

Glory of a  
Successful  
School

BRYANT  
COLLEGE  
ARCHIVES

1909?

The Story of a  
Successful School

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BRYANT & STRATTON  
BUSINESS COLLEGE OF  
PROVIDENCE  
RHODE ISLAND

THEODORE B. STOWELL  
PRINCIPAL AND OWNER

HOPPIN HOMESTEAD BUILDING  
357 WESTMINSTER STREET

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ARRANGED AND PRINTED BY  
DART & BIGELOW, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND



37 years Teacher, 31 years Principal and Proprietor



THE COMMERCIAL SCHOOL is of comparatively recent origin. Its evolution is of interest to the student of educational progress, for it was the forerunner of the great movement in technical and industrial education now claiming the attention of the world.

At the time when the first private commercial schools were established, the business world was undergoing a great change. With the revival of prosperity immediately following the Civil War, came a constantly increasing demand for skilled labor. The old office apprentice system was entirely inadequate to meet this demand, and thus the commercial school came into being. From the start, it found itself confronted with the task of educating the public to a conception of its work, as well as training young people in business methods. The business men of that period, especially those of conservative minds, were inclined to consider the graduates of these schools with more or less disfavor and accepted their claims only after a liberal discount.

It did not seem possible for any institution to graduate young men able to take up the duties and responsibilities of business life without a long period of "breaking in." It was only after the commercial school graduates had verified their

ability by marked success in life that the business public began to accept the work of these schools at its face value. From that time the demand for the commercial graduate has so increased that private business schools have multiplied by the hundreds, and high schools and academies, as well as institutions of higher learning, have added courses of business training to their curricula.

In the early sixties, Messrs. Bryant & Stratton, those famous pioneers of business education, established a chain of business schools in the larger cities of the country. In these schools were taught bookkeeping, penmanship, English, commercial law and arithmetic, according to a uniform system of text-book instruction. In 1863, was established the Providence Bryant and Stratton College, with Mr. E. W. Mason as principal, and it has enjoyed an uninterrupted existence and will soon celebrate its fiftieth anniversary.

The Bryant & Stratton system had a successful existence until the death of Mr. Stratton, which caused its dissolution, when practically all the schools came under individual ownership, and are to-day leading institutions of business education in the United States. The Providence school met with favor from the time of its establishment, and many of the earliest graduates are to-day successful business men in the state.

Retaining the Bryant & Stratton name, the school passed into the control of Messrs. Warner & Ladd. This partnership was soon dissolved, when Mr. Warner became the sole owner. Mr. Warner was an enthusiastic teacher and materially advanced the standing and good will of the school.

On the erection of the Hoppin Homestead Building in 1876, Mr. Warner secured a lease of the entire fourth floor, embracing a total area of 15,000 square feet, which was especially planned for the home of this school.

In 1872, Mr. Warner secured the services of Theodore B. Stowell, at that time a teacher in the public schools of the state. Mr. Stowell was peculiarly fitted for the position. His early instruction and training were of such nature as to insure the esteem and respect of the students under his charge. He possessed that gift of sympathy, so necessary to the success of every teacher. Aggressive and earnest, he aroused a spirit of enthusiasm and determination in his pupils in whatever line of work he led them.

Mr. Stowell's influence in the school grew so rapidly that he soon became its executive officer. Every detail of the day's work was under his personal supervision. Under his guidance the school materially increased in numbers and influence, and

at this period was laid the foundation of success for the years to come.

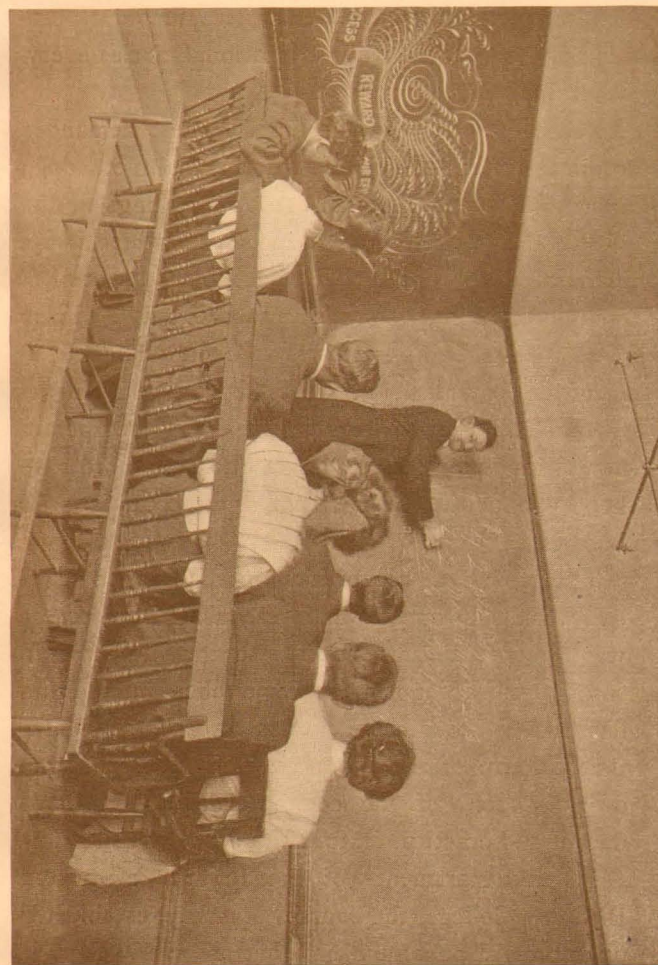
On July 1, 1878, Mr. Stowell purchased the school outright, and from that time until the present has been the proprietor and principal of the Providence Bryant & Stratton Business College.

