CAREFUL observer watching the men here during the first few days after vacation, would have carried away one definite impression,—that Tech. men have an abnormal amount of inquisitiveness.

On all sides, forming part of every greeting, was heard a repeated endeavor by each man to ascertain what records his classmates had made in each study of the preceding term.

Exhibited in one form or another, each fellow showed a most positive interest in the standing of the other men in his class.

And yet, despite these facts and appearances, such an observer would have been wrong. It was not mere inquisitiveness that led each man to pry into other men's records. They were simply trying to find out what their own might mean. Furnished by the secretary with a report weighed by some unknown and varying standard, they were endeavoring to obtain definite values for their individual records by comparison with the only available standard, the average work of the class to which each belonged.

In certain sections of the Senior Class it was found advantageous to actually obtain an arithmetical mean of the marks given in each subject, in order that each man might know what he personally had done.

That such a state of affairs is not only inconvenient and unsatisfactory, but capable of real injustice, is well realized by the men, few of whom feel that the marks given represent the work accomplished. The mere fact that records are given out shows that they are intended for the information of persons outside the government of the Institute, primarily for the student and his parents. To serve the purpose for which they are issued, they must be intelligible; that is, they must be capable of ready reference to some clearly understood standard. And what is that standard at the Institute? Nowhere in the catalogue, in the President's report, on any of the numerous bulletin boards, or in any report issued individually to the men, is to be found any statement as to whether we are ranked on the amount we know of a subject as taught at the Institute, or as known to mankind; whether a credit in a difficult engineering subject and one in an easier English course is given for the same absolute amount of application, or for the same proportionate knowledge of each subject; and yet, by each of these different standards, marks were given on the work of last term.

If "passed" and "failed" were the only ranks given, there would be no ground for confusion; but as long as a graded system of mark-