

man, the eminent statesman, the political philosopher, has bequeathed to our literature some bursts of invective which have driven unsuccessful imitators mad with envy. His eloquent parliamentary speeches, both against the government of India, and in favor of the American Colonies; his ardent denunciatory eloquence against the principles of the French Revolution, afford excellent specimens of his powers of piquant satire and eloquent invective; but it is in that admirable essay, his "Letter to a Noble Lord, that he excells himself in this most difficult literary style. With the majority of Burke's readers this is probably the favorite of his works, and the one which they oftenest read. Burke is styled "the greatest master of metaphor that the world has ever seen" and he applies this striking figure with exquisite taste throughout this remarkable essay. For some time he had been in retirement from active life and the government unsolicited voted to him a considerable pension. This vote was stubbornly opposed in the House of Lords by the Duke of Bedford, who severely attacked the recognition in any manner of Burke's political career.

To this attack Burke replied, and most masterfully proved his titled enemy to be wholly dependent for his title and fortune on the unmerited gratuity of the crown.

After this manner he writes of him "The Duke of Bedford conceives that he is obliged to call the attention of the House of Peers, to His Majesty's grant to me, which he considers as excessive and out of all bounds. I know not how it has happened, but it really seems, that whilst His Grace was meditating his well-considered censure on me, he fell into a sort of sleep.

Homer nods, and the Duke of Bedford may dream; and as dreams (even his golden dreams) are apt to be ill-pieced and incongruously put together, His Grace preserved his idea of reproach to *me* but took the subject matter from the Crown grants to his own family. This is "the stuff of which dreams are made." In that way of putting things together his Grace is perfectly in the right. The grants to the house of Russell were so enormous, as not only to outrage economy, but even to stagger credibility. The Duke of Bedford is the levia than among all the creatures of the crown. He tumbles about his unwieldy bulk; he plays and frolics in the ocean of the royal bounty. Huge as he is, and whilst "he lies floating many a rood" he is still a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very spiracles through which he spouts a torrent of brine against his origin, and covers me all over with spray-everything of him and about him is from the throne. Is it for him to question the dispensation of the royal favor?"

Thus he pillories his victim as a mushroom aristocrat, and traces his lineage back to a fawning minion in the service of Henry eighth, who obtained an extensive grant of confiscated abbey property as a reward for his servile obedience in executing the tyrannical laws of this lascivious despot.

In the limited space of this short essay no adequate idea can be given of that composition which scholars of correct taste continually read and re-read with the greatest pleasure. The style is so vigorous, the thought so chaste, the metaphor so picturesque and appropriate, that no student with pretensions above mediocrity can afford to be unacquainted with this masterpiece.