

The Commerce Course

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The Commerce Course

By HAROLD A. INNIS

The Commerce Journal, The University of Toronto Commerce Club, March 1941

The change in the character of the *Commerce Journal* introduced in this number is a fresh reflection of the continuous alertness of the Commerce Club. It has sponsored an annual publication since 1933 and in this and in other ways has supported the development of the commerce course. The writer was appointed to the Department of Political Economy in the academic session 1920-1 to teach elementary economics to the first year of the commerce course, and is therefore in a position to pay tribute to the work of the Commerce Club formed in the same year for the purpose of expressing the views of an alert student body in the general development of the course. With the gradual stabilizing of the curriculum, the Commerce Club has been concerned to protect the position of the course and to extend the range of interest of its students. The course emerged from a background of a strong Arts faculty which has characterized the federal structure of the University of Toronto, and this position it has defended throughout. At this point it is fitting that reference should be made to the active interest of Professor W. T. Jackman. One of the achievements to be noted on the occasion of his retirement this year at the end of a quarter of a century in the service of the Department is the maintenance and consolidation of an Arts tradition.

The insistence on an Arts tradition in the undergraduate course has been accompanied by efforts to strengthen the position of the graduate in the commercial world, and to encourage professionalism in the graduate course and in extramural courses. Under the able supervision of Professor G. E. Jackson, an extensive employment service was built up, and this has been maintained and extended during the difficult years of the depression by his successor, Professor C. A. Ashley. The efforts of the latter were largely responsible for the establishment of the Master of Commerce degree in 1937. The degree has been taken by a relatively small number but experience has gradually been acquired and courses have been built up with

a view to providing an adequate foundation for advanced work and intensive research.

The development in graduate work has been accompanied by closer relations with commercial organizations in extramural courses. In 1938 Professor H. R. Kemp with the co-operation of Mr. W. J. Dunlop in the Department of University Extension, and of the Advertising and Sales Club of Toronto, arranged a series of ten lectures in the general field of marketing. These were edited by Professor Kemp and published as *Canadian Marketing Problems* (Toronto, 1939). Following Professor Kemp's appointment to the Wartime Prices and Trade Board on the outbreak of war, Professor J. F. Parkinson continued the arrangements, and another course was given in the following year. The lectures were edited by Miss Jane McKee and published as *Marketing Organization and Technique* (Toronto, 1940). Professor S. B. Stocking, a graduate of the Harvard School of Business Administration, has directed a third course of lectures with a roster of distinguished names. The Commerce Club with the support of Mr. Dunlop has included articles presented to the course in this number. It is a pleasure to note that a graduate of the commerce course, Mr. Chisholm, has participated in the lectures. Professor Parkinson with the co-operation of the Credit Institute arranged a course of lectures in 1939-40 which were published as *Canadian Investment and Foreign Exchange Problems* (Toronto, 1940). During the current academic session a second series on War Finance has been arranged with the co-operation of the Department of University Extension and of the Credit Institute and other organizations, and it is again planned to publish these lectures.

The importance of more systematic co-ordination of extramural activities has led to the establishment of a certificate course in commerce. The curriculum includes two years of evening courses and has been designed particularly to meet the needs of graduates of high schools of commerce. It has three basic branches—accounting, economics, and law—and granting of the certificate assumes a reasonable foundation in these subjects. The course was started in 1939-40 and with the second session drawing near its close has shown its practicability in the general level of ability and interest of the students, and in the efforts to improve the instruction.

With the background of these developments the Commerce Club has felt justified in taking the important step of establishing the *Commerce Journal* on an effective footing. It will gradually become established as the central core in the development of the whole range of activities centring about

commercial education in the University of Toronto. The undergraduate courses will gain substantially from the development of a journal to serve as a permanent record of advances in education and research. This number is an important landmark in this record.

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

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[The end of *The Commerce Course* by Harold A. Innis]