

### Mii3 Great Verulam is very lame, the gout of goe-out feeling

*Notes.* This poem, the most densely topical and allusive of all the libels on Bacon, is almost certainly the work of John Hoskyns. It raises the suggestion that Bacon was effectively sacrificed to the political interests of his otherwise loyal patron, the Duke of Buckingham, and hints scurrilously about his relationships with his servants. The poem is discussed in Jardine and Stewart 465.

“Vpon the fall of Sir Francis Bacon Lo: Verulam & Viscount St. Alban Lo: Chancellor”

Great Verulam is very lame,<sup>1</sup> the gout of goe-out feeling<sup>2</sup>  
Hee humbly begs the crutch of state with falling sicknes<sup>3</sup> reeling  
Diseasd, displeasd & greved sore, that stately fate shold perish  
Unhappie that noe helpe can cure nor high protection cherish.  
Yet cannot I but marvell much, and that in common reason 5  
That Bacon should neglected be, when it is most in season  
Perhaps the Game of Buck hath villifi'd the Bore<sup>4</sup>  
Or els the Crescent in the wayne that hee can hunt no more  
Be what it will the Relative the antecedent moveing  
Declines to case accusative, the dative soe much loveing<sup>5</sup> 10  
Young<sup>6</sup> this greife will make the old, for care with youth ill matches  
Sorrowe makes Mute<sup>7</sup> to muse, that Hatche's<sup>8</sup> under hatches  
Bushells<sup>9</sup> want by halfe a peck the measure of such tares  
Because his Lords posteriors, makes buttons which hee weares<sup>10</sup>  
Tho Edney<sup>11</sup> nowe be cleane cassher'd, greife moves him to compassion 15  
To thinke that fates should bring soe lowe, the wheele of his Ambition.  
Had Butler<sup>12</sup> liv'd had<sup>13</sup> vex'd & grev'd so suddaine for to see  
The hogsh'd that soe late was brocht to run soe neere the Lee<sup>14</sup>  
Fletcher<sup>15</sup> may goe & feather bolts<sup>16</sup>, for such as quickly shoot them  
Nowe Cockens<sup>17</sup> combe is newly<sup>18</sup> a man may soone confute them 20  
The Red-rose house<sup>19</sup> lamenteth much, that this soe fatall day  
Should bring the fall of Leafe in March before the spring in May  
Albons condole their suddaine losse, their greatest Viscount Charter<sup>20</sup>

Who suffering for his Conscience sake, is turn'd Franciscan Martyr.<sup>21</sup>

**Source.** Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 23

**Other known sources.** Osborn 210; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 37v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 32v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 96r; Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151, fol. 102v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 22v; BL MS Harley 367, fol. 187r; BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 80v; BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 27r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 152; Folger MS V.a.192, part 2 fol. 7r; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 127

### Mii3

<sup>1</sup> *Great Verulam is very lame*: this limping pun on Bacon's title is noted by Sir Simonds D'Ewes as the invention of men mocking Bacon's shortage of money: "So as men raised very bitter sarcasms or jests of him; as that he lately was very lame, alluding to his barony of Verulam, but now having fallen into a consumption of purse, without all question he was become All-bones, alluding to his new honour of St. Alban" (qtd. in Jardine and Stewart 443).

<sup>2</sup> *gout of goe-out feeling*: punning on Bacon's fall from power and his struggles with gout.

<sup>3</sup> *falling sicknes*: epilepsy; here the use is entirely figurative.

<sup>4</sup> *Perhaps the Game...Bore*: the suggestion here, raised at the time by some people close to Bacon, though without any apparent foundation, is that Buckingham turned against Bacon, in order to protect his own position (Jardine and Stewart 455-56).

<sup>5</sup> *Be what...loveing*: an intricate and barely penetrable mesh of puns on grammatical terms. "[D]ative" can mean "disposed to give", and thus probably alludes to the bribery allegations; "accusative" might carry legal connotations; "Relative" may refer to a particular person, unidentifiable at this point.

<sup>6</sup> *Young*: John Young, one of Bacon's secretaries.

<sup>7</sup> *Mute*: i.e. Thomas Meautys, another of Bacon's secretaries; or Edmund Meautys, Bacon's gentleman of the horse.

<sup>8</sup> *Hatche's*: i.e. Hatcher, Bacon's seal-bearer.

<sup>9</sup> *Bushells*: Thomas Bushell, one of Bacon's gentleman ushers.

<sup>10</sup> *Because his Lords...weares*: "Aubrey explains the lewd reference to Bacon's backside and buttons: 'Twas the fashion in those days for gentlemen to have their suits of clothes garnished with buttons. My Lord Bacon was then in disgrace, and his man Bushell having more buttons than usual on his cloak, they

said that his Lord's breech made buttons and Bushell wore them: from whence he was called "buttoned Bushell".' Aubrey can only be suggesting that it was maliciously put about that Bushell's ostentatious dress had been earned by sexual services to his master" (Jardine and Stewart 465).

11 *Edney*: Francis Edney, Bacon's chamber-man.

12 *Butler*: Mr. Butler, one of Bacon's gentleman ushers.

13 *had*: probable scribal error; read "he had".

14 *Lee*: possibly either Mr. Leigh, Bacon's sergeant-at-arms, or Humphrey Leigh, one of Bacon's yeoman ushers presumably punning on the River Lea.

15 *Fletcher*: Mr. Fletcher, Bacon's gentleman waiter.

16 *feather bolts*: punning on the name Fletcher, as a maker of arrows. To feather bolts is to attach feathers to arrows.

17 *Cockens*: Mr. Cockaine, Bacon's page.

18 *is newly*: probable scribal error; read "is newly cut".

19 *Red-rose house*: the allusion here is clearly to Bacon's home, York House (a point made in a marginal note in one source (Bodleian Eng. Poet. c.50). Although the red rose was actually associated with the House of Lancaster most sources of the poem are consistent with this historical error. Only one known source prefers the historically correct "whit Rose" (BL MS Harley 367).

20 *Albons condole...Charter*: punning on Bacon's title, Viscount St. Alban's.

21 *Who suffering...Martyr*: the image of martyrdom (punning on the Catholic Franciscan order), though obviously couched in heavy irony, echoes the poem's earlier suggestion that Bacon has been sacrificed in the political interests of Buckingham.

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