

OF STUDIES (Bacon)

OF STUDIES is a representative essay of Bacon. It contains sound ideas and practical advice for the readers as to what they should be their approach to studies. There are several do's and don'ts in this essay. According to the essaying we should not spend much time in studies, we should not read too much to make our language and speech ornamental, as it could be showiness. Like foolish scholars, we should not be guided by our bookish knowledge in our action and judgement, we should not merely hate and advise books. We should not read the books indiscriminately, on the other hand, we should read properly because studies improve our nature and develop our activities. They give us pleasure and business acumen. It is only a well read man who can give sound plan and general advice. We must combine studies with experience to get good fruits. It is better to acquire wisdom from the observation of the world of men and nature. Wisdom teaches us how to make the best use of studies.

Bacon further says that the practice of reading, writing as well as conversation makes a man perfect. Reading makes a man replete with ideas and information; writing makes his



ideas definite and concrete; conversation makes him prompt, active and ready-witted. But deficiency in any of these three may be made up in other ways. Lastly he says that appropriate studies can remove all mental defects just as proper exercises heal up all physical maladies.

The whole essay is serious and argumentative. The points are logical and sound and have high moral seriousness. It is an impersonal and aphoristic essay. The purpose of the essayist is to teach and not to please. So there is no place for wit and humour in the essay. The grace, the emotional tone and personal touch, lightness and ease lack in this essay. Bacon expresses his ideas scantily dressed in pithy sentences. As a result, many of his sentences are as proverbs. For example, "Reading makes a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man!" Each sentence contains a paragraph for an ordinary writer. He wrote mostly in Latin and we find Latin phrases in this essay. He did not entertain good opinion regarding the worth of English language. His essays are models of prose-writing of his time.