown by the students, and many made a practice of spending their noon hour at school studying the stenographic reports. They were required to report in writing on all lectures, and these reports were kept on file for the inspection of their employers.

Each class had an advisory committee of employers who cooperated in the direction of the work, and assumed the responsibility of securing lecturers who had a knowledge of the subjects. "These men, who would hardly be supposed to be willing to absent themselves from their business, much less talk to the public on what a few years ago were considered trade secrets, are to-day lending all their force and energy to this movement."<sup>1</sup>

In this manner Continuation classes were first established by the Boston School Committee in 1910 for young people employed in the shoe and leather industry, the dry goods industry and department stores. The support accorded these classes by business men of Boston led to further development of the continuation school through legislation enacted by the General Court in 1913.

Massachusetts Legislation	This legislation (chapter 805, Acts of 1915) permitted school committees to establish com-
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<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 10, 1910, p. 106.



pulsory continuation schools for workers between the ages of fourteen and sixteen years who were regularly employed at least six hours a day, and, with the approval of the State Board of Education, to make attendance compulsory. This act stipulated that instruction should be given within the hours which children were permitted by law to work, such instruction to be not less than four hours each week. This act also provided that the state should, under certain conditions, reimburse cities and towns for one half the cost of the maintenance of such schools. The Massachusetts law, unlike those of some other states, permitted a diversified form of education and included civic and social subjects as well as the more vocational.

Compulsory Continuation  
School Established

Classes were opened under this law  
in September, 1914,<sup>1</sup> and all

children who went to work between the ages of fourteen and sixteen were required to attend this school four hours a week. The course given was prevocational in character and closely related to the occupation of the child. When the child was in a position that was in line with his future life occupation, the energies of the school were bent on training him to make the most of his opportunities where he was employed. When the child was in an occupation that offered no future for him, he was given a prevocational course in order that he might

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston, May 4, 1914.



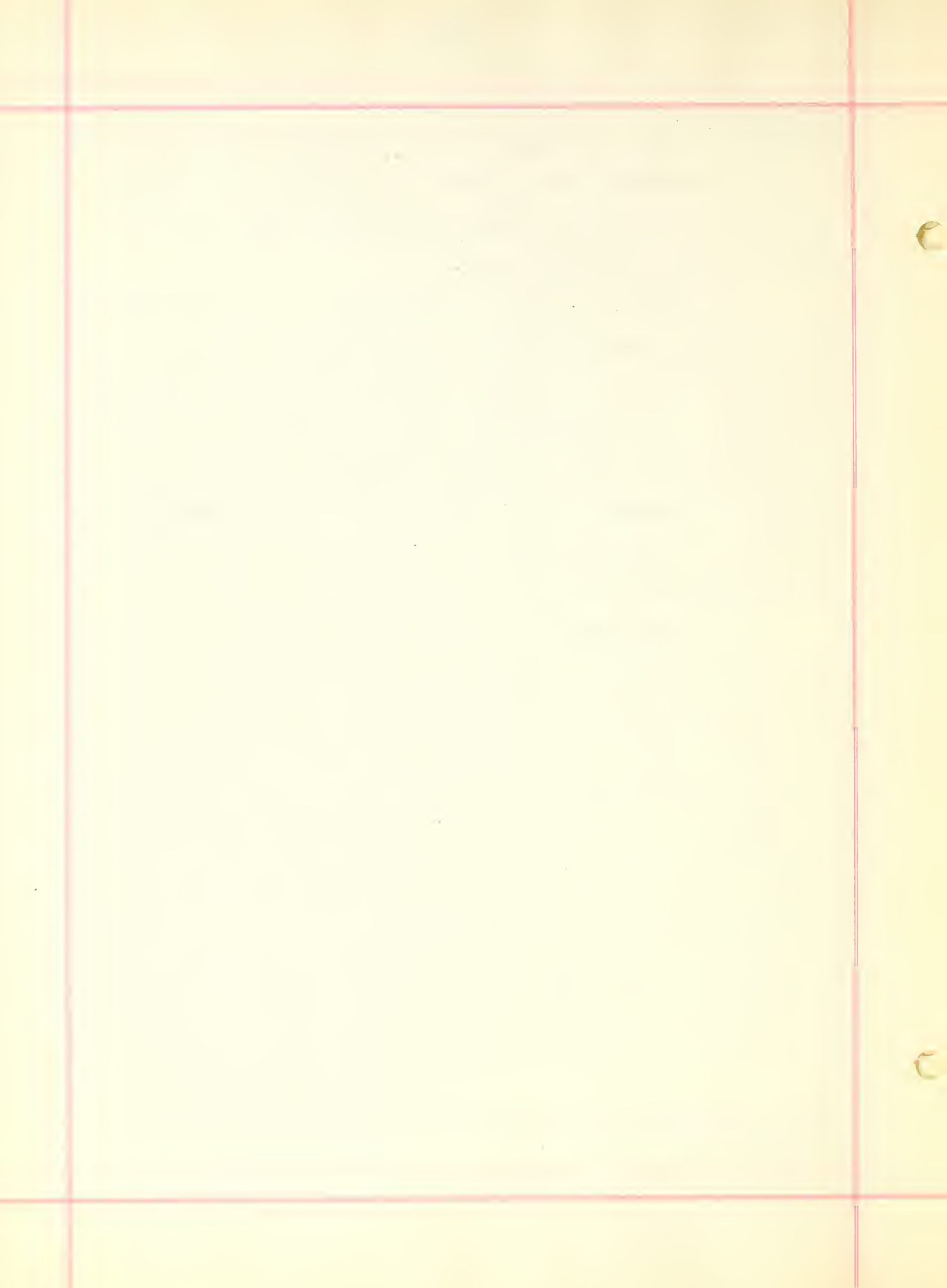
discover his work. A registration of 2000 was recorded in 1914.<sup>1</sup>

