

DOUGLAS ALFRED BRUCE

THE PLACID PUG, AND
OTHER RHYMES

Alfred Douglas

The Placid Pug, and Other Rhymes

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The Placid Pug, and Other Rhymes

THE PLACID PUG

THE placid Pug that paces in the Park,
Harnessed in silk and led by leathern lead,
Lives his dull life, and recks not of the Shark
In distant waters. Lapped in sloth and greed,
He fails in strenuous life to make a mark,
The placid Pug that paces in the park.

Round the slow circle of his nights and days
His life revolves in calm monotony.
Not unsusceptible to casual praise,
And mildly moved by the approach of "tea,"
No forked and jagged lightning leaps and plays
Round the slow circle of his nights and days.

He scarcely turns his round protuberant eyes,
To mark the mood of animals or men.
His joy is limited to mild surmise
When a new biscuit swims into his ken.
And when athwart his gaze a Rabbit flies,
He scarcely turns his round protuberant eyes.

And all the while the Shark in Southern seas
Pursues the paths of his pulsating quest,
Though the thermometer at fierce degrees
Might well admonish him to take a rest,
The Pug at home snores in ignoble ease.
(And all the while the Shark in Southern seas!)

If Pugs like Sharks were brought up in the sea
And forced to swim long miles to find their food,
Tutored to front the Hake's hostility,
And beard the Lobster in his dangerous mood,
Would not their lives more sane, more useful be,
If Pugs like Sharks were brought up in the sea?

The placid Pug still paces in the park,
Untouched by thoughts of all that might have been.
Undreaming that he might have "steered his bark"
Through many a stirring sight and stormy scene.
But being born a Pug and not a Shark
The placid Pug still paces in the park.

BALLAD FOR BISHOPS

BISHOPS and others who inhabit
The mansions of the blest on earth,

Grieved by decline of infant birth,
Have drawn attention to the rabbit.
Not by design these good men work
To raise that beast to heights contested,
But by comparison, suggested,
With those who procreation shirk.

For if a nation's moral status
Be measured by prolific habit,
Between man and the meanest rabbit
There is an evident hiatus.

Each year, by lowest computations,
Six times the rabbit rears her young,
And frequent marriