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Title: Homenagem ao Marquez De Pombal 1782-1882

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Release date: April 29, 2008 [eBook #25239] Most recently updated: January 3, 2021

Language: Portuguese

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Alberto de Magalhães

HOMENAGEM

AO

MARQUEZ DE POMBAL

1782-1882

VALENÇA

Typographia Commercial

1882

AO

MARQUEZ DE POMBAL

POR

Alberto de Magalhães

Poesia recitada no Theatro Valenciano, no sarau litterario-musical de 8 de maio de 1882.

1782-1882

VALENÇA

Typographia Commercial

Meus amigos

Annuindo ao convite para tomar parte do sarau litterario do dia 8 de maio, recitei a poesia que vai lêr-se, e vós applaudindo-a indulgentemente, desejastes possuil-a.

Publicando hoje essa modesta composição, satisfaço o vosso desejo e cumpro um dever, prestando a minha singella homenagem ao Richelieu portuguez, ao nosso maior vulto politico do seculo passado.

Guilherme d'Azevedo—o distincto e chorado escriptor, esse astro de primeira grandeza ha pouco eclypsado no ceu da nossa litteratura, disse do Epico:

«A verdadeira homenagem a Camões ou se paga com uma epopeia ou com um ponto de admiração!

«Julgo preferivel que o meu humilde nome subscreva antes esta segunda prova de respeito. Terá feito uma obra mais duradoura, e, sobretudo, muito mais incontestavel!»

Eu, plagiando aquella phrase tão conceituosa, direi o mesmo de Pombal. Um ponto de admiração seria uma homenagem mais duradoura e incontestavel do que esse punhado de alexandrinos, que, ousadamente, vou sugeitar ao bisturi da critica.

Que ella leve ao menos em conta a humildade do meu nome, que ha pouco tempo ainda firma, nas columnas ignoradas de jornaes de provincia e nas paginas dos almanachs, umas quadras massudas de um lyrismo piégas.

Valença-Maio-1882.

A. M.

Ι

De joelhos heroes! Baixai a fronte altiva, Que passa triumphante, aureolada e viva A sombra d'outro heroe!—a luzitana gloria Que ha um seculo morreu para viver na Historia.

É cedo inda talvez para a consagração; Não 'stão extintas já as luctas da paixão; E a treva—a emulação—debate-se na liça, Emquanto não raiar o dia da Justiça.

Mas vós, a mocidade, a esperança do Futuro, Que altivos caminhaes, com passo bem seguro, Na senda gloriosa e ardua do Progresso; Vós, que haveis de lançar ao solo do Universo A semente feraz da grande Idèa-Nova, Deveis ajoelhar perante aquella cóva, Que encobre veneranda a ossada do gigante Que ha um seculo cahiu em lucta triumphante.

Ide!... ide ensinar ás gerações vindouras Que ha paginas de luz que são immorredouras Na historia das Nações!

Dizei a vossos filhos, Que estão calcados já os gloriosos trilhos Que hão-de conduzir ao fundo de seu peito A força da Justiça e a força do Direito! A noite tenebrosa, a noite dos horrores,
Estendia feroz as suas negras cores
Sobre a Europa abatida e sobre a terra inteira;
Apenas o clarão sinistro da fogueira
Illuminava a custo aquella triste scena;
Sentia-se um rumor como o rugir da hyena,
Havia um cheiro forte e acre e nauseabundo
Subindo em espiraes pelo azul profundo;
A carne a crepitar!.. Os gritos lancinantes!..
Como orgia infernal de velhos Corybantes!

Uma sombra indecisa, impavida e soturna Fluctuava ali á viração nocturna; Era a sombra do Mal—o negro pavilhão Que tinha escripto em sangue um lemma: Religião! E sobre cada corpo, e sobre esses destroços. Conjuncto informe e nú de carnes e de ossos, Andavam a pairar abutres esfaimados, Despedaçando ainda os membros trucidados!

Humildes, evocavam o nome de Jesus,
—O nome da Justiça, o explendor, a Luz;
Traziam n'uma mão um velho Breviario;
A outra segurava o facho incendiario,
Um Christo sobre o peito, aos hombros uma estola...

Era a turba feroz dos filhos de Loyolla.

Portugal acordou, emfim, do seu lethargo; Esgotára de todo o calix mais amargo.

Um homem, um gigante, um genio portentoso Erguera-se de pé, n'um brado poderoso, E disse sem temor áquellas turbas vis.

