

Gunpowder is of great value in works of engineering, in removing natural obstructions that stand in the way of improvement. It has given to man, in a greater degree than ever, dominion over the animal creation, and it has given him a vast power in destroying his fellow man. It has created a total revolution in the art of carrying on War. The bow and arrow, and the spear are exchanged for the cannon and the musket; and to what an extent the power to throw missiles, and the unerring aim by which they are discharged, has reached, are well known to the present generation. The rifle and the rifled cannon have in our time been brought almost to perfection. It has been a matter of dispute, whether this invention has been more a blessing or a curse. My impression is, that it has mitigated the sufferings of the wounded, it has inspired Nations with a greater dread of war, from the power of the weapons employed, and it has placed the weak and the strong more on a level, and given the advantage to skill over brute force. Of course, much might be said on both sides.

The great discovery which throws all others into the shade, is the art of printing. The honor of this invention is claimed by Hærlæm, Mentz and Strasburg; and to each it belongs in a qualified sense. The origin of it however belongs to Hærlæm, where in the year 1430 the first book was printed; and to Lawrence Coster of that city belongs this great discovery.—Coster was walking in a wood near the city, when he cut out several letters on the rind of a beech tree, which to gratify his fancy, being impressed on paper, he printed one or two lines, as a specimen, for his grand children to follow. It is said that Coster's method was to cut out the letters upon a wooden block—Afterwards Guttemburg, John Fust or Faustus and Schœffer greatly improved the art. The first named invented moveable types, and the two latter metal types. Printing in a very short time acquired great perfection; but, it is evident that the art, as we have it, acquired from different hands its recognized excellence. Fust was said to have been an apprentice to Coster,