

# The School

*“ Recti cultus pectora roborant ”*

## Editorial Notes

**The War as a School Subject.**—The Minister of Education of the Motherland has instructed his teachers to train their children in the lessons of the war. The Department of Education of Ontario has added “the war, its causes, and the interests at stake” to the school courses and examinations of this Province. President Stanley Hall of Clark University assures us that 80 per cent. of the city schools of the United States give instruction in the war. Everywhere in the English-speaking world schools teach the war with greater or less intensiveness.

No doubt, here and there, especially outside the Empire, the schoolmaster will protest against the new subject. If schools now stagger under an overload of studies, he will say, why force upon them an additional burden? If a multiplicity of subjects has made the teacher's scholarship thin and inaccurate, why add an unnecessary subject? If the history of the last quarter century cannot be taught without bias and in true perspective, how may the school hope to teach history that is not a day old? War is a compelling human interest and yet abounds in the inhuman. Is it safe or is it right to expose the child to absorption in a subject which will fill his imagination with the cruel and the horrible?

But such protests will be very rare, indeed, even outside the Empire. Most teachers will adopt the new subject for its own sake. War, even when as remote as the Balkan war or the Russo-Japanese war, is an absorbing interest. It is good pedagogy to make use of such an interest as a ‘core’ around which to weave other interests or subjects not so highly favoured. The journalist knows this truth and never gets far away from the day's war news. The clergyman knows it and takes his ‘saws and instances’ from the battlefield. The teacher knows it and has the greater need to practise it, because he deals with children.

Discussions of commercial questions do not ordinarily interest children. Let the school teacher show how the closing of the Dardanelles by the Turks affects the price of wheat at Chicago and the school boy is alive with interest! Social and political problems do not appeal to the child's mind, and yet every schoolmaster recognizes the very rapid