

by tradition, they are accused of having committed "a blunder." Now, Webster defines a blunder as meaning "a gross error or mistake, resulting from carelessness, stupidity, or culpable ignorance." Under which head Mr. Fiske would class our difference of opinion he has not made quite clear. In his attempt to elucidate the historical character of this Saga he is constrained to give up the "uniped" in despair, as "a fabulous creature"; but the "self-sown wheat" causes him no trouble whatsoever, — indeed, for him it is "an important ear-mark of truth in the narrative"; it means *maize*, "a cereal requiring so little cultivation that without much latitude of speech it might be described as growing wild." Governor Bradford, however, who had had some practical experience on this point, thought differently. In his account of the earliest doings at Plymouth he tells us: —

"As many as were able began to plant ther corne, in which servise Squanto stood them in great stead, showing them both y<sup>e</sup> maner how to set it, and after how to dress and tend it. Also he tould them excepte they gott fish and set with it (in these old grounds) it would come to nothing." <sup>1</sup>

In turning over Mr. Fiske's pages, however, I have chanced upon certain statements that would seem to me to come quite up to the accepted definition of a blunder. For example, he states that Helbig<sup>2</sup> says that "stone-pointed spears were used by the English at the battle of Hastings."<sup>3</sup> But if he had taken the trouble to read what Helbig actually does say, he would have found only a literal translation of William of Poitiers's statement that the Anglo-Saxons had "club-like weapons, consisting of stones made fast to wooden stocks." Again, he tells us that "the Romans in the regal period were ignorant of iron."<sup>4</sup> This is stated upon the authority of Lanciani;<sup>5</sup> but a long while ago I showed this conclusion of Lanciani to be entirely wrong, and that he "might as reasonably have argued that Rome was founded in the Age of Stone as in the Age of Bronze."<sup>6</sup> So, also, Mr. Fiske asserts that

<sup>1</sup> Bradford's History of Plymouth, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Die Italiker in der Poebene, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Discovery of America, vol. i. p. 186.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries, pp. 39-48.

<sup>6</sup> The Nation, Jan. 24, 1889.