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Xavier da Cunha**

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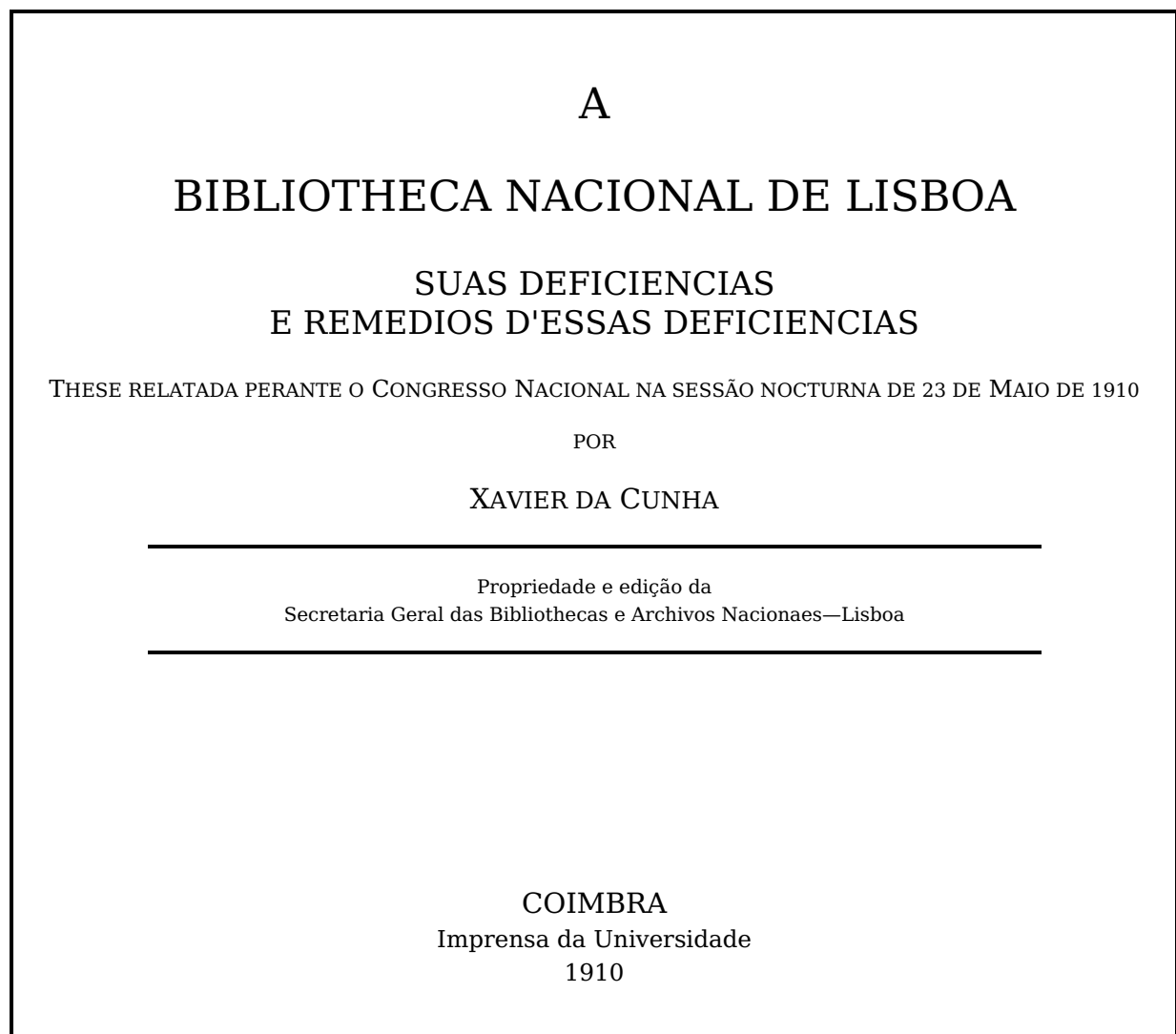
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A BIBLIOTHECA NACIONAL DE LISBOA ***