The school was in session five days a week through the entire year, teachers serving six hours a day, four in class and two in follow-up work.

By 1915 the school was passing out of the experimental stage into an assured position of importance in the school system. It had been thoroughly investigated by three distinct committees: the investigating committee appointed by the Finance Commission, the investigating committee appointed by the Chamber of Commerce, and the Advisory Committee on Industrial Education. All these committees reported favorably upon the school and gave it the stamp of their high approval.

In 1915 about 4000 children were in the school, so that it was possible to organize groups of many kinds. Shop work and class work were closely associated. It was then, as it is now, a part of the teacher's duties to keep in close touch with the employer, so that every teacher in the Continuation School is also a vocational counselor and "follow-up" worker. When children were out of work they attended the school six hours a day in order to prepare themselves for other work and the school assisted them to find employment, often placing from twelve to twenty children a week, and thus acting as an aid to the vocational guidance department.

<sup>1</sup>Annual Statistics of the Boston Public Schools, School Document no. 6, 1914, p. 7.



Salesmanship  
Studies

The department of salesmanship first organized in the high school in 1913 had developed two divisions of the salesmanship work in the continuation school: pupils fourteen to sixteen years of age who were required by law to attend the school; and those over sixteen years of age who were attending voluntarily. The studies as specialized in the school were:<sup>1</sup>

Arithmetic--Combination drill to develop power, accuracy and alertness in addition; subtraction; multiplication; division of whole numbers and of fractions. Units of United States money; measures of length, inches, yards; measures of quantity, gross, dozen, quire, etc.; cash and personal accounts; fractions commonly used in business; English and French money; bills and accounting; bank checks; receipts; orders for goods; interest, commission, discounts.

Spelling--Names of departments in store; names of articles of merchandise in store; names of positions in store; names of streets in Boston; names of towns in New England; names of states with abbreviations; family names; words misspelled in notebooks; French words used in the store (spelling combined with notebook and other written work).

Hygiene--Personal appearance; bathing; care of feet; foods and digestion; care of the teeth; dress; the Board of Health; ventilation; correct standing and walking; recreation and reading; formation of habits.

Textiles--Fibres; spinning; weaving; raw material of cotton (2 lessons); manufacturing processes (3 lessons); finished product (3 lessons); linen (4 lessons); silk (6 lessons); wool (6 lessons).

English--Friendly letter; business letter; ordering goods with replies; notebook work; com-

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 17, 1915.



parison of adjectives; formation of plurals and possessives; adjectives for store work; masculine and plurals and possessives; masculine and feminine forms of nouns; comparison of adverbs; use of personal pronouns; irregular verbs; right work for right merchandise.

Civics--Opportunities for Boston citizens (libraries, parks, buildings, lectures, concerts, educational, charitable, bathing, hospitals); and chances for recreation; responsibility--of citizens; postal service (this is also connected with hygiene and English).

