

## NATIONAL EDUCATION.

THE importance of National Education is a truth now pretty generally confessed even by those who do nothing to advance it. It is not therefore necessary to use many arguments to shew how much it conduces to the well being of all governments, that the people should be well instructed. It may suffice at present to address those who think that too much knowledge in the people may diminish the sanction of the laws, in the words of Bacon; "To say that a blind custom of obedience should be a surer obligation, than duty taught and understood; it is to affirm that a blind man may tread surer by a guide, than a seeing man by a light."

The omission of national education is the less excusable, since the invention of printing has made it easier. But there is yet another consideration, which, though paradoxical, will, I think, turn out to be true; and that is, that in those countries where the lower orders are not taught to read, the invention of printing is not merely useless, but actually hurtful to them. Let us look to the days of ancient Greece, when books were produced by much labour, and were consequently rare. Knowledge then was communicated almost entirely by word of mouth in public. How was the history of Herodotus published? By recitation at the Olympic Games. On such an occasion, in such an assembly, as the loadstone draws iron, the historian would attract around him all the spirits capable of appreciating and imitating his merits.—Thucydides, it is said, was one of this audience, and shed tears of pleasure and emulation at the eloquent periods of the historian, at the deep silence which drank his words, at the mighty applause which followed them. The tears of Thucydides were not unprofitable. They produced the history of the Peloponnesian war. So the lectures of the philosophers

**Η** ωφέλεια ἢ προερχομένη ἀπὸ τὴν ἐκπαίδευσιν ἐνὸς ἔθνους ὁμολογεῖται πλέον καὶ ἀπ' αὐτοὺς ἀκόμη τοὺς εἰς τοῦτο ἀδιαφοροῦντας. Δὲν εἶναι χρεῖα λοιπὸν νὰ μεταχειρισθῇ τις λόγους πολλοὺς πρὸς ἀπόδειξιν τοῦ πόσον συμφέρει εἰς ἐκάστην πολιτείαν, ὥςτε ὁ λαὸς τῆς νῆ ἦναι ἐκπαιδευμένος· ἀρκεῖ μόνον νὰ ἀντιπροβάλλῃ τις πρὸς ἐκείνους, οἱ ὅποιοι ἤθελαν φρονεῖν ὅτι ἡ ὑπερβολικὴ καθολικευτικὴ τῆς παιδείας εἰς ἓνα λαὸν σφικτοῦναι τὸ κύρος τῶν νόμων, ἀρκεῖ λέγω, νὰ ἀντιπροβάλλῃ τοὺς λόγους τοῦ Βάκωνος. “Τὸ νὰ εἴπῃ τις,” λέγει ὁ μέγας οὗτος ἀνὴρ, “ὅτι τυφλὴ συνήθεια ὑποταγῆς ἤθελεν εἶσθαι σθενωτέρως δεσμὸς παρὰ τὸ διὰ τῆς διδασκαλίας ἐγνωσμένον καθήκον, εἶναι τὸ ἴδιον ὡς νὰ δυσχυρίζετο, ὅτι ἄνθρωπος τυφλὸς ἤμπορεῖ νὰ περιπατήσῃ ἀσφαλές· μετὰ οὗτο, παρὰ ἄνθρωπον βλέποντα καὶ κρατοῦντα λύχνον.,

Ἡ παραμέλεια τῆς ἐθνικῆς ἐκπαιδεύσεως ἀποβαίνει πλέον ἀναπολόγητος, ἀφ' οὗ ἡ ἐφεύρεσις τοῦ τύπου κατέστησεν αὐτὴν εὐκολωτέραν. Πλὴν ὑπάρχει ἀκόμη καὶ ἄλλη τις παρατήρησις, ἡ ὁποία, ἂν καὶ παράδοξος, σοχάζομαι ὅμως ὅτι δὲν θίλει ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι, τοιούτων ὅτι, εἰς ἐκείνους τοὺς τύπους, ὅπου ὁ κοινὸς λαὸς δὲν μανθάνει νὰ ἀναγινώσκη, ἡ ἐφεύρεσις τοῦ τύπου εἶναι ὅχι μόνον ἀνωφελὲς, ἀλλὰ καὶ βλαβερὰ.

