

been a schoolfellow of Fitzgerald's at the Grammar School of Bury St. Edmund's, and their friendship, at Spedding's death in 1881, had lasted for sixty years. One of his peculiarities, in Fitzgerald's judgment, was that he began where he ended, and was unaltered from fourteen to seventy-four. Wise in his boyhood, and with plenty of the boy in him when he was old, he had throughout combined, in heart and head, all that was best of youth and age—a man “incredible, had one not known him.” Two qualities Fitzgerald singled out in him, his calmness and his wisdom. No matter what the trial, he kept his quietude, and was, says Fitzgerald, “immutable.” “He was the wisest man I have ever known,” is the language of his friend. He was the oracle of Fitzgerald, who referred doubts and difficulties to him, and always got from him the light he required. His range was wide. He was an excellent classic, was acquainted with the elements of science, and had studied Christianity, history, poetry, the drama, and politics, in some of their branches, with the unpretentious exactness that was habitual to him. His steady employment for upwards of forty years was to edit the Works, and unravel the life, of Bacon. With a prodigality of obscure research that made no show, and earned him little credit or none, he pursued his subject through dull and dusty mazes of books and manuscripts, not diverted for a moment by outward discouragements and inward weariness from his immovable purpose. It is a venial anomaly that he, who was accustomed to approach every question with a rectitude superior to prejudice, should have been misled by personal bias in his verdict on Bacon's moral obliquities. This partiality of a noble nature admitted, the book remains a monument to Spedding's integrity.

A man is known by his company. Thackeray's friends at college were men of a superior class, some of them learned, all well read, all desirous of assimilating to themselves the works that had credit in their circle. He owed none of the friendships to previous ties. They were formed on the spot from community of tastes, and the future lives of these confederates