He immediately began to put into execution the many changes and reforms he had long had in mind, so that within a comparatively short period the school became, as it is to-day, an aggressive and able exponent of business education.

From the first Mr. Stowell's motto has been "Integrity." The policy of a square deal has always been in force in this institution. It was his determination to maintain a school of business education, not only as good as any, but a little better; to set the standard so high that the value of a diploma from Bryant & Stratton Business College would become a passport to business offices everywhere. To this end, nothing was spared in the line of securing the very best instructors, and the most complete and up-to-date equipment.

Blessed with rare foresight and judgment, the principal builded for the future. He realized that to make the work of the school a success, it must be lifted to the level of business rather than drag business down to the level of the school.

Although this policy was in direct opposition to



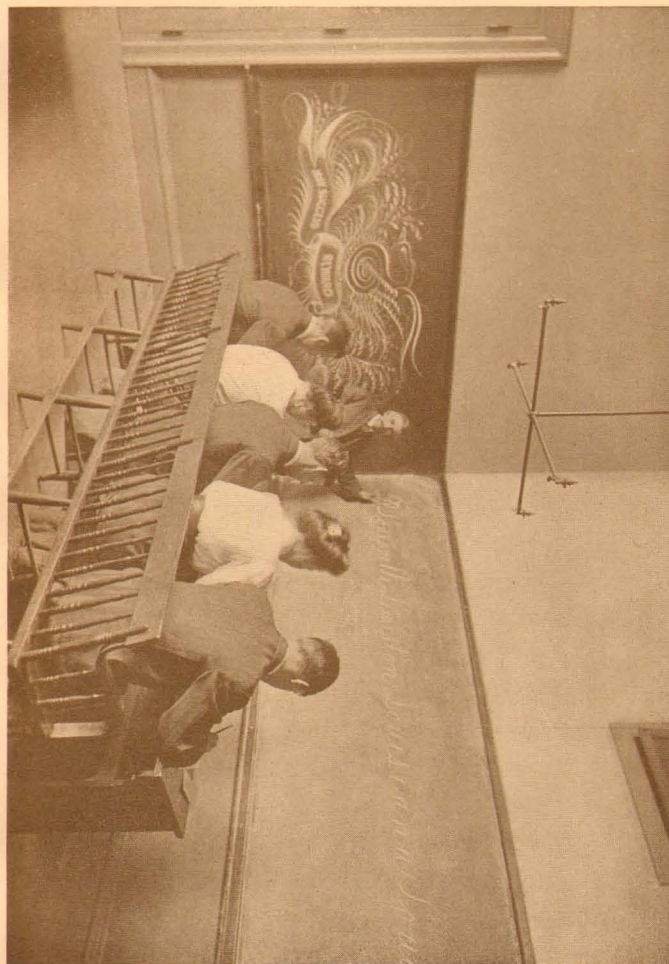
Class Group in Arithmetic

the belief of the majority of business educators of that period, time has proved its superiority. It explains, to a certain extent, the splendid reputation the school enjoys in educational circles everywhere.

This new system of teaching business demanded original text-books, business forms and methods of instruction, and here were the beginnings of the well-known system of actual business, which in its elaborated and completed state forms the basis of commercial instruction in the school to-day. From time to time, this system has been amplified to meet the demands laid upon it. It has been a fundamental policy of the management to incorporate new ideas and methods of instruction in order to keep pace with the ever changing conditions of business.

The growth of corporations and their control of the world's business was foreseen, and this school was prompt to introduce a thorough course in corporation accounting. Experience in auditing has proved so valuable an asset to our graduates that a term of audit work is now required from every student of the commercial department, a unique and practical feature of a business education.

