

"Can you teach English thoroughly?"

"No; but I can impart the elements of Esquimaux or the rudiments of Volapuk."

"Can you teach the higher mathematics?"

"No; but I can calculate to a fraction what \$700 a year is a week."

"Do you understand live stock; could you instruct a class in agriculture?"

"No; but I can tell a sheep from a pig, at least I think so, and I once boarded with a farmer."

"Can you perform on the horizontal bars?"

"No; but I can on the chopsticks."

"Can you swing clubs, or put a squd through its extension motions?"

"No; but I can waltz a little, and when a lad, that is some thirty-five years ago, more or less, I could turn cart wheels and stand on my head."

The Hindu cook in the long run has the best of it. After bragging of his culinary resources, and being let down gently rung by rung of the ladder of his deceit, he is allowed to walk off on *terra firma* with a mild rebuke and advice to study the early life of General Washington. His hyperbolic professions are a source of amusement rather than otherwise. With his fair-skinned fellow-professional of the West it is different. With him it is an unpardonable sin to be convicted of ignorance on any subject. It is the depth of depravity to be unable to convince an enlightened public that after having obtained the intellectual status of a Solon, one has not likewise specially prepared oneself for the honourable positions of a Blondin or a contortionist. To teach Sanskrit is admirable, to understand one's mother tongue and to be able to employ it without blundering at every third word or construction, is at least not criminal, but, *ehu!* not

to be able to walk a tight rope or swing a bludgeon, and at forty or fifty, peradventure sixty years of age, *fiat justitia, ruat cælum*, let the unprofitable servant be cast into outer darkness where there shall be neither calisthenics nor annual inspections. Fancy a Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford inviting his class out into the quadrangle to an exhibition of fancy drill conducted by himself!

"Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." To what madness is this educational craze of the nineteenth century leading presumably intelligent men who call themselves leaders, and who think they are entitled to the name? Is there any sense of the eternal fitness of things left to the Reformer of the nineteenth century? Is there any such trite maxim as *infra dig.* left in the Delectus of life? Is there any idea of natural aptitude or inaptitude left to the progressive or rather impulsive tyrant of modern innovation?

The office of drill sergeant is an honourable one, and there are individuals, worthy members of society, specially fitted by nature and art for the position. The office of mental sergeant is, despite the clap-trap respecting the ancient pedagogue, also an honourable one, and presumably individuals may likewise be found specially fitted by nature and art for the performance of its duties; but to suppose that every diver after Anglo-Saxon roots, or wrestler with Greek particles, has been endowed by nature with the faculty, or by art with the accomplishment, or by personal preference with a desire to stand on his head, or pose as a scholastic Ajax defying the disturbed molecules of outraged space, before a class of struggling, panting and red-faced hobble-de-hoy, and Noah's ark maidens corsetted to kill at two thousand yards, is "wasteful and ridiculous excess" of the prophetic function of