

How Much is that Doggie in the Window?

by [Petrus Tornarius](#) (February 2023)



The Dog in the Armchair, Alfred de Dreux, 1857

*I am his highness's dog at Kew;
Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?*

—motto Alexander Pope had engraved on the collar of a puppy he presented to Frederick, Prince of Wales in 1736

We did but ask you lot to curb your dogs,
but found the ancient sport of rolling logs
was still as universal as could be.

The fey romanticism of Whig modernity
grew big and sassy in the Boomer century.

“You must change your life,”

a poet opined. They did, and the resulting strife
almost put paid to you and me.

Even flamingoes dance in Spain,
they say! The Prince's puppy rose into a dog,
but Freddie never got to reign as king.

The collar, though, transmuted into bling,
adorns Exponential Growth hounds in the City
and quite a few others—more's the pity!

*Squeak 'o the mouse to John Milton's Sonnet 12: “I did but
prompt the age to quit their clogs.”*

The opening poet was Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926).

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Petrus Tornarius is the latinized name of the South African American poet Peter Dreyer—a form often used by some of his medieval German ancestors. He employs this pseudonym to sign poems he thinks “worth publishing, but perhaps a bit infra

dig.” Dreyer is the author, among other books, of *A Beast in View* (London: André Deutsch), *The Future of Treason* (New York: Ballantine), and *Martyrs and Fanatics: South Africa and Human Destiny* (New York: Simon & Schuster; London: Secker & Warburg).

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