In all departments of the Bryant & Stratton Business College, the courses of study, established upon broad foundations, have been so wisely planned

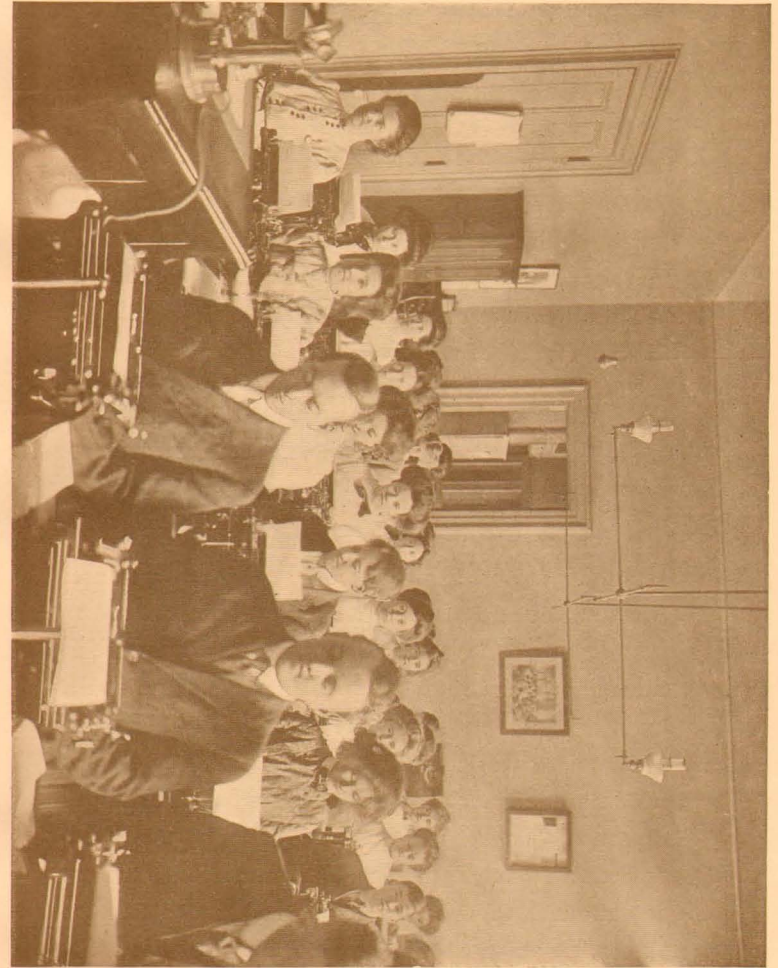


Special Instruction in Penmanship

as to enable the institution to keep pace with the demands made upon its graduates by the business men of the community. Every requisite for a thorough, well-grounded knowledge of business is here included without superfluous or unnecessary detail, and the work required demands the fullest attention of the student to obtain the coveted diploma.

The introduction of stenography can be considered one of the most important chapters in the history of business education. The tremendous growth in trade all over the country demanded improved and time-saving methods in transacting business. The telegraph, the telephone and the myriad labor-saving office devices are the result of this necessity for doing a greater day's work and doing it better than ever before. Of all these devices for the aid of the business man none can be compared in importance with stenography. Business men generally were slow to adopt this innovation, but once introduced, its value was immediately recognized.

Stenography opened the door of opportunity for thousands of young women. It afforded the opportunity to gain a comfortable income by congenial employment, and the commercial schools of the country found a rapidly increasing percentage of young women in their enrollment, anxious to acquire



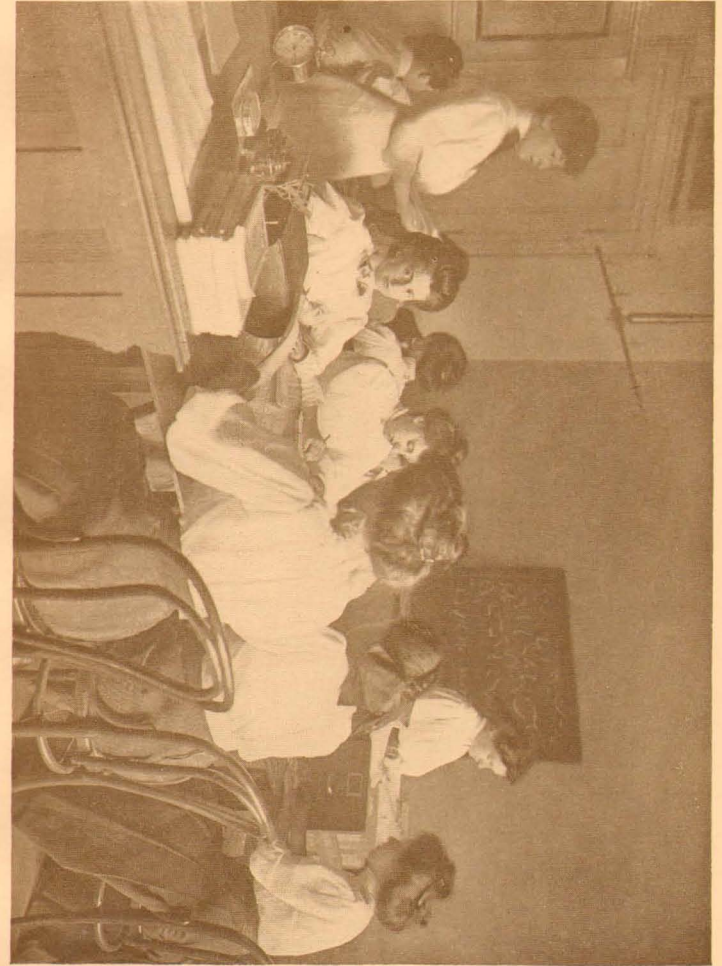
Typewriting

the knowledge necessary to become stenographers.

The success of this new venture was so marked that additional teachers were secured, and the shorthand and typewriting department was formally organized as an integral part of the institution. No better proof of its growth and success is afforded than a comparison of this department to-day, with its own principal and faculty and its comprehensive course of instruction and splendid equipment, with that modest beginning of twenty years ago.

The shorthand department has prospered because the same methods were employed that made the commercial department a success — the application of integrity, enthusiasm and intense earnestness of purpose to the work in hand.

“Individual instruction,” that much quoted expression in the literature of commercial schools, is exemplified in the highest degree in the Bryant & Stratton Business College. At no time can any system of grading or classification be used, save in the minor courses of study. Progress as a whole, must depend entirely upon the student's ability and application, without any relation whatever to his fellow students. Students of all ages, in all stages of preparation, enter the school yearly, and it becomes the task of the principal and his instructors to graduate them fitted in all respects to take up the duties and responsibilities of business life.



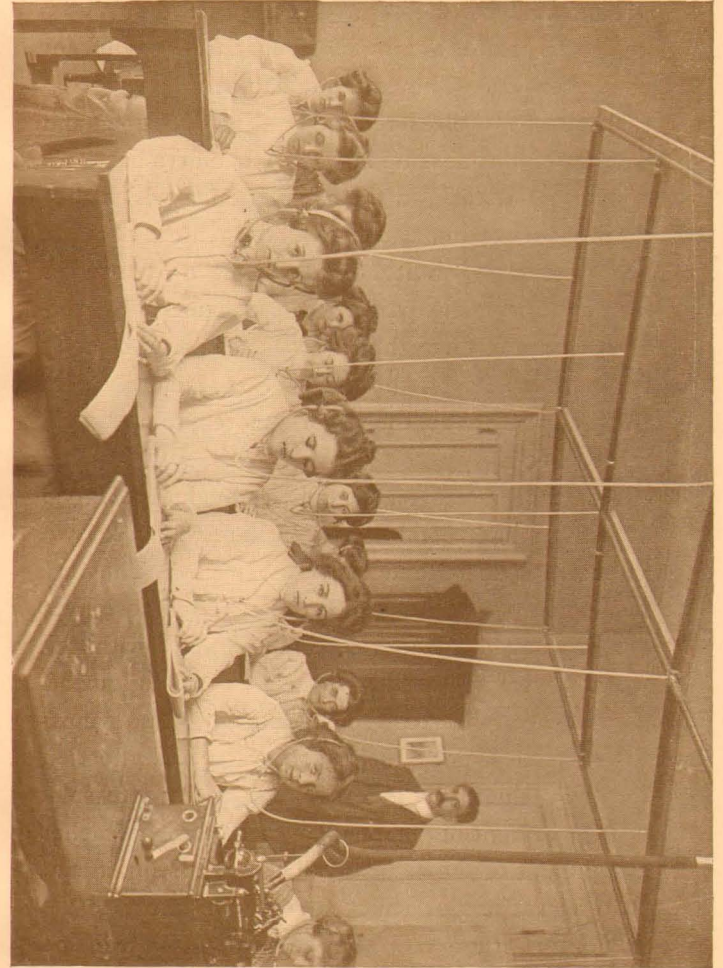
Group Dictation in Shorthand



Thus individual instruction from the Bryant & Stratton standpoint means careful study of the individual pupil and instruction to suit his needs. It often means that the whole life of the student must be changed — his mannerisms, his habits, his ways of thinking; it means that the courses of study must be sufficiently elastic to prepare the grammar school graduate as well as the college man; it means that the idle boy, who has been shifted from one preparatory school to another, the despair of his parents, must be aroused to a *desire* for knowledge. Time, tact, energy and unflinching patience on the part of a large corps of men and women, who are alive to their responsibilities and ready to take advantage of every opportunity to advise and assist the student, make individual instruction a *reality* in this school.

In the loyalty and co-operation of the faculty lies the surest evidence of the soundness of the principles on which this institution has been built. The long terms of service on the part of these men and women prove that they have found in the work of the school something worth while, an opportunity for genuine service in one of the broadest fields in modern education.

The members of the faculty occupy a position not unlike the heads of departments in great plants, who are responsible to the superintendent for



Group in Phonographic Dictation

proper execution of their duties. To them is given the raw material which must be moulded, shaped, ground and polished, before it is turned out in its perfected state, a completed machine, ready for active service. They are not hampered by restrictions, or by useless red tape. They are men and women of business upon whose shoulders has been laid a special task, in the completion of which they are forced to make use of the greatest possible energy and ingenuity. They are in themselves *creators*, for many parts of the scheme in instruction now in force in the school have sprung directly from the needs of the instructors themselves in their efforts to do their work more promptly and more effectively.

Above all, these teachers are individuals of good standing in the community, who are widely known in business, social and religious circles. They are men and women who are *doing things*, whose lives are broadened and perfected by contact with the world's work, blessed with insight and judgment. They are big-hearted, self-sacrificing, and sympathetic, with a deep feeling of loyalty and affection for their chief, and a devotion to their profession.

The element of personal contact between teacher and pupil is of the highest value, and it is significant that year after year, as former pupils return to the school for a short visit, they seek out those teachers



Consulting File

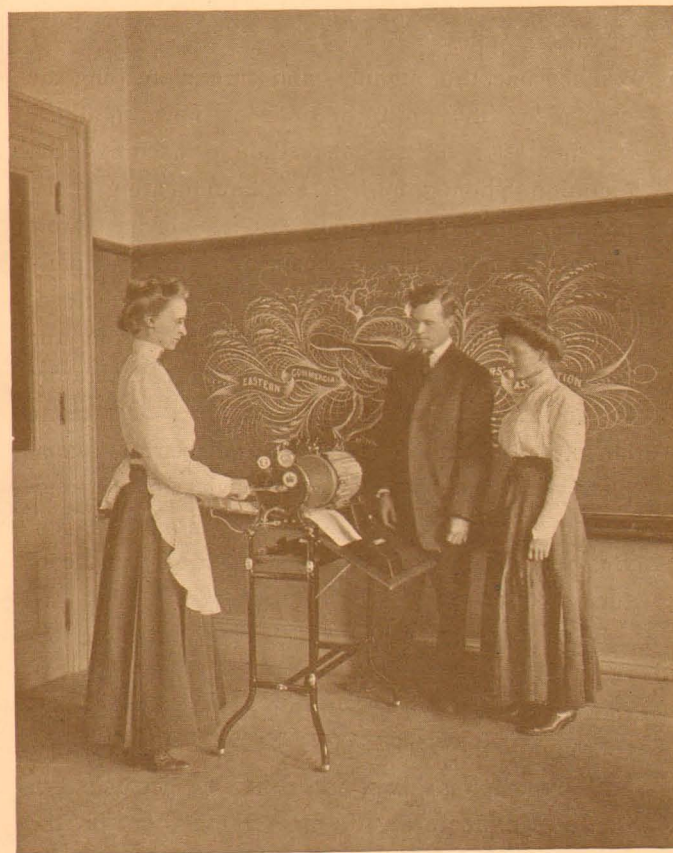
Copying

with whom they have been associated, and by every means in their power endeavor to express the debt of gratitude they owe for what has been done in the line of fitting them for the duties of the business world.

The Bryant & Stratton Business College has been foremost in adopting every device of value for business training. In the furnishings and equipment of the school no expense has ever been spared to secure the very best for the use of the students. In the commercial departments, the rooms are equipped with a specially designed desk of quartered oak with automatic locking drawers and swivel seat, designed to afford a maximum of comfort and convenience. In the office practice and shorthand departments the furnishings are of equally high grade and suited to the needs of the student there employed.

In designing the rooms for the use of the college, special attention was given to light and ventilation and hygiene, while special janitor service insures cleanliness. Everything possible is done to promote the health and happiness of students and instructors alike.

The typewriting department is one of the most complete and practical of any in the country. During the present year, all machines have been replaced by the very latest models. Here are found

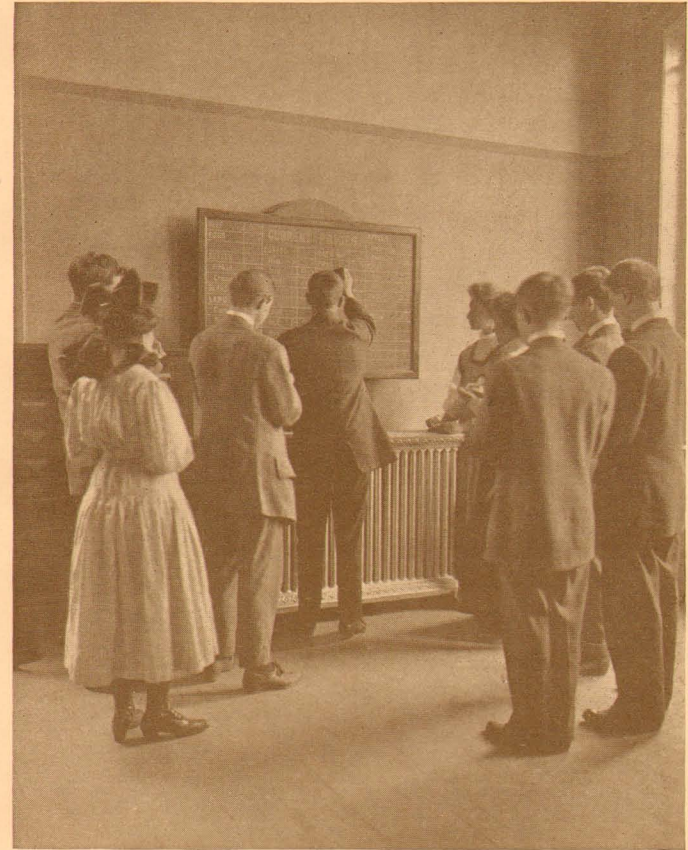


Demonstrating the Multigraph

the newest "visible writers" and billing and duplicating machines, thus affording the students the greatest possible knowledge of the use and care of various types.

The same thoroughness and care in keeping the equipment fully up to the times is shown in all departments of the school. Adding machines, the dictation phonograph, intercommunicating telephones, filing systems and loose-leaf devices, are a few of the many aids to business training in daily use in this institution. A special department of multigraph instruction has been added during the past year, designed to furnish multigraph operators for business houses using this machine. For circular letters the multigraph is now indispensable, completely superseding all previous devices of the kind. The machine installed in the Bryant & Stratton Business College is the latest model, capable of turning out 2000 perfect circulars per hour.

The student of the commercial department passes through three definite periods of instruction. In the first, or preparatory period, he covers very thoroughly the technical ground of bookkeeping, both by keeping sets of books and by instruction in the form of lectures and oral examinations on the fundamental principles of the subject. These lectures cover the ground in a very thorough and detailed manner, and at the end of the preparatory