«Hyenas! recolhei ao fundo dos covis!
Largai a vossa presa, oh tigres sanguinarios!
De joelhos, chacaes! malditos salafrarios!
Hei-de lavar com sangue o sangue da Innocencia,
Matar-vos como cães, matar-vos sem clemencia,
E arrojar, porfim, ás fauces do abysmo,
Os vossos corpos nús e o vosso Fanatismo...

«A verdadeira Fé succede à Hypocrisia; A Noite terminou, reaparece o Dia!»

E o braço poderoso e forte de Pombal Arrebatou da treva o velho Portugal, Para lançar a Luz, para lançar a Gloria, Sobre elle, que era só recordação na Historia.

Exhausto e abatido ao sopro da desgraça, Vergado ao Fanatismo—esse tufão que passa E tenta destruir os brilhos da Rasão— Sentia emmurchecer na sua heroica mão Os louros que colhêra ao sol de cem batalhas. Calára-se o canhão; o fumo das metralhas Ja não tostava a tez aos bravos defensores De Diu e de Malaca!

Esses conquistadores

Que tinham offuscado o nome de Veneza,

Que tinham concebido a audaciosa empresa,

—Na febre do valor, febre de triumphar,—

De avassalar a terra e submetter o mar;

Esse povo de heroes, titanico, indomavel,

Que dera ao mundo leis e fôra inconquistavel,

Já não queria colher da Heroicidade a palma.

III

As gloriosas naus, as naus conquistadoras, Que levavam no tópe as quinas vencedoras, Traficavam agora o oiro, os diamantes, O topazio, o rubi, os limpidos brilhantes, Que outr'ora o Oriente e hoje o Novo-Mundo Lançavam sem cessar do seu ventre fecundo!

E todo esse thesouro, e toda essa riqueza, Era p'ra abastecer a perdularia meza D'essa turba fradesca—a turba de vadios, Que não passavam fome e não passavam frios, Emquanto cá por fóra os tristes proletarios, Famintos, rotos, nús, sem pão e sem salarios, Iam implorar ás portas dos conventos As migalhas servis dos fartos alimentos!

Um rei fraco, imbecil, um rei dissipador, Assim, à imitação do Rei—Inquisidor, Lançava essa riqueza aos tigres de roupeta, Que tinham branca a face e a Consciencia preta.

Em vez de edificar escholas e hospitaes, Surgiam contrucções athleticas, brutaes, Que erguiam ao Azul, ao seio do Infinito, As torres collossaes, gigantes de granito.

IV

Pombal surgiu, emfim, e encetou a lucta, Heroica, gigantesca, audaz e resoluta, Que havia de firmar a nossa autonomia, E á Europa mostrar que era chegado o dia Em que, aniquillada a negra Reacção, O velho Portugal tornava a ser Nação.

A Industria floresceu e a Arte resurgiu; O commercio acordou; de novo se cobriu A vastidão do mar do nosso pavilhão, Que ia transplantar a Civilisação E levar aos confins de todo esse Universo O nome Portuguez, extincto e submerso!

Depois, deixando assim firmado com ardencia O acrisolado amor da nossa independencia, Esse homem genial, espirito gigante, Lançou o seu olhar ainda mais distante: Reformou a Instrucção—o foco da Verdade Que póde approximar o Genio á Divindade.

Um dia—horrivel dia!—um rude cataclysmo Lançou uma cidade ao seio do abysmo. D'essa terra gentil, que se chamou Lisboa, Só restava um montão que fuma e se esborôa!..

Pouco tempo depois erguia-se imponente A nova capital, mais bella e mais ridente...

Calêmos-nos agora!.. Ha-de-se admirar!.. Porque a nossa razão não sabe explicar Gomo é que um braço sò podesse, sem canceira, Alevantar do pó uma cidade inteira! Injusta muita vez, a Critica, ingloria, Quer negar-lhe um logar no pantheon da Historia, Chamando-lhe cruel, carrasco de mil vidas, A elle, que remiu as raças opprimidas, Que deu à escravidão a carta de alforria, Apontando ao Porvir da Liberdade o dia!

E se elle teve, emfim, manchas ensanguentadas, Tambem o sol as tem, que ficam offuscadas, Pela irradiação da sua luz brilhante...

Está limpo o pedestal da estatua do gigante! Elle foi da Justiça o braço vingador, Como depois na França os homens do Terror.

Saudai-o Mocidade! Um brado bem seguro, Apostolos da Luz, videntes do Futuro! Vós, que saudastes já o genio de Camões, Erguei-lhe um monumento em vossos corações. É justo que façais dupla consagração: —Ao genio da Epopeia e ao genio da Instrucção!

Valença, 8 de Maio de 1882.

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