sition of water, and it is only within this last year or two that the controversy has been decided in favour of Cavendish.

To go further back, the invention of printing is stoutly contested by two or three claimants in different countries of Europe. The composition of gunpowder, which is generally ascribed to SCHWARTZ, a Monk of Cologne, is said to have been known before his time—indeed Roger Bacon tells us that a mixture of nitre, sulphur, and charcoal was in common use among boys in his own day to produce explosions. There are two claimants for the invention of the telescope; but long before either of them the same Roger Bacon had published an account of the manner in which such an instrument might be constructed.

It would be easy to adduce other illustrations; but these are sufficient to exhibit the uncertainty which frequently attends the origin of important inventions, rendering it difficult to distinguish between a true inventor and one who has grown rich on other men's ideas.

How is this uncertainty to be accounted for? One would have thought that the admiration and gratitude of mankind would have assuredly marked the individuals who entailed such benefits upon their race, and that their names would have been enshrined in everlasting remembrance. Is it that rogues are so numerous that an honest man is not allowed to retain an undisputed claim to his own ideas? Or is it not rather that invention is generally a gradual work, which requires the labor of many minds to elaborate it. Stone upon stone the edifice is reared by successive workers; and it is difficult to pronounce at what precise stage in its erection it first deserves the name of a house. Often too the labours of the thinker and the worker are distinct, and yet both are necessary before the idea can become a fact. One man describes in general terms how a thing may be done, but does not take the trouble to do it, or perhaps does not