

**THREE LECTURES
ON LIBERAL
EDUCATION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649022335

Three Lectures on Liberal Education by John Snelling Popkin

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOHN SNELLING POPKIN

**THREE LECTURES
ON LIBERAL
EDUCATION**

THREE LECTURES

ON

LIBERAL EDUCATION.

BY

JOHN SNELLING POPKIN, D. D.

CAMBRIDGE:

FOLSOM, WELLS, AND THURSTON,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

1886.

Recd. Dec. 16, 1836.
H. W. Childs.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Three Lectures were delivered in the way of office, and are now published by way of occupation. They are of a general character, treating chiefly of the manner of Instruction, and of the matter of Education. If they be found acceptable, I shall be gratified; and more so, if useful. If not, I must bear my own burden.

JOHN S. POPKIN.

Cambridge, July 4th, 1836.



LECTURE I.

THE name of SAMUEL ELIOT, the munificent Founder of the Professorship of Greek Literature, is extensively known, and highly respected, for his strong and vigorous intellect, his judicious and successful operations, and his active and effective benevolence. I was his townsman, and we all knew Mr. Eliot's zeal for good works; and I think these significant words of the Apostle may be aptly and justly applied to him: "zealous of good works." The design of this Foundation is obvious, and is understood to be that of engaging a person, and a succession of persons, in the permanent study and instruction of the Greek Language and Literature. Or, in the words of the Law on the subject: "It shall be the duty of the Professor to cultivate and promote the knowledge of the Greek Language and of Greek Literature." This generous purpose and donation show the high sense, entertained by an enlarged and enlightened mind, of the importance of the study to a liberal education, and to the Christian Religion. The interest of learning held a high place in his estimation; but, doubtless, the highest object and motive was to promote the knowledge of that language, in which the volume of divine truth and grace was composed and is preserved; and in which the faith and the

sentiments of its living and dying martyrs are recorded for a testimony to all succeeding generations.

The regulation and direction of the Office were referred to the highest authorities of the University; and their Ordinances, we are informed, were approved by the Founder. The duties prescribed and implied are formidably extensive and arduous. The Professor "shall give public and private lectures, as the Corporation may determine, on the genius, structure, characteristics, and excellencies of the Greek language in the purest age of the language, and in the period succeeding, not neglecting the state of it in modern times; on the principal Greek authors, taking notice of the Greek Fathers and ecclesiastical writers; and on the interpretation of the Septuagint Version, and of the Greek New Testament, especially so far as such interpretation may be aided by a knowledge of Greek." He "shall give private lectures or exercises to such of the graduates and undergraduates, as may come under his care, in which he shall assign portions of Greek authors to be studied by the pupils. In these exercises it will be his duty to explain and illustrate the work under consideration; to observe the sentiments, spirit, style, and general execution; the imagery and rhetorical beauties; that the University may send out alumni, who possess a discriminating knowledge of the renowned productions of Grecian authors, and the powers of the Grecian language."

These duties, to be taken in their full measure, and executed with happy success, require high and bright talents, and strenuous and unremitting exertion; a force, and extent, and versatility of genius, an apt-

ness and correctness of taste and judgment, which are no common portion of human nature. Viewed in all their nature, and relation, and extension, they require an almost incompatible combination of powers and of labors; an untiring industry, a keen accuracy, an ardent investigation, a solid judgment, a rapid execution, a happy expression; and to crown all, to make his works and his words impressive and effectual, one must have a hearty, overweening and overbearing enthusiasm. He must have a wide comprehension and variety of knowledge. He must be a grammarian, a rhetorician, a logician, an historian, a politician, a philosopher, natural and moral, a mathematician and a poet. At least, he must have a good taste for poetry, eloquence, and elegance; for a chief object of these studies is presented in the poetry, eloquence, and elegance of a people the most celebrated for genius and taste in the world.

Such being the objects presented, and the talents required, one may well be inclined to shrink from the undertaking. It is a work not for one man alone, but for many to employ themselves in divided and distributed labor. An industrious and learned German, as I understand, gives a course of lectures on a single book of no great dimensions. But Professor Dalzel writes in his Lectures: "There are still extant near three thousand Greek books, and about sixty only in Latin, exclusive of those written by the moderns." I have not made the enumeration, nor know by what rule it was made, whether authors, or works, or fragments, or volumes, are counted. But still, I think, the number of authors and works extant is great, even if those be not counted, of

whom only a few fragments remain. The time also and space, through which the whole study extends, is measured by the ages and the regions of the world. Including the Septuagint Version of the Hebrew Scriptures, and the interesting period of Modern Greece, it reaches from the beginning of the world to the present time. In its relations with India and the Sanscrit, and with all Asia and Europe and their languages, with Egypt and all Africa, it spreads from the Ganges to the Atlantic Ocean. And in the connexions of history and mankind, in the comparison of languages and modes of communication, it might be extended from the extreme east to the extreme west of the habitable globe.

But we must prudently and necessarily be confined to a narrower compass. The objects and duties prescribed are sufficiently extensive, and more than sufficient for one of moderate ability, and moderate performance; and who can boast no power, nor art, but attention and perseverance. It was proper and right, that the constituting authorities should take a large view of the principal objects of the office, and should set them in wide extent and variety before the mind of the officer. But, I presume, it must be implied and understood, that he should proceed on those points, and in those courses, which he sees and feels that he can pursue with the best advantage, on his own part, and that of the hearers. For this purpose, and for all the purposes of life, the rule of Socrates, and of Hesiod, is a good precept, and exhortation, and justification: *Kaddónavav*; or in plain English, We must do as well as we can.