

"their hands, turning up their heels upwards, whome she would followe and "wheeke so herself, naked as she was, all the fort over?" Are we any better off because of this victory of truth?—because this charming romance has been destroyed?

Mr. Gould, in his entertaining volume *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, says that it is the painful duty of the antiquarian to dispel many a popular belief, and to probe the groundlessness of many an historical statement. But why? The antiquarian's labors are self-imposed, and he might spare both himself and others pain if he did not meddle with stories which have in a measure come to be implicitly believed; and the disapproval of which only awakens doubt as to everything.

The gentleman above quoted, for instance, has shown us that several stories which have for centuries been received as reports of actual occurrences are nothing but myths. One of these is the well-known story of William Tell. Now, the story of Tell's nerve and courage has been a theme on which the poet and the orator loved to dwell. It has awakened the loftiest emotions in the breast of the struggling patriot, and nerved the arm of the oppressed to deeds of the noblest heroism. Men everywhere, and in every station of life, have felt the influence of this story of unflinching bravery; and the very name of Tell has become in our ears synonymous with outspoken hatred of tyrants. It is impossible to over-estimate the good that the relation of Tell's action has done. Yet Mr. Gould actually undertakes to show us that all this is a mistake; and that the world has been admiring but a shadow. According to the ordinarily related accounts of Tell's action, it took place in the year 1307; but Saxo Grammaticus, a Danish writer of the twelfth century, tells the story of a hero of his own country who lived four centuries before the date of Tell's adventure. It also appears in Norwegian history, with variations, again and again. In the Faroe Islands, it is current under a slightly different form. The parties are Geyti, Aslak's son, and king Harold. The former had vanquished the latter in a swimming match, and the king, angry at his discomfiture, bids his rival shoot a hazel nut from off his brother's head. Mr. Gould quotes the story in verse.

"On the string the shaft he laid,
And God hath heard his prayer;
He shot the little nut away,
Nor hurt the lad a hair."

The king asks him—

"List thee, Geyti, Aslak's son,
And truly tell to me,
Wherefore hadst thou arrows twain
In the wood yestreen with thee?"

And the bowman replies—

"Therefore had I arrows twain
Yestreen in the woods with me:
Had I but pierced my brother dear,
The other had pierced thee."

Mr. Gould quotes English, Finnish, and even Persian versions of the story, and comes to the conclusion that the coincidence of finding so many versions of the same story scattered through countries as remote as Persia and Iceland,