

for his conception of the knowledge which was to be. English seemed to him too homely to express the hopes of the world, too unstable to be trusted with them. Latin was the language of command and law. His Latin, without enslaving itself to Ciceronian types, and with a free infusion of barbarous but most convenient words from the vast and ingenious terminology of the schoolmen, is singularly forcible and expressive. It is almost always easy and clear; it can be vague and general, and it can be very precise where precision is wanted. It can, on occasion, be magnificent, and its gravity is continually enlivened by the play upon it, as upon a background, of his picturesque and unexpected fancies. The exposition of his philosophical principles was attempted in two forms. He began in English. He began, in the shape of a personal account, a statement of a series of conclusions to which his thinking had brought him, which he called the "Clue of the Labyrinth," *Filum Labyrinthi*. But he laid this aside unfinished, and rewrote and completed it in Latin, with the title *Cogitata et Visa*. It gains by being in Latin; as Mr. Spedding says, "it must certainly be reckoned among the most perfect of Bacon's productions." The personal form with each paragraph begins and ends. "*Franciscus Bacon sic cogitavit . . . itaque visum est ei,*" gives to it a special tone of serious conviction, and brings the interest of the subject more keenly to the reader. It has the same kind of personal interest, only more solemn and commanding, which there is in Descartes's *Discours de la Méthode*. In this form Bacon meant at first to publish. He sent it to his usual critics, Sir Thomas Bodley, Toby Matthews, and Bishop Andrewes. And he meant to follow it up with a practical exemplification of his method. But he changed his plan. He had more than once ex-