

beings, even young human beings, are not parrots, and mere words are nothing without the thoughts which they clothe.

This discontent is not without method. It takes this form :— Information must be imparted through our mother tongue alone. That is, we must concentrate our efforts upon English, and throw out of our schools all other languages, living and dead. A trifling knowledge of geography will do, and the "four ground rules of arithmetic" will be amply sufficient for all business purposes.

So simple a remedy for existing evils is undoubtedly plausible. It teaches, however, only one fact. The real, but unappreciated objection to our school system, is in the subject of reading. Reading is the one study that is either very irrationally taught, or not taught at all. In fact, the English language, from the district school to the university, is so completely neglected that unexceptionable English, even in books, is becoming rare. It is the basis of our system of education; there is not a graded school in the land that is not graded by the reading book; yet in handling the subject, the teacher often fails to impart even information.

If teachers do not learn to teach English better, no revision of courses of study will remove the defects that now exist. Certainly no more information can be taught than is now taught by existing methods, or want of methods. With all our shortcomings, good scholars, provided a regular course of instruction is taken, do go out from the schools in moderately large numbers. The trouble is not at its worst, then, in our grammar and high schools: it is very largely confined to schools below those grades. There is no necessity, then, for the sweeping changes that are over-zealously advocated by reformers. There is no special need of throwing out other languages, no occasion for popular practical work or industrial schools. The one great thing to do is to make English a real study, not a pretence as it now too frequently is, and all the practical reforms of our school system will be attained.

How can this be done in a rational way? To develop in our schools a knowledge of English that will prepare the way for its mastery, requires a careful study of reading, grammar, rhetoric and literature. The first three branches belong to the lower schools, the last to the high schools. At present, a course in English often rejects rhetoric. Logic may be omitted, because its study is not essential to the comprehension or mere expression of a thought; but rhetoric cannot be, because all complexity of