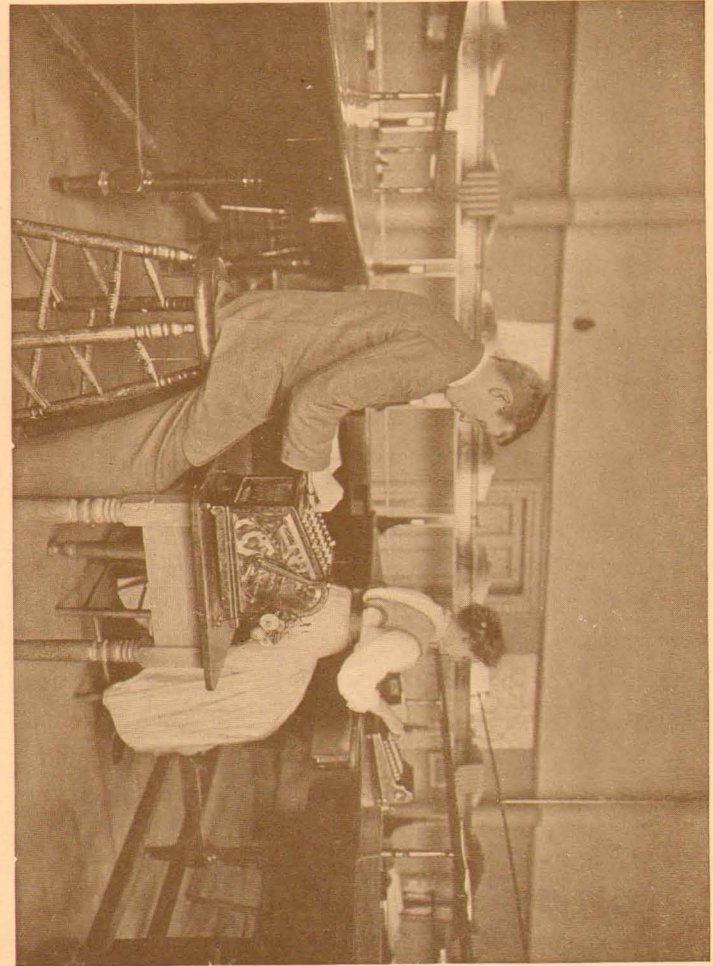


Getting Latest Quotations

period the student is in a position to take up the work of actual business with a clear knowledge of the principles which underlie it.

The second period, or period of actual business practice, is the longest in the course. During this period the student must open and close at least eight sets of books, including work in special column journals, cash books, purchase and sales books, commission sales book, partnership and corporation accounting. The value of his instruction and practice in this period cannot be over-estimated. His textbooks contain merely directions for carrying on his work. The instruction is given to him orally and in person by those in whose charge he is placed. He is taught to recognize the value of independence. He is taught to think for himself, act for himself, keep his eyes open for the best opportunities for advancing his own interests in the line of business. As he progresses in his work, his trading operations gradually extend from his fellow-students to students of other schools, so that at the end, we find him carrying on transactions with students in schools from Ontario to Florida.

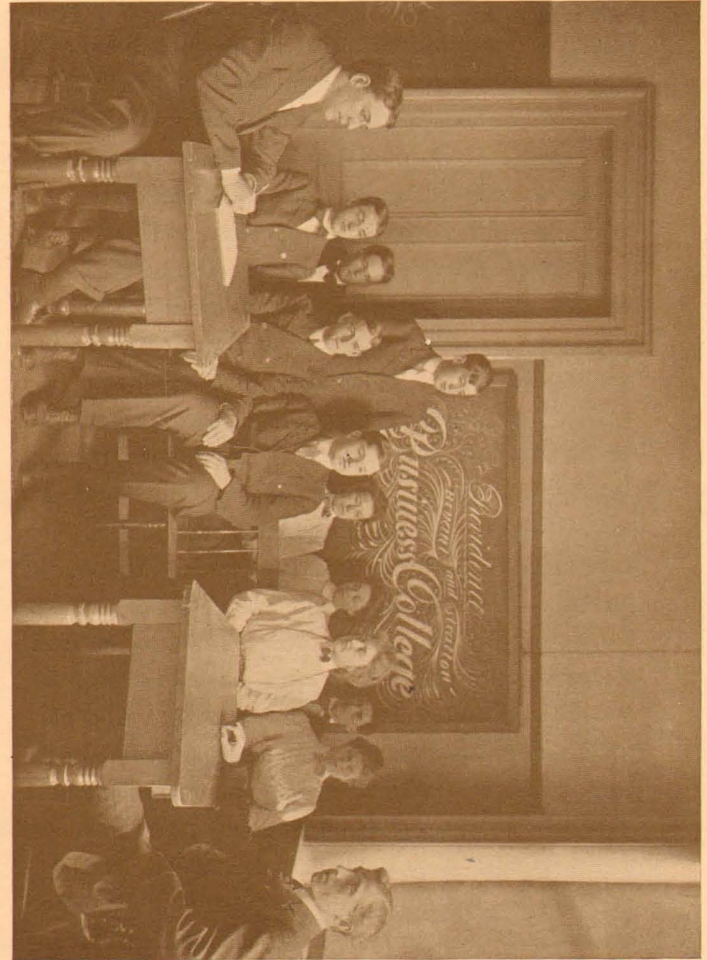
One of the most valuable features of this entire period is the auditing required from each student. It often happens that our boys and girls upon entering their first position are confronted with the task of straightening out the books of a predeces-



Verifying Results by Adding Machines

sor. There is no work so well calculated to strengthen the student along accounting lines as the auditing of any set of books that may be brought to hand. The auditors are required to verify the books and make a complete report of the condition of the books as they stand. These reports are carefully filed and are counted as part of the work done by each individual.

The second period completed, the student passes to the third, or office practice department. This department is complete in itself, in charge of an able and experienced instructor, who, in addition to his regular school work, has built up a large outside business in auditing and accounting. The student, fortified by his experience in the previous departments, finds the fourteen weeks of this office practice period of inestimable value. He has the opportunity to serve in various capacities in wholesale houses, commission houses, banks, manufacturing companies, transportation companies and audit office. His terms of service in each vary with his ability to handle the problems that confront him. Advancement, as before, is due to his ability and application. At the end of this period of office practice, the student is ready and fitted to take up the duties of a bookkeeper with a clear understanding of what is required of him. It is not an unusual thing for a young man to go out from this school



Stockholders Meeting

to assume full charge of a business office or other responsible position.

