

# The School

*"Recti cultus pectora roborant"*

## Editorial Notes

**Examiners and Examinations.**—Mr. Grainger's article on the marking of examination papers which appeared in the September issue of THE SCHOOL has provoked much discussion. His revelations mean great searchings of heart among those of us who have long regarded examinations as an infallible test of school progress.

Mr. Grainger prepared an examination paper for a Middle School class in physics. There was nothing extraordinary about the paper. It was such a paper as any science master might set for such a class during the school session. Mr. Grainger selected by chance one from among the answer papers of his class, mimeographed it, and distributed it with the question paper among the science teachers, and particularly the science specialists, of Ontario. With question-paper and answer-paper went the request that the science teachers should assign values to both questions and answers. Mr. Grainger's article contained a summary of the results.

In considering Mr. Grainger's summary, it is to be remembered that the subject under consideration was physics. The teacher expects, however much he may regret, variation in standards of marking in the languages, in literature, or composition, or history. But Middle School physics has much of the exactness of algebra or geometry and would seem to present few opportunities for diversity. In no subjects, moreover, has greater care been taken to detail the courses of instruction, and therefore of examination than in the sciences. The science master is told exactly what he must teach and exactly what his pupils must know. It must also be mentioned that the science teachers of the Ontario High Schools are unusually competent men. This Province has given much time and thought to the development of an efficient method in science teaching and an efficient staff.

Despite the character of the subject and the character of the examiners, the variation in marking standards exhibited by Mr. Grainger's summary is disquieting, if not startling. The valuations of the answer-paper went as low as 47 per cent and as high as 83 per cent. The average valuation was 63.7 per cent and Mr. Grainger's own valuation