

widen, the level of home morality is sure to degenerate. We can depend only on our schools for training good citizens. In the past the attention of teachers has been too exclusively turned toward the cultivation of the intellect. Let us hope that signs which he who runs might read will not be disregarded, and that for the pre-

sent we may cease to quarrel about instruction in theology, until we shall have done a little more in the direction of teaching the children in simple morality—in those things which are true and just and lovely and of good report, against which there is no law, and can be no rational opposition.—*The Westminster.*

COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC.

HARVARD COMMITTEE.

THE celebrated series of reports of the Harvard committee on composition and rhetoric, which have caused so wholesome a perturbation in the educational world, has come to an end. There have been four of them, each loaded with dynamite, and the members of the committee, Charles Francis Adams, E. L. Godkin, and George R. Nutter, think that the desired object has been accomplished and that further discussion may be postponed till 1920, or thereabouts. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of the statement made in the last of these reports, No. 71, that "the attainment of the end it has all along had in view may be assumed. Correct, elementary, written English will in the near future be scientifically taught as part of the primary and secondary education." In brief, the colleges will soon be able to drop the rudimentary work in grammar, spelling and composition which has been forced upon them, and confine themselves to the proper field of collegiate work, while the many graduates of the lower schools who are unable to go to college will no longer be left without a sound training in the use of their mother tongue. It is a long stride forward, and the Harvard committee has had a large share in its accomplishment. In one of its earlier reports, the famous No. 28, the com-

mittee mercilessly exposed the weakness of entering freshmen by giving specimens of their work, reproduced in fac-simile. In its last document it undertakes to show some of the causes of this weakness and to point out the wrong ideals which many schools have adopted in their haste to comply with the sharp lesson from Harvard. To this end all the students in the various English courses at Harvard were requested to describe the work in composition which they had before entering college, and to criticise it in the light of their subsequent experience and instruction. Extracts from the 1,300 papers received have been selected, classified, and published in the present report.

The documents are entertaining and instructive in a high degree, and the reader can readily make allowance for the measure of injustice which could hardly fail to result from setting so many immature young persons to criticise their former teachers. But after eliminating prejudiced criticism, and it should be said that nearly all the papers presented show a commendable fairness of spirit, there is still abundance of evidence of the faulty and ill-judged character of the instruction given. As to the actual attainments of the graduates of secondary schools, the committee finds that while there has been encouraging pro-