

ON NATIONAL EDUCATION

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649662630

On National Education by Mrs. S. Austin

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

MRS. S. AUSTIN

**ON NATIONAL
EDUCATION**

ON
NATIONAL EDUCATION.

BY
MRS. AUSTIN.

"How many things might be tolerated in peace and left to conscience, if we had but charity!"—MILTON.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1839.

9. ~~75~~



PRINTED BY RICHARD AND JOHN E. TAYLOR,
RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

PREFACE.

THE following remarks on National Education in France was written four years ago, and appeared in the second number of Cochrane's Foreign Quarterly Review. As that journal did not reach a third number, and the public was scarcely aware that it existed, the contents were known to very few.

Some persons interested in the subject of national education, have from time to time suggested to me the expediency of reprinting this article in a separate form. Occupations of another kind, doubts of the value of everything it contains, except the quotations,—but above all, a general and strong disinclination to bring before the public any opinions as mine (especially on subjects of such grave interest), have withheld me till recently, when

seeing that the question must be considered on every side and subjected to thorough discussion, it appeared to me, that a view, however slight and imperfect, of what has been said and done by the Legislature of another country, would not be without its value as a contribution to the materials on which the discussion is to be founded. I was further encouraged by the consideration, that the documents which constitute the substance and worth of the article are not only extremely voluminous, repulsively dry, and in great part irrelevant to the wants and circumstances of England, but are all official and unpublished; consequently not likely to fall in the way of many English readers.

I have therefore decided on submitting it, such as it is, to those who take any interest in the education of the people, though not without considerable fear of being misunderstood.

I am, however, so confident of intending no offence, that I am inclined to hope I can give none. The whole of what follows, with the exception of the notes, was written above

four years ago, consequently can have no reference to the proceedings or the spirit of the present moment.

I would willingly have omitted some of the text, not because I have seen cause to retract any one opinion expressed, but because questions are discussed which (writing in my own name) I should not have had the presumption to touch upon. I should also have been glad to withdraw some remarks, which, though true at the time they were written, are, I rejoice to say, no longer so. But I have altered nothing, that I might not fall under the suspicion of adapting matters of permanent interest and truth to temporary demands.

For me to attempt the advocacy of a party, even had I the disposition, would be so absurd, that I can hardly believe myself obnoxious to the suspicion; but lest any such should arise, I must earnestly and sincerely disclaim the smallest wish or intention of the kind. On the contrary, my wishes, hopes, prayers, are all directed to that moment when the two parties now divided may unite in the great work. The respect, the admiration, and the sympathy which

I have felt while listening to the sentiments or contemplating the labours of some of the members of both parties, have long ago led me to entertain the consolatory belief, that whenever such men come to understand each other and to do each other justice, they will wonder at the suspicion and animosity which have so long prevented their combining their forces against their common enemies, ignorance and vice.

In the mean time, although divided and estranged, they draw from one common source of observation, experience and truth. Every advance in the science of education made by the one party is so much achieved for the advantage of the other.

Both, by even partially enlightening the people, will hasten the time when the people will become conscious of their own wants, and will demand, as a part of their common and permanent institutions, a system of National Education; when they will understand that it is for the interest of the public, and that therefore the public has a right to demand, that every member of the community should, as matter of course and without possibility of

exclusion or exemption, receive such instruction as may enable him to comprehend his most obvious interests, duties and resources,—the most simple and intelligible relations in which he stands to the works of nature, to society, and to his Maker.

This is the end to which the labours of all sects and parties in the cause of education inevitably tend, and will in time accomplish.

So much is love stronger than hate, truth than error, good than evil, that those who imagine themselves enemies, are unconscious, perhaps unwilling, allies in one great and good cause.

S. A.