

rials to work on, was the object of the *Advancement*. It was but a sketch; but it was a sketch so truly and forcibly drawn, that it made an impression which has never been weakened. To us its use and almost its interest is passed. But it is a book which we can never open without coming on some noble interpretation of the realities of nature or the mind; some unexpected discovery of that quick and keen eye which arrests us by its truth; some felicitous and unthought-of illustration, yet so natural as almost to be doomed to become a commonplace; some bright touch of his incorrigible imaginativeness, ever ready to force itself in amid the driest details of his argument.

The *Advancement* was only one shape out of many into which he cast his thoughts. Bacon was not easily satisfied with his work; even when he published he did so, not because he had brought his work to the desired point, but lest anything should happen to him and it should "perish." Easy and unstudied as his writing seems, it was, as we have seen, the result of unintermitted trouble and varied modes of working. He was quite as much a talker as a writer, and beat out his thoughts into shape in talking. In the essay on *Friendship* he describes the process with a vividness which tells of his own experience—

"But before you come to that [the faithful counsel that a man receiveth from his friend], certain it is that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up in the communicating and discoursing with another. He tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth wiser than himself, and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the King of Persia, 'That speech was like cloth of arras opened and put abroad, whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thought they lie in packs.' Neither is this second

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