A

BIBLIOTHECA NACIONAL DE LISBOA

SUAS DEFICIENCIAS E REMEDIOS D'ESSAS DEFICIENCIAS

THESE RELATADA PERANTE O CONGRESSO NACIONAL NA SESSÃO NOCTURNA DE 23 DE MAIO DE 1910

POR

XAVIER DA CUNHA

Propriedade e edição da
Secretaria Geral das Bibliothecas e Archivos Nacionaes—Lisboa

COIMBRA
Imprensa da Universidade
1910

A BIBLIOTHECA NACIONAL DE LISBOA

Suas deficiencias e remedios d'essas deficiencias

(These relatada perante o Congresso Nacional na sessão nocturna de 23 de Maio de 1910)

Convidado pela Academia de Sciencias de Portugal a escrever sobre deficiencias das nossas Bibliothecas e remedios de taes deficiencias, escolhi de preferencia, para objectivo de minhas considerações, a Bibliotheca Nacional de Lisboa, em que, por Decreto de 27 de Novembro de 1902, tive a immerecida honra de ser nomeado Director.

Fundada em 1796 sob o titulo «Real Bibliotheca Pública da Côrte», ella funccionou durante annos em salas da Praça do Commercio,—e foi só depois de extinctas as ordens religiosas de Portugal que a Bibliotheca veiu installar-se no Convento de San'-Francisco, onde existe ainda hoje, sem todavia d'esse vasto edificio occupar mais do que uma parte, pois que outras partes se acham destinadas a nellas se accommodarem a Academia Real de Bellas Artes e as repartições do Governo Civil de Lisboa.

Quando em 1844 José Feliciano de Castilho, Bibliothecario-Mór da Bibliotheca Nacional de Lisboa, apresentou ao Ministro do Reino o relatorio da sua diligentissima gerencia,—relatorio que se publicou impresso, constituindo 4 volumes in-8.^o,—queixava-se elle do improprio logar que lhe prestava o destinado convento.

E tanto no tempo d'aquelle prestimoso funcionario, como igualmente em quadras ultteriores, se teem por vezes dispendido sommas importantes,—sem que todavia as condições do edificio hajam mudado a ponto de o tornarem adequado ao fim que lhe destinaram; nem creio mesmo que possam nunca taes desejos converter-se ahi numa realidade, pois que (segundo o tem sempre mostrado a experiencia) de um convento nada mais se pode fazer do que... outro convento.

Ora advirta-se que, no tempo de Castilho, a parte do Convento destinada á Bibliotheca Nacional, posto que lhe escasseassem as condições proprias, era ainda sufficientemente ampla para accommodação das especies existentes.

E ainda em 1886, quando, por concurso de provas públicas, eu alli tive ingresso, na categoria de Segundo-Conservador, sobejava o espaço a ponto de poderem ser facultados gabinetes especiaes ao isolado trabalho de certos estudiosos.

São todavia decorridos, desde então, pouco mais de vinte annos—e foi quanto bastou para que a affluencia das especies, quotidianamente adquiridas, invadissem todos os recantos,—

assuberrando-nos o receio de não termos em breve onde accommodar novas acquisições.

Nos meus relatorios trimestraes, que o *Boletim das Bibliothecas e Archivos Nacionaes* costuma sempre publicar, tenho eu frequentemente instado por que nos sejam cedidos os aposentos occupados pelas repartições do Governo Civil, transferindo-se essas para outro local,— e no mesmo sentido representou depois a Academia Real das Sciencias de Lisboa; infelizmente, porém, similhantes instancias ainda até hoje não obtiveram resultado algum.

Com a falta do espaço coincide a pobreza do mobiliario, e não sómente pobreza, mas impropriedade. As estantes que a Bibliotheca Nacional possui acham-se longe, muito longe, de corresponder ás condições exigiveis para acondicionamento de especies raras e preciosas, accrescendo a triste circumstancia de não ter a Bibliotheca, em sua pequenissima dotação, recursos pecuniarios para a conveniente reforma de taes estantes.

