

rut and slough of exhumed generations to the Renaissance. So it is from the tiny attic of this or that favorite author, we are enabled to look out, and at a glance behold the wondrous fascination of the past down through an illuminated vista wherein plays that mystic fount of literary lore, whose pyrotechnic splendors, dwindling away into the remoter gloaming, are confounded in the grotesque shadows of the antique, or eclipsed in the more refulgent lunacy of a traditional age. Notwithstanding, however, the little value we may be disposed to set on History as Fact, *taken as the commonly accepted standard of truth*, it is unimpeachable, and hence the libraries of the world always have been, and always will be, esteemed an invaluable acquisition to the intellectual wealth of mankind. But while, as we have intimated, it is impossible for a reflective mind not to feel a certain contempt for even such prodigious granaries of knowledge as these, nevertheless, in the popular disposition to believe and not to think, we find the ungracious task of arraigning history opposed by such potent, not to say, salutary influences as are dictated by public policy and social conservatism. So it is, that nursed and cradled on the bosom of a slumbrous faith, we glide tranquilly along, lulled, rather than disturbed, by the rippling wavelets; and hence the fretful sceptic, who obtrudes his unwelcome visage in opposition to the general current, is looked upon by sects and institutions somewhat as the festive occupants of a Mississippi steamer regard the protruding muzzle of some ugly "snag."