Commercial Geography--Boston's harbor; Boston as a commercial center; New England as a manufacturing center; highways of commerce--rivers, lakes, oceans, canals, railroads, etc; means of communication; transportation related to merchandise in store; Central Atlantic States (manufacturing); Mississippi valley (farming); Southern States (cotton); Rocky Mountains (minerals, wool); Pacific States (fruits, wool); system of Great Lakes; importations from foreign countries (related and connected both with the store and the textiles).

Store Topics--Store organization; store system; sales slip practice; waste in business; store directory; business qualifications; truthfulness in business; courtesy; work (dignity and responsibility); relation to employer; relation to fellow workers; care of stock; approach to customer; use of talking points; suggestion; decision; demonstration sales.

The interest of the Boston merchants was shown by their willingness to assist in these classes, and whenever possible, groups of fifteen to twenty children were organized as a class in the store, usually in the employees' rest room, the lunchroom or the schoolroom of the educational department of the store. The stores also provided the furniture, the heat and the light without charge.

The public schools provided supplies and teachers. The teachers of salesmanship in the high schools also devoted



a portion of their time to the continuation school classes located in stores. In 1915 there were about 300 pupils enrolled in the store groups. Through the awakened interest in school and the efforts of teachers to help each individual a number of pupils went back to regular full-time day schools to finish their high school course. Many promotions in the stores had been traced directly to the work in the store classes.

The Continuation School continually outgrew its quarters. In 1923 the boys received instruction mainly in the old Brimmer School with its annex and portable; most of the girls were instructed in hired quarters at 25 La Grange street and 52 Tileston street. There were additional classes for boys and girls at the Plant Shoe Factory and in Hyde Park.

Besides the civil and social subjects the following commercial subjects were offered: For boys, salesmanship, office practice, typewriting, and bookkeeping; for girls, office practice, typewriting, and bookkeeping.

Progress      After several years' progress the educational need which this school fulfilled was evidenced in the number of those enrolled during a year--from 7,500 to 10,000 boys and girls from Grades VII to X and sometimes from XI. This number included a group from the various special classes, that is, those fourteen years of age, who had completed seven years' attendance in the regular day schools and who had there progressed as far as their capacity would permit.



All the employed children between the ages of fourteen and sixteen attended once a week, either from 8 to 12 o'clock in the morning or from 1 to 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Upon satisfactory completion of one hundred hours of attendance they were awarded certificates. Certification exercises were held twice a year, in February and in June, and an average of six hundred certificates were awarded upon each occasion.

Later a Business English course was added to the list of commercial subjects. The school is now centrally located at 25 Warrenton street and is in session from 8 A.M. to 12 M. and from 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. each school day. Boys and girls under sixteen years of age who leave school to go to work are required to attend Continuation School one-half day each week while working and every day while temporarily unemployed.

Purpose        The purpose of this school has always been to help employed minors make such immediate and prospective adjustments as are necessary in changing their status as full-time school pupils to that of responsible wage-earning citizens. The aim is to serve this group by continuing general education, by promoting civic intelligence, by equalizing opportunities, by meeting the situation that exists as the result of the child labor laws, by extending vocational intelligence and by providing vocational guidance.

