

**COLLINS' SCHOOL AND COLLEGE
CLASSICS. THE ESSAYS (I-XXXI);
OR, COUNSELS CIVIL AND
MORAL OF FRANCIS LORD
VERULAM, VISCOUNT ST ALBANS**

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HENRY LEWIS

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THE ESSAYS

(I-XXXI)

OR
COUNSELS CIVIL AND MORAL

OF

FRANCIS LORD VERULAM,
Viscount St Albans.

With Introduction and Notes

BY

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
LIFE OF LORD BACON,	7
INTRODUCTION TO BACON'S ESSAYS,	11
ESSAY I. OF TRUTH,	13
NOTES ON ESSAY I,	15
" II. OF DEATH,	20
NOTES ON ESSAY II,	22
" III. OF UNITY IN RELIGION,	25
NOTES ON ESSAY III,	29
" IV. OF REVENGE,	33
NOTES ON ESSAY IV,	34
" V. OF ADVERSITY,	36
NOTES ON ESSAY V,	37
" VI. OF SIMULATION AND DISSIMULATION,	39
NOTES ON ESSAY VI,	42
" VII. OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN,	45
NOTES ON ESSAY VII,	47
" VIII. OF MARRIAGE AND SINGLE LIFE,	48
NOTES ON ESSAY VIII,	50
" IX. OF ENVY,	52
NOTES ON ESSAY IX,	57
" X. OF LOVE,	62
NOTES ON ESSAY X,	63
" XI. OF GREAT PLACE,	66
NOTES ON ESSAY XI,	69
" XII. OF BOLDNESS,	73
NOTES ON ESSAY XII,	74
" XIII. OF GOODNESS AND GOODNESS OF NATURE,	76
NOTES ON ESSAY XIII,	78

	PAGE
ESSAY XIV. OF NOBILITY,	82
NOTES ON ESSAY XIV,	84
" XV. OF SEDITIONS AND TROUBLES,	86
NOTES ON ESSAY XV,	92
" XVI. OF ATHEISM,	98
NOTES ON ESSAY XVI,	101
" XVII. OF SUPERSTITION,	104
NOTES ON ESSAY XVII,	106
" XVIII. OF TRAVEL,	109
NOTES ON ESSAY XVIII,	111
" XIX. OF EMPIRE,	113
NOTES ON ESSAY XIX,	117
" XX. OF COUNSEL,	121
NOTES ON ESSAY XX,	126
" XXI. OF DELAYS,	129
NOTES ON ESSAY XXI,	130
" XXII. OF CUNNING,	132
NOTES ON ESSAY XXII,	135
" XXIII. OF WISDOM FOR A MAN'S SELF,	139
NOTES ON ESSAY XXIII,	140
" XXIV. OF INNOVATIONS,	142
NOTES ON ESSAY XXIV,	144
" XXV. OF DISPATCH,	146
NOTES ON ESSAY XXV,	147
" XXVI. OF SEEMING WISE,	149
NOTES ON ESSAY XXVI,	150
" XXVII. OF FRIENDSHIP,	152
NOTES ON ESSAY XXVII,	159
" XXVIII. OF EXPENSE,	163
NOTES ON ESSAY XXVIII,	165
" XXIX. OF THE TRUE GREATNESS OF KINGDOMS AND	
ESTATES,	166
NOTES ON ESSAY XXIX,	175
" XXX. OF REGIMENT OF HEALTH,	178
NOTES ON ESSAY XXX,	180
" XXXI. OF SUSPICION,	181
NOTES ON ESSAY XXXI,	183
GLOSSARY AND INDEX,	184

LIFE OF LORD BACON.

FRANCIS BACON was born at York House in the Strand, 22d January 1560-1. His father was Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Queen Elizabeth. His mother Ann was one of the accomplished daughters of Sir Anthony Coke, the tutor of Edward VI, and sister to Mildred Coke, who was married to Lord Burleigh, which famous man was therefore Bacon's uncle.

In his early youth he seems to have shown promise of unusual ability, and at the age of thirteen was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge. He left the university, however, without taking a degree, and his father, who designed him for the public service, sent him abroad in the suite of Sir Amyas Paulet, the queen's ambassador at the court of Paris. He remained abroad until 1579, when he was hastily summoned home by the death of his father, and he found his elder brother Anthony in possession of the family property, and himself left with very slender means. After having in vain solicited his jealous uncle for some public employment, he entered Gray's Inn, and for ten or eleven years gave himself up to the study of law with earnestness and assiduity, and when called to the bar in 1582 shortly acquired considerable practice and a high professional reputation. His advancement into office was, however, consistently opposed by Lord Burleigh, who dreaded the possibility of Bacon's rivalry with his own son, Robert Cecil; and when the office of Solicitor-General became vacant, although his case was pleaded personally with the queen

by the Earl of Essex, he contrived to have him passed over.

To console him in his disappointment, Essex generously presented him with a beautiful estate and residence on the banks of the Thames called Twickenham Park; but their friendship had a deplorable ending, for soon afterwards, when the favourite fell into disgrace, and was put upon his trial for treason, Bacon was named by the queen as one of Her Majesty's counsel against his former friend, and not only took a prominent part in his prosecution, but afterwards wrote a pamphlet justifying his execution.

Probably with the idea of acquiring that fortune by marriage which he seemed debarred from in his profession, he made matrimonial overtures to Lady Hatton, who, however, had read her suitor's essays upon *Love*, and *Marriage and Single Life*, and therefore declined him. On the accession of James I his prospects somewhat brightened; he was knighted (with a crowd of more than two hundred other gentlemen), and in 1606 married Alice Barnham, daughter of a wealthy alderman of the city of London. The next year he was made Solicitor-General, and then Attorney-General, when he at once renounced his private legal practice, and gave himself up to his official duties and to study.

In 1617 he was made Lord Keeper and Lord Chancellor. He was also raised to the peerage as Baron Verulam, a title which three years afterwards was replaced by the higher one of Viscount St Albans.

In 1621 the House of Commons, indignant at the abuses and corruptions connected with the government, ordered an investigation into certain matters, the result of which was that evidence was obtained seriously implicating Bacon himself, and he was formally impeached before the House of Lords on twenty-three counts of bribery and corruption. He confessed his guilt, urging in palliation, what no doubt was true, that his faults were not *vitia hominis* but *vitia temporis*. He was condemned to pay a fine of £40,000, and to be imprisoned