Parallel with instruction in bookkeeping and business practice, are given courses in business English, commercial correspondence, arithmetic, rapid calculation, commercial law and penmanship. This instruction is given usually by the group system.

The Bryant & Stratton standard here, as in all other parts of its work, insures the student a systematic and thorough preparation in these all-important subjects, thus rounding out and completing a course of instruction that completely fits him for business life.

The department of shorthand and typewriting represents to-day the results of more than twenty years' experience in teaching stenography. Rigorous elimination of all "fads" and the adoption of that which the student *needs* to insure success have here prevailed to make this course of instruction the means of graduating stenographers who *think* and typists who have a working knowledge of business principles.

The school adopted the Munson system of shorthand because it had been thoroughly tested in every form of verbatim work and found to be equal to every demand. It is one of the simplest Pitmanic systems to learn and most surely read. Twenty years of experience in teaching this system has en-

abled the school to present it in the most logical and systematic manner, thereby making this difficult and complicated subject thoroughly interesting and comparatively easy to learn. Students writing other systems are admitted to the advanced dictation classes and are enabled to graduate with the Bryant & Stratton diploma.

Instruction in stenography is divided into two periods,—the elementary period, and the advanced or training period where attention is centered on speed and accuracy. During the entire course, there is a required period of practice in typewriting and a daily drill in penmanship, rapid calculation and spelling. A complete course in business English, including word analysis and rhetoric, is required from every student.

The department of shorthand and typewriting is in charge of a principal and three assistants, whose entire time and attention are devoted to its needs. In this respect, the school possesses a decided advantage.

Special emphasis should be laid upon the instruction in typewriting and advanced dictation. The unsolicited testimony of employers and business men who come in contact with our graduates leads to the belief that in these departments lies the secret of their success.

The touch typewriter system is here exemplified

in the fullest degree, with attention to billing, invoicing, duplicating and all the special forms of machine work. Neatness and accuracy are fundamental requirements from every student.

The advanced dictation includes special work in legal and mercantile forms, requiring the highest degree of care and concentration. This work is in charge of an experienced teacher, who insists upon the highest standard of completed work from her students. The results of this training repeatedly demonstrate that stenographers trained according to the Bryant & Stratton methods are the leaders in their profession.

The introduction of a system of office practice for stenographers came as a logical sequence to the increased demands made by business men upon them. Although this system is of comparatively recent origin, the results obtained more than justify the wisdom of the step. It has given the institution additional power in this great work of "Education for Business."

The dictation phonograph furnishes a unique and invaluable aid in developing speed and accuracy.

From first to last, the shorthand department represents the highest integrity in instruction, the most modern equipment and the greatest possible efficiency as an organization in preparing stenographers for the highest grade of work.

The student having completed his course to the satisfaction of the school is taken in charge by the employment bureau. This bureau, created to meet the demands of business men for the graduates of this school, gives its service free to any student, past or present, who may be in need of a position. The reputation of the school among business men, for its care in filling positions, often makes the service of the employment bureau to the student worth many times the entire cost of his tuition. Once a member of the Bryant & Stratton family, always a member.

Business training is no longer a debatable question. The advantages possessed by the graduate of a good business school are too apparent to admit of any argument. The demand for young men and women trained in business methods is stronger and more insistent to-day than ever before. The all-important question is the choice of the school that will best prepare for the keen competition of commercial life.

This booklet has been prepared with a view of stating briefly some points of interest concerning the Bryant & Stratton Business College. It is a simple and candid statement of facts, which may be emphasized by a visit to the school, or by a talk with any of its graduates.

In building for the years to come, see to it that



the structure of your business education, from foundation to pinnacle, is constructed from the best materials, and reared under the supervision of a skilled and experienced architect so that it insures self-reliance and stability.

The Providence Bryant & Stratton Business College opens the door of success to every young man or woman contemplating a business career. The influence and standing of the institution in the community, the benefits of its years of experience, the advice and assistance of the business specialists who compose its faculty, are powerful influences for advancement.

The office is open daily from nine until four o'clock for consultation and advice. Visitors are assured a cordial welcome and will be given an opportunity to inspect the school and its equipment. A special invitation is extended to all who are interested in business education to visit the school during a regular session and witness its workings. Letters of inquiry will receive prompt and careful attention. The complete catalogue and "The Record," the school journal, are free upon request.