

sidered, it is better fitted for this purpose than any other metal or substance. It owes its position entirely to its intrinsic worth.

It has come by evolution and will not go even by revolution. We have passed the fish hook, wampum, tobacco, iron, and silver stages of civilization and have entered the golden stage. Each year sees some progressive country stop experimenting with the fickle and fluctuating

silver standard and declare for the staple and world recognized gold standard of value. Possibly we may, by unusual legislation, make silver legal tender for awhile and drive gold out of circulation, but our commercial interests will continue to use gold, and soon all interests will be glad to drop Mexico and China and to return to the society of more advanced nations. —*Byron W. Holt, in the Evanston Press.*

"THE GROWING ILLITERACY OF AMERICAN BOYS."

THE Committee of the Overseers of Harvard College on Composition and Rhetoric last year very severely criticised the examination papers of the entering class, as indeed they had done three years before, and published specimens of them which were admitted on all hands to be deplorable. This was done on the ground that students came up from the leading preparatory schools in such a condition of unfitness, as regards their own tongue, that it was necessary for the college to spend much time, energy, and money in teaching them what they ought to have learnt already. To use Prof. Goldwin's language on this subject, "There was no conceivable justification for using the revenues of Harvard College or the time and strength of her instructors in a vain attempt to enlighten the Egyptian darkness in which no small portion of her undergraduates were sitting."

This report naturally excited a good deal of dissatisfaction among the schoolmasters, which has been much increased by the proposal of the committee to print this year the papers of all the candidates presenting themselves for admission to college from particular schools or academies—the Boston Latin School, for instance,

and Mr. Noble's, and Messrs. Brown & Nichol's, and the Roxbury Latin—thus at once bringing into contrast the methods pursued and the results achieved in those schools.

The principals of these schools have accordingly filed the following protest with the Board of Overseers:

"We, the principals of the schools named in this report, wish to protest against the action proposed therein, for two reasons:

"(1.) Such a comparison as is suggested, of papers of candidates from specified schools, would establish a dangerous precedent, and is a new departure for Harvard College, which has been scrupulously careful in the past to treat all fitting-schools alike.

"(2.) We contend that sight translations from Latin, Greek, French, or German made in a limited time, under a great nervous strain, are not evidence of a candidate's general ability or inability to write good English.

"While we regret the growing illiteracy of American boys as much as your committee does, we cannot feel that the schools should be held solely responsible for evils which are chiefly due to the absence of literary interest and of literary standards in the community.

"No school shuns a discussion of plans and methods of teaching or a comparison of results achieved, but no school is willing to carry such discussion and comparison before the general public, which, from the nature of the case, cannot appreciate the true value of the evidence submitted, and must therefore draw false inferences.