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Editorial

At its General Meeting in March 1983, the Irish Mathematical Society decided to seek closer links with the Irish Mathematics Teachers' Association. This move, together with other activities of some of our members, e.g. the organisation of the National Mathematics Contest, contributions to the recent Irish Times Supplement on Mathematics (September 27, 28), the submission on the Intermediate Certificate Geometry course to the Syllabus Committee etc., show a greater awareness of the necessity of cooperation with those involved in second level teaching of Mathematics.

The majority of our members are involved in teaching and research at third level institutions. If we wish our students to derive maximum benefit from our activities and encourage some of them to take up careers in Mathematics after graduating, then we should be fully aware of the mathematical experiences students have at second level schools. Any curriculum changes in our courses designed to take account of the changing role and nature of Mathematics must be explained to those who are preparing students to embark on that curriculum. Furthermore, we should examine the syllabi and books used in schools and, where we feel necessary, make effective, cogent and constructive criticisms. School teachers often feel victimised by poor advice from third level mathematicians, while the latter plead that their ideas were never well understood or properly explained.

The links between the two professional organisations should be strengthened and utilized to further the common aim of both groups; the teaching of Mathematics.

Donal Hurley