Αἱ ἐπιρρίψωμεν, παραδείγματος χάριν, τὰ βλέμματά μας εἰς τοὺς καιροὺς τῆς ἀρχαίας Ἑλλάδος, τῆς τροφῆς τῶν καλῶν ὧλων καὶ διδατκίλου τῶν σοφῶν παιδευμάτων. Κατ' ἐκείνους τοὺς καιροὺς τὰ βιβλία ἐγράφοντο μὲ πολλὴν κόπον, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἦσαν σπάνια. Οἱ τότε σχεδὸν ἡ παιδεία ἐκοινωνεῖτο διὰ ζωῆς φωνῆς δημοσίως. Πῶς ἐξεδύθη τὸν Ἡροδότου ἡ ἱστορία· διὰ δημοσίου βέβαια ἀπαγγελίας· εἰς τοὺς Ολυμπιακοὺς ἀγῶνας. Ἀπὸ τριαύτης συνάξις, καθὼς ὁ μηχανήτης ἐφέλκει τὸν σίδηρον, ὁ ἱστορικὸς ἤθελεν ἐφελκύσει περὶ ἐαυτὸν ὅλα τὰ πνεύματα, τὰ δυνάμενα νὰ ἐκτιμῇ.

were all verbal, and most of them public. Now the advantage of this system was, that the poorest and most ignorant man in the state, if he had talent, might profit by the same means of education, as the rich and scientific. He might turn, if such were his taste, from the contests of strength and swiftness at the games, to the nobler strife of imagination and memory. He might always find some corner in the Portico to listen to the sublime lesson, that there is no real evil but vice; nor would the groves of Academus ever be so crowded, as not to leave him a shade, where he might learn the noblest of employments, the search for truth. Nay, let him come reeling home, like Polemo, from the midnight banquet, he might stray by a lucky error into a School, where he might be taught by the calm accents of the philosopher, first to blush for what he was, and then to become what he was not. By such means there was less chance of a rich and powerful mind rotting away for want of cultivation: The poor shared in a great degree the polite education of the rich; and to this perhaps may be attributed the elegance and refinement of the plays and the speeches, which were composed for popular assemblies.

But in modern times, literary men give themselves no trouble to recite their discoveries in public: they content themselves with laying before the world one single copy of their works, knowing that in a short time it will be multiplied and dispersed over the world by the magical power of the press. But who will benefit by this? Those who can read. Those who cannot read are not only shut out from the sight of the books, but being also deprived of all opportunities of hearing recitations, they remain in profound ignorance of that improvement which is silently flowing into the minds of the higher orders. This produces an invisible but strong line of separation between the manner of thinking of the rich and the poor; a separation not necessarily resulting from the nature of things, and which did not exist in so great a degree in former times.

