

their escape from the thralldom and tyranny of words into the open air of things and facts, and who pointed out that this was the only safe road towards Natural Knowledge, was Francis Bacon. And this will mark for all time his position and importance in the history of Thought. But though he was in addition possessed of much worldly wisdom, and a master in giving expression to the same, he was not himself an adept in the new language of the sciences: he did not recognise the importance of Mathematics, and he still more failed to realise that, by the new movement, the whole task of philosophy had not been performed or even approached. He did indeed allow that there were other questions comprised under the general term Theology which were of importance, but his attitude towards them was never clearly defined. What Francis Bacon never attempted was done somewhat later by Descartes in France.

### III.

Descartes agreed with Bacon in condemning the dialectical method as practised by the Schoolmen. But his objection to it and his scepticism rested upon a different ground. Whilst Bacon denounced these methods as not leading to Knowledge—notably Natural Knowledge—Descartes denounced them because they did not lead to certainty. He was the first thinker in whose arguments we can trace a clear distinction between certainty and exactness of thought. This is an important point. In order to be useful