

IN a recent number of the *McMaster University Monthly* there is a characteristic and finished article entitled *Limæ Labor*, by Dr. Theodore H. Rand.

The action of the Canada Pacific R. R. in refusing to the Charlotte County teachers attending the Institute any reduction in fare was a selfish one. Under other management reduced rates were always accorded and considering the amount of subsidies which the present owners have drawn from the coffers of the country a little return to some of the people might reasonably be looked for. Such action on the part of the road will only have the effect of preventing future meetings of the Institute from taking place at points only reached by that railroad.

The recent utterance of Dr. Inch at Alma will be received by the teachers with satisfaction. As the matter now stands a longer summer vacation is taken, in many districts, than is sanctioned by the regulations and the teachers are not only the losers in the matter of district earnings, but of the government money as well. This, independent of the desire of many teachers for a longer vacation, makes it a proper question to be brought up at institutes as was done in Albert county. As the option of longer holidays is to be left to boards of trustees, it may be advisable for teachers not to take too active a part in obtaining the extension as they may be misjudged in some quarters where boards are apt to go by contraries. We hope that it will be enacted that when once applied for, the extension shall be permanent in that particular district.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Our exchanges tell us of the dismissal of the School Inspectors by the new government, and later still of the Superintendent of Education, and at a season of the year when it is too late for him to expect any other educational opening. We do not profess to know all the facts of the case, and accordingly reserve judgment. But we may say generally, that if school officers are appointed for any other reason than their special fitness for the positions held, the teaching profession should unanimously support a new government in the unpleasant duty of giving the posts to the proper men. But on the other hand, if efficient officers should be removed simply to make way for no better men who thus want payment for their political services, the government should receive no quarter.

The public interests demand, especially in education, that appointments be made solely on account of the fitness of the individual. If political considerations should be shown to determine these, it is a

direct request by the government, that the able men of the profession who seek promotion, should do so, not by endeavoring to excel as educationists, but to intrigue as politicians. What would be the effect of such a stimulus, on our already staggering educational advancement? It is sad to contemplate. There are many reasons why, under ordinary circumstance, teachers should completely repress partizanism. In order to protect the profession from malign government influence it should be done. The less partizan a man is the more his influence is felt when the occasion for its exercise arises. With the teachers of our Provinces as a unit in favor of a true educational policy independent of other political questions, a steady and continuous improvement in our educational conditions would, normally, always exist. Let us in the meantime hope that the drastic treatment of the educational department in our island Province has for its object the appointment of the very best men in its service to the important posts of inspectors and superintendent of education.

ACCURACY IN FIGURES.

We cannot too emphatically call the attention of those who have charge of the promotions in our graded schools to the necessity of the accurate as well as rapid manipulation of figures by pupils from the very beginning. The great majority of mathematical failures in the common and higher schools is due to the lack of thorough initial training. A boy makes a "slip" in work, he finds, when he comes to look at the answer. He goes over the work and soon discovers the mistake, and the answer then comes out all right. The "slip" is considered of little consequence. But is it? When he goes up to examination he makes only one "slip" on an average in each question. That may mean, that he has not one correct, because he has no answer to refer to indicating error. This explains why a 40 per cent. candidate will make only 40 per cent. after a year's study—remain a forty-percenter perhaps through the university. Every "slip" he makes is an education; and as he advances he grows in blundering, *pari passu*. Such persons cannot help "hating" arithmetic and algebra; because when they even understand the principles, they fail in the execution, and conclude they can understand nothing.

The most serious feature of this blundering evil is, that if the habit is once formed it goes on perpetuating itself, and the older the pupil the less hope there is for him. The operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, must be performed mechanically, with rapidity and unerring accuracy for success in mathematical work. Rapidity comes