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## Resolution From Poet's Corner

(continued from previous page)

how they would have taught English to Chaucer."

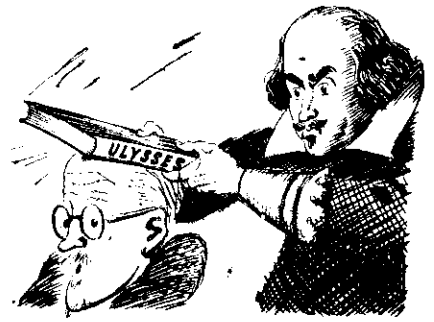
"Possibly," suggested Bacon, "these Committee people of yours feel a little diffident: they may be modest souls. I believe what they suffer from mostly is nowadays called inferiority complex. Perhaps they feel they are failures, and out of the goodness of their hearts they do not wish to create a brains trust quite as lacking in brains as themselves. So they suggest altering the system."

"But they are not lacking in brains, Master Bacon," said the New Zealander. "You wrong them. Fair dinkum you do! They mean well. They simply put forward suggestions to improve the education of the rising generation."

"To produce better citizens than themselves?"

"I suppose so."

"Then let us sincerely hope that they succeed, so that we hear no more of this nonsense. Why, under this new system Will Shakespeare might have been trained to 'function' as a furrier: Johnson as a merchant . . ."



"... No more of this nonsense"

"What! Me a merchant?" exclaimed the Doctor, perturbed. "Did you say merchant? So many gross of this and that? So many barrels and firkins? So many bales and crates? Faugh!"

"Or as a typesetter: Milton may have been trained to 'function' as a mere civil servant. Ods Bodikins!"

"As I stated before," claimed Milton, "I was a splendid civil servant, in spite of my poetry."

"You mean you were a splendid poet in spite of being a civil servant," said Doctor Johnson.

"By the way," inquired Dickens, "was it after or before you left the civil service that you wrote *Paradise Regained*?"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," the New Zealander exclaimed. "I do thank you and thank you again . . . but I think I'll have to return to my duties. There's . . . there's a war on, you know."

"One word before you go," put in the talented author of *Areopagitica*. "These moderns of yours. They're supposed to be pretty brainy?"

The New Zealander hesitated.

"You know," Milton went on, "George Bernard Shaw, Professor Joad, Winston Churchill—they're not exactly failures in life? They're thought a good deal of by the present generation?"

"Oh, yes," the New Zealander assured him, "each has established . . . well, a bit of a reputation."

"Were they taught to express themselves under the old system or under the new?"

"Under the old system. The new has not yet been tried out."

"Thank you. Personally, I should hate to take a chance of stifling future Shaws and Joads and Churchills in a post-primary schools' experiment . . . but I suppose a Committee, well. . . . Why do you laugh, Will?"

Shakespeare resumed a serious expression.

"I'm sorry," he said, "I was just thinking how glad I am that I am not about to enter — all unsuspecting — a post-primary school in New Zealand. I thank my lucky stars I went to Stratford Grammar School, with accent on the *grammar*."

Doctor Johnson concluded, "And you tell that to your people, sir. You tell that to your people."



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