

passage from Mr. Macaulay's Essay on Mitford's Greece—"Who shall say, how many thousands have been made wiser, happier, and better, by Literary pursuits To how many they have been wealth in poverty—liberty in bondage—health in sickness—society in solitude."

A QUERY CONCERNING TRUTH.

THE "enquiring spirit of the age" has one very serious drawback. It is causing the destruction of many cherished stories of self-abnegation, generosity, bravery, and other virtues, around which both memory and imagination fondly lingered. In his terrible crucible of Truth, the critic of our day, working with the earnestness of the searcher after the philosopher's stone, melts down, reduces and finally wastes away records of heroic deeds that seemed, but a few years ago, destined to last forever. We all know what the Latin proverb says about truth: but why should truth prevail at the expense of so much fine sentiment? Are we any better off when we discover that many stories of self-sacrifice and of unselfish love are mere fables? Truth may gain the victory, but it is at a fearful expense. The result of the labors of the modern achemists, who seek for truth instead of the philosopher's stone, is to make us all doubters. What can we believe? We may accept some story as truth, the moral or lesson of which is good; but after we have given it a place in our affection comes along some terrible fellow, who in the name of truth, pronounces it a mere sham, and either denounces or laughs at us for believing. We reluctantly accept his decision, and fix our affections upon something else, but always with the same result.

What story was more touching, more charming in every way than that of Pocahontas, the lovely Indian princess, rushing in under the clubs of the warriors of her tribe, uplifted to beat out the brains of Capt. John Smith—throwing her arms about him, and laying her head upon his to save him from death? It added to the force of this gentle act that it was performed by a beautiful woman—"the king's dearest daughter." We scarcely know which most to admire, the beseeching, imploring, tender maiden, whom "no entreaty could prevail" to give up her effort to save the pale-faced prisoner's life; or the chivalrous savages, gallantly yielding at last, as their more civilized brothers would probably not have done, to the importunities of the lovely offspring of their chief; their stoical natures, which ordinarily boasted no woman's interference, completely changing before her exalted effort of mercy. Now, why should a merciless critic in a late number of the *North American Review* show us plainly that this story has no foundation in fact: that it is a pure coinage of the brain of Capt. John Smith?—and above all, why should he quote some other remorseless fellow who preceded him, who describes "Pocahontas as a well-featured but wanton yonge girle," whose principle pastime it was, when at the age of eleven or twelve years, to "get the boyes forth with her into the markett place and make them wheele, falling on