

of cabinet-making and turnery they are perfect masters: they are, besides, admirably skilled in the manufacture of all articles belonging to domestic economy. What knowledge can be more useful to the common people? The arts and sciences, indeed, have attained a higher degree of elevation among us; we have men who prescribe their orbits to the heavenly bodies, the Japanese have not; but on the other hand, for one such we have thousands who are unacquainted with every element of knowledge. We possess in Europe great mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, physicians, &c. such as we

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Europe in 1340. Telescopes also are described by Thunberg as in frequent use; but with us these were unknown until about 1600. It is probable however that these are strictly an European invention; as the Portuguese writers, in describing the early voyages, offer not an hint respecting them.

Early writers assert that the Japanese cultivated no science, purely speculative, except religion, in which and in controversy their clergy were unceasingly employed: but as to metaphysics, mathematics or even natural philosophy, they knew scarcely any thing respecting them. In short they knew little of astronomy; their architecture was without taste, skill or order; their epochs, their rudiments of chronology, the manner of dividing time and of reckoning their years, even now are far from giving a high idea of their knowledge of combination and of calculation. Some idea of the uncertainty even of their daily calculations may be drawn from the fact, that the number of hours, from sunrise to sunset, is always the same; so that the hour consequently varies in length at different times of the year.—Ed.