

The United States has been pre-eminent in its inventions, making it the leader of the world's civilization to some extent, for we know the most effectual means of enlightening the darker portions of the earth is to bring them into close relationship with the progressive nations. Now since the days of Columbus, all that has been done to facilitate communication between the continents must be credited to America. For example, we have Fulton's steam and sailing vessels; the wonderful invention of Field, the Atlantic Cable, which quickened the speed of inter-communication to lightening velocity. Not many years ago, if any one had ventured to prophecy that there would ever be an instantaneous communication between the continents, he would most probably have been called a 'crank' or an insane person. If civilization could have had the fruits of Field's inventive genius seventy-one years ago, the bloody battle of New Orleans would never have been fought.

Living in an age of literature, as we do, it is somewhat difficult for us to fully realize the great scarcity of books, and the thirst for knowledge which was not to be had in the time of our fore-fathers. Let us first look at the paper which, in those days, was far inferior to what we now have. All modern inventions were, of course, unheard of, and knowing nothing of the manufacture of paper, it was prepared from the inner covering of an Egyptian plant called papyrus. This required much time in preparing it for use; having to be dried and pressed, then polished with a shell of ivory. This, however, was only the commencement of the work that followed, for then came the tedious and tiresome work of copying; all the books being copied by hand. Consequently there were no public libraries, and those who were too poor to possess books, remained in perfect ignorance. When the printing press was introduced into England by William Caxton, in 1474, the world began to be filled with books, till no matter how poor a person might be, he could possess some sort of a library. With the increase of books new authors sprang up improving

the literature of the day. In thinking that nothing improves us more than reading, we can form some idea of what obligation we are under to that greatest of all inventions, the printing press.

We will not dwell longer on the well known modern inventions, chief of which are Bell's telephone and Morse's telegraph. When we meditate on these last two wonders, we are apt to think proudly that in this enlightened age, there is very little the clever people of the time cannot accomplish. It is true we can safely prophecy far more wonderful discoveries in electricity for the future; yet in our pleasant reflections, let us not grow too puffed up with the thoughts of our own importance (?), but try and remember that "the earth does not weigh one jot more at present than it did when God pronounced it finished."

PENNY, Class '89.

The Autumn Mystery.

What means this glory, shed around
From sunset regions to the east,
These wondrous tints, so rarely found
Except at Oriental feast?

'Tis morning still and see, on high,
Not yet from thence the sun descends,
But 'tis as if the sunset dye
With all the forest verdure blends.

Why is there silence so profound
Through all these high and dreaming hills?
And is it blood, besprinkled round,
Yon fields with floods of crimson fills?

Across the meadows, where gold,
Resplendant, of the sunlight, warms,
By yonder mountain's leafy hold—
What are those scarlet mantled forms;

That beckon with their jewelled hands,
As if a friend they fain would greet,
While purple folds with golden hands
Trail round their silver-sandalled feet?

What mean these shades of filmy white
Wind-wafted past the meadow-bars;
And on the grass, those pearls of light,
In number like the midnight stars?