πωσι καὶ νὰ μιμηθῶσι τὰς ἀρετὰς του. Ο Θουκυδίδης, ὡς λέγουν, ἦτον εἰς ἀπὸ τούτους τοὺς ἀκραζομένους τὸν πικτέρα τῆς ἱστορίας, καὶ ἔχουσε δάκρυα ἡδονῆς καὶ ἀμίλλης εἰς τὰς ἐντόνους ἐκείνου περὶδους, εἰς τὴν βαθεῖαν σιωπὴν, μὲ τὴν ὁποίαν ἤκουοντο οἱ λόγοι του, εἰς τὴν μεγάλην ἐπικρότησιν, ἣ ὁποία τὴν διεδέχθη. Τὰ δάκρυα τοῦ Θουκυδίδου δὲν ἦσαν ἀκαρπὰ ἀπὸ αὐτὰ ἐγεννήθη ἡ ἱστορία τοῦ Πελοποννησιακοῦ πολέμου. Οὕτως ἀκόμη καὶ αἱ διδασκαλίαι τῶν φιλοσόφων ἐγίνοντο ὅλαι διὰ ζώσης φωνῆς, καὶ σχεδὸν ὅλαι δημοσίως. Τὸ καλὸν λοιπὸν τοῦ τρόπου τούτου ἦτον, ὅτι καὶ ὁ πτωχότερος ἄνθρωπος τῆς πολιτείας ἠμποροῦσεν, ἂν εἶχε πνεῦμα, νὰ ὠφεληθῇ ἀπὸ τὰ αὐτὰ μαθήματα, καθὼς καὶ ὁ πλουσιώτερος. Αὐτὸς ἠμποροῦσε νὰ μεταβῇ ἀπὸ τοὺς σωματικούς ἀγῶνας τῆς ταχυποδίας καὶ πυγμαχίας εἰς τὴν γενναιοτέραν πάλιν τῆς φαντασίας καὶ τῆς μνήμης. ἠμποροῦσε πάντοτε νὰ καθέξῃ γωνίαν τινα εἰς τὴν Στραν, διὰ νὰ ἀκούσῃ τὸ ὑψηλὸν μάθημα, "ὅτι ἡ ἀρετὴ εἶναι τὸ μόνον ἀγαθόν" καθὼς ἀκόμη οὐδὲ τὸ σκιερὸν δάσος τῆς Ακαδημίας δὲν ἤθελεν εἰσθαί ποτε τόσον στενόχωρον, ὥς νὰ μὴ μείνῃ εἰς αὐτὸν μία σκιά, ὑποκάτω τῆς ὁποίας νὰ μάθῃ τὴν καλητέραν ὅλων τῶν ἐργασιῶν, τὴν ζήτητιν δηλονότι τῆς ἀληθείας. Τὶ περισσύτερον; ἐκβαίνων τις καὶ μεθυσμένος ἀπὸ τὸ καπηλεῖον ἠμποροῦσεν ἴσως κατ' εὐτυχίαν πλάνην, καθὼς ὁ Πολέμων, νὰ προσκόψῃ εἰς διδασκαλεῖον, ὅπου ἠμποροῦσε νὰ μάθῃ ἀπὸ τοὺς πρεῖς τόνους τοῦ φιλοσόφου πρῶτον, νὰ ἐρυθριάσῃ εἰς τὴν κατὰσάσιν του, καὶ ἔπειτα νὰ γίνῃ καλὸς κἀγαθός.

Τούτων οὕτως ἐχόντων, δὲν ἤθελε ποτὲ χαθῇ τὸ ζωηρὸν καὶ δραστήριον πνεῦμα δι' ἑλλείψιν μαθημάτων. Οἱ πτωχοὶ ἐμέτεχαν εἰς μέγα μέρος ἀπὸ τὰς μαθήσεις τῶν πλούσιων καὶ εἰς τοῦτο πρέπει ἴσως νὰ ἀποδώσωμεν τὴν ὡραιότητα καὶ τὴν κομψότητα τῶν τραγωidiῶν, τῶν κωμωδιῶν, καὶ τῶν λόγων τῶν συγγραφέων διὰ τὰς δημοσίους συνάξεις. Τώρα ὁμως ὁ περὶ ὁποιασδήποτε τέχνης ἢ ἐπιστήμης συγγραφέων δὲν ἀναλαμβάνει εἰς ἑαυτὸν τόσον κόπον, ὥς νὰ ἐκθέσῃ διὰ ζώσης φωνῆς δημοσίως τὰς ἐφευρέσεις του. Ἀρκεῖ εἰς αὐτὸν νὰ δώσῃ εἰς τὸ κοινὸν ἐν μίῳ ἀντίγραφον τοῦ Βιβλίου του· διότι ἡξεύρει, ὅτι τὸ ἀντίγραφον

Let us look for an instance in the science of legislation, in which within the last century an immense improvement has taken place. This improvement is as completely hidden from those who cannot read, as if it had never been discovered; nor can they at all appreciate the motives of the lawgiver who introduces it. Whereas if the doctrines of Beccaria, of Montesquieu, and of Bentham had been constantly recited, and their different systems discussed in public, many of the lower class, even in countries where reading is not general, would have imbibed the truths taught by these authors, and would have communicated them to others.

Let no one think that I mean to undervalue the usefulness of the art of printing, which is the greatest engine for the improvement of man. My only object is to remind those upon whom the duty of education rests, that a people, who have lost the habit of gaining instruction by the ear, and have not yet attained the art of taking it in by the eye, is in a state of moral degradation, to which we can find no parallel in the ages, which preceded our boasted and justly prized invention.