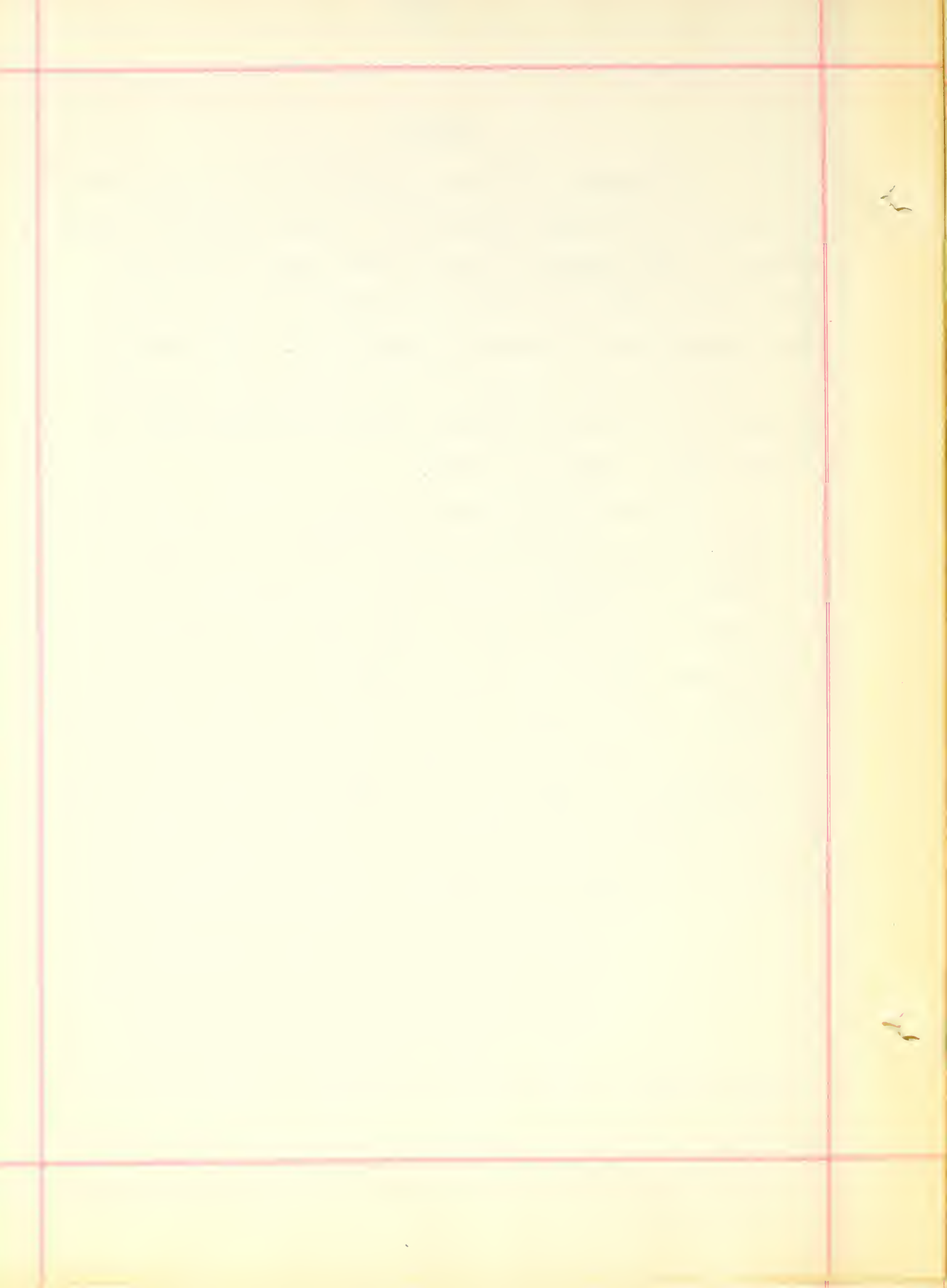


## SUMMARY

The report of the School Committee for the year 1868 contained the following statement:<sup>1</sup> 'Boston, founder of Public Schools in 1635, holds its chosen place today in the front ranks of the cities of America in everything which relates to sound learning and intellectual development.' After reviewing the steady and rapid progress of the development of commercial education in its various phases the above statement might be applied today as well as in 1868.

From the little trace of commercial education in the American colonies, through the rising importance of trade and its consequent influence on the changing curriculum of the high schools, to the broad scope which commercial education covers today, Boston has been a forerunner in the business education of its citizens. The best results of commercial education cannot be attained by merely reviewing the past but by considering future tendencies. All through the history of commercial education in the Boston Public Schools this factor appears outstanding in the thoughts of the administrators.

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the School Committee of the Boston Public Schools, 1868, p. 21.



