

such a way as to convert the symbols into reality, books are useless. We were quite sure that we could impart it.

Now it seems that unless the pupil chooses to receive it, we are attempting to fill a bottle with a cork in it. As for getting pupils to reproduce it after it has been supposed to be imparted, we all know what a delusion that is. You tell a child something about Sir Walter Raleigh, and when he produces his so-called knowledge some six weeks or six months later, you find that Sir Walter Raleigh has been metamorphosed into Sir Walter Scott. You give him a careful account of Noah's Ark, and by-and-by he tells you that the children of Israel carried it on their shoulders for forty years in the wilderness. The knowledge you had fondly imagined that you had communicated comes up in such a transformed con-

dition that you do not recognize it. It has been re-arranged; the head has been converted into the tail; the proportions have been altered; some old parts have totally disappeared; new parts have been introduced of alien material; the brain has been invariably removed, as was the case with those mummies of which we have recently heard so much, and apparently for the same purpose, as an indispensable condition of preservation.

Ignorant of what the mind is, of what knowledge is, and of what education is, is it surprising that we should fall back on what these things are *like*, and conceal our ignorance by a multiplicity of metaphors? We have no other course open to us. We are compelled by the nature of the case to use a language of make-believe, and talk in figures.—*The Educational Times*.

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.*

BY ALFRED AINGER.

THE study of English literature in our schools and colleges on a scale proportionate to its importance is of comparatively recent date. I suppose we should not be far wrong in fixing that date at about thirty years back. Up to that time, although the colleges in London and other great centres could boast distinguished professors of the subject, it had hardly been recognized, even in the higher forms of schools at all. School histories of England, in an appendix to the successive chapters, may have furnished the names of the great authors in prose and verse who adorned each reign, with a list of their more important works, but that was all.

To whom the credit is due of leading the movement which has brought about the remarkable change in this respect, it might be difficult to say. But there is no doubt that the movement received a great impetus about the time just mentioned by the publication, through the Clarendon Press at Oxford, of a series of selected works of the great English classics, thoroughly edited and annotated, under the general direction of the late Professor Brewer, of King's College. Single plays of Shakespeare, separate portions of the "Canterbury Tales," selected poems of Dryden, and so forth, were one by one issued, under the care of the editors best qualified for the task, and at a price that made them available for use in all the higher class schools and colleges in the

* An address delivered at University College, Bristol, at the opening of the session 1889-90.