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τοῦτο θέλει πολλαπλασιασθῇ καὶ διαδοθῇ εἰς ὅλα τὰ ἔθνη διὰ τῆς μαγικῆς δυνάμεως τοῦ τύπου. Ἀλλὰ τίς ἤθελεν ὠφελθῇ ἐκ τούτου; ἐκεῖνος βέβαια, ὅστις ἤξεύρει νὰ ἀναγινώσκη. Εκείνοι ἐξ ἐναντίας, οἱ ὅποιοι δὲν ἠμποροῦν νὰ ἀναγινώσκωσιν, ὅχι μόνον στεροῦνται τῆς γνώσεως τῶν βιβλίων, ἀλλὰ ἀκόμη καὶ ὡς μὴν ἔχοντες καμμίαν δημόσιον ἀπαγγελίαν διδασκαλίας μένουσιν εἰς βαθυτάτην ἀγνοίαν τῶν ἐπιστημῶν ἐκείνων, αἱ ὁποῖαι ἡσύχως εἰσέρουσι εἰς τὸν νοῦν τοῦ πεπαιδευμένου. Τὰ πράγματα ταῦτα φέρουσιν διαίρεσιν τινὰ ἀνεπαίσθητον μὲν, πλὴν πολλὰ δυνατόν μεταξὺ τῶν πτωχῶν καὶ τῶν πλουσίων ὡς πρὸς τὸν τρόπον τοῦ σοχάζεσθαι· διαίρεσιν ὅμως, ἡ ὁποία δὲν πηγάζει ἀναγκαίως ἀπὸ τὴν φύσιν τῶν πραγμάτων, καὶ ἡ ὁποία δὲν ὑπῆρχε τοιαύτη εἰς τοὺς παλαιοὺς καιροὺς τῆς Ελλάδος.

Ὡς λάβωμεν παράδειγμα τῆς ὑποθέσεώς μας ἀπὸ τὴν ἐπιστήμην τῆς νομοθεσίας, ἡ ὁποία κατὰ τὴν παρελθούσαν ἑκατονταετηρίδα ἔκαμε μεγάλας προόδους. Αἱ πρόοδοι αὗται οὕτως ἀγνοοῦνται ἀπὸ τοὺς μὴ δυναμένους νὰ ἀναγινώσκωσιν, ὡς καὶ ἂν δὲν ἤθελαν ποτὲ γίνεαι· οὐδὲ ἠμποροῦσαν ὀλοτελῶς ποτὲ οἱ τοιοῦτοι νὰ ἐκτιμήσωσι τοὺς σκοποὺς τοῦ νομοθέτου, ἐνῶ πλέον οὗτος ἤθελε μεταβάλλει καὶ κελλίνει τοὺς νόμους. Ἀλλ' ἐὰν αἱ διδασκαλῖαι τοῦ Βερκαρίου, τοῦ Μοντεσκίου, τοῦ Βενθάμου, ἀπηγγέλλοντο συνεχῶς, τὰ δὲ διάφορα αὐτῶν συστήματα ἐξετάζοντο δημοσίως, πολλοὶ ἀπὸ τὸν κοινὸν λαόν, ἀκόμη καὶ εἰς τοὺς τόπους, εἰς τοὺς ὁποίους ἡ τέχνη τῆς ἀναγνώσεως δὲν ὑπάρχει διαδεδομένη, ἤθελαν μάθει τὰ ἀπὸ τοὺς συγγραφεῖς τούτους διδασχέας ἀληθείας, καὶ ἤθελαν τὰς κοινοποιήσει ἀκόμη καὶ εἰς ἄλλους.

Μὴν ὑπολάβῃ τις, ὅτι σκοπεύομεν διὰ τούτου νὰ καταφρονήσωμεν τὴν ὠφέλειαν τοῦ τύπου, τῆς μεγίστης ταύτης μηχανῆς εἰς τὴν πρόοδον τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἐπιστήμης· ἅπασι! Ἡβελήσαμεν μόνον νὰ ὑπομνήσωμεν τοὺς κυβερνήτας τῶν ἐθνῶν, ὅτι λαός, ὅστις ἔχασε τὰ μέσα τοῦ νὰ ἀποκτῇ γνώσεις διὰ τῆς ὁράσεως ὑπάρχει εἰς κατάστασιν ἠθικῆς ἐκπτώσεως, τῆς ὁποίας δὲν ἔχομεν παράδειγμα εἰς ὅλους τοὺς αἰῶνας τοὺς πρὸ τῆς τόσον ἐπαινετῆς καὶ δικαίως τιμωμένης ἐφευρέσεώς μας.