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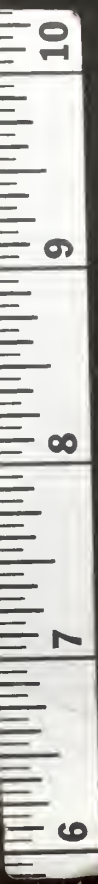
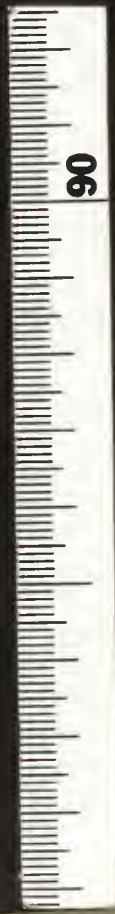
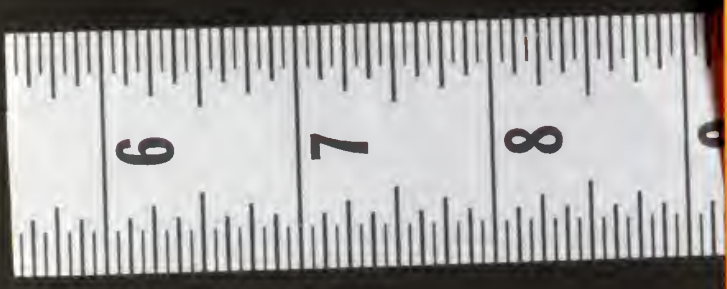
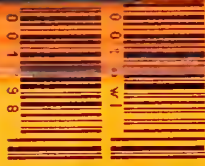
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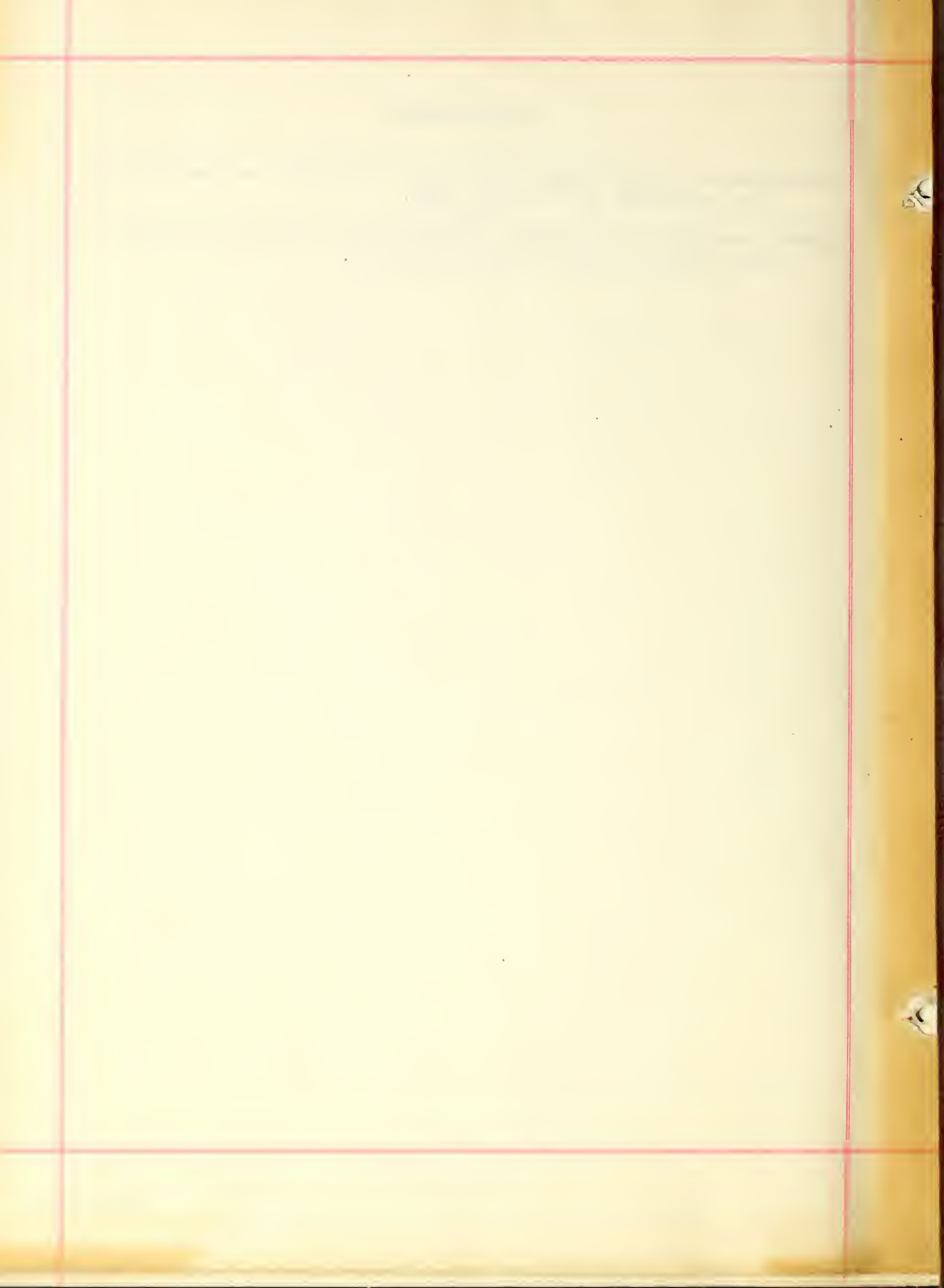
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