O mesmo direi com respeito á verba decretada para compra de livros, assignatura de revistas estrangeiras, e despeza indeclinavel de incadernações: é escassissima, e deficientissima a quantia destinada para taes encargos.

Escasso e deficiente é, não menos, o quadro dos funcionarios,—resultando d'esse facto que ainda estão apenas em projecto (projecto por ora platonico!) alguns dos mais indispensaveis Catalogos (v. g. um Catalogo alphabetico geral por nomes de auctores; um Catalogo por titulos de obras; Catalogos methodicos das diversas especialidades; e um Catalogo-Diccionario por especificação singular de materias, como actualmentemente se vai usando com muito proveito nalgumas bibliothecas dos Estados Unidos da America).

Querem estas deficiencias significar pouco interêsse de quem na Bibliotheca Nacional tem superintendido? por fórma nenhuma. Significam ellas apenas a ausencia dos indispensaveis recursos.

Do impenho que altos funcionarios teem mostrado pelo ingrandecimento da Bibliotheca, foram exemplos frisantes a personalidade distinctissima de José Feliciano de Castilho (digno continuador de Antonio Ribeiro dos Santos), a actividade energica de Silva Tullio (que frequentes vezes desimpenhou interinamente as funcções de Bibliothecario-Mór), e o incansavel zelo do erudito Director a quem succedi em 1902 na gerencia da Bibliotheca (o Sr. Gabriel Pereira, que hoje exerce as funcções de Inspector das Bibliothecas e Archivos Nacionaes).

Em conclusão do que deixo laconicamente expellido (e muito haveria que particularizar sobre o assumpto), a Academia das Sciencias de Portugal, que sobremaneira me distinguiu constituindo-me seu delegado e seu interprete perante o Congresso Nacional, emite os seguintes votos:

1.º—Que o Governo de Sua Majestade Fidelissima resolva proceder com a maxima brevidade á construcção de um edificio especial, destinado exclusivamente á Bibliotheca Nacional de Lisboa, edificio por todas as faces completamente isolado, e absolutamente disposto em harmonia com as prescrições que para taes institutos determina a hygiene,—hygiene em relação aos livros e mais especies congeneres, hygiene em relação aos leitores, e hygiene em relação aos funcionarios;

2.º—Que o mesmo Governo proceda urgentemente á indispensavel ampliação dos aposentos que actualmentemente usufrue a Bibliotheca Nacional, para que esta, provisoriamente (emquanto se lhe não constróe definitivo edificio), possa bem accommodar as suas especies;

3.º—Que á Bibliotheca sejam fornecidos os meios pecuniarios para adquirir o mobiliario conveniente á boa arrumação e conservação das especies na Bibliotheca arrecadadas;

4.º—Que a dotação annual da Bibliotheca Nacional seja sufficientemente augmentada, para que se possam adquirir, por compra, importantissimas obras, de que, perante a exiguidade ridicula da actual dotação, nos fica tolhido alcançar exemplares;

5.º—Que o quadro do pessoal seja convenientemente ampliado com funcionarios idoneos e que tenham o amor do officio, funcionarios escolhidos sempre em concurso do provas públicas (concurso em que a decisão do jury tecnico seja respeitada), funcionarios condignamente remunerados,—consequindo-se, por essa ampliação do quadro, organizar num breve lapso de tempo todos os Catalogos indispensaveis á consulta dos estudiosos, e realizar todos os mais serviços correlativos;

6.º—Que a todas as outras Bibliothecas públicas do nosso paiz se applicuem, dentro das suas especiaes necessidades, e conforme as circumstancias peculiares exijam, reformas analogas ás que ficam summariamente expostas para a Bibliotheca Nacional de Lisboa.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A BIBLIOTHECA NACIONAL DE LISBOA ***

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