

fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel. (They are, indeed, best.) But even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits against a stone which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a *statua* or a picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother."

Bacon, as has been said, was a great maker of notes and note-books: he was careful not of the thought only, but of the very words in which it presented itself; everything was collected that might turn out useful in his writing or speaking, down to alternative modes of beginning or connecting or ending a sentence. He watched over his intellectual appliances and resources much more strictly than over his money concerns. He never threw away and never forgot what could be turned to account. He was never afraid of repeating himself, if he thought he had something apt to say. He was never tired of recasting and rewriting, from a mere fragment or preface to a finished paper. He has favourite images, favourite maxims, favourite texts, which he cannot do without. "*Da Fidei quæ sunt Fidei*" comes in from his first book to his last. The illustrations which he gets from the myth of Scylla, from Atalanta's ball, from Borgia's saying about the French marking their lodgings with chalk, the saying that God takes delight, like the "innocent play of children," "to hide his works in order to have them found out," and to have kings as "his playfellows in that game," these, with many others, reappear, however varied the context, from the first to the last of his compositions. An edition of Bacon, with marginal references and parallel passages, would show a more persistent recurrence of characteristic illustrations and sentences than perhaps any other writer.