

of letters, and regarded the fine arts as a disgraceful inheritance of the people they had conquered; that for a time even the conquered peoples of Rome lost taste for the sublime and the beautiful. But then science found friends in the sanctuary and in the cloister, and the clergy preserved the tradition of literature and art. As for practical science and the arts, are we much more advanced than our medieval ancestors? I will here mention a few of the improvements and inventions which we owe to these compassionate men.

The linen paper on which we write is, according to historians, an invention of the year 1100, and cotton paper was used in Italy in the tenth century. The art of printing, or, rather, the press, was invented in 1436, but printing was done by hand in the tenth century. That music may now be called a science is due to an Italian monk, Guido, who determined the scale, hitherto uncertain, in 1124. In the twelfth century the mariners of Amalfi first applied the knowledge of the loadstone to navigation, thus enabling the subsequent Italian navigators to prosecute geographical discovery. In those days of alleged ignorance, and hence of presumed neglect of study, spectacles, one of the most powerful aids to study, were invented by a monk of Pisa, in 1285. Other notable inventions were: Gunpowder, in 1278; engraving, in 1410, and oil painting, in 1415.

By a people's language we can surely judge of their refinement and intellectual development. Gramatical forms are the results of the manner in which a nation considers and treats its language. Hence it is hard to believe that ignorance was the portion of those times which produced the sweet and philosophic Italian, the majestic Spanish, the graceful French, and the forcible English and German tongues. When the decay of the Roman Empire had entailed that of the Latin language the succeeding jargons could not be called languages, but Christianity took hold of the raw material and moulded it into new organizations. Thus dialects were transformed into illustrious languages fit to be introduced into the temple, the school, and the conversation of the learned.

Have modern times rivalled the Middle Age in architectural skill and taste? All the real triumphs of European architecture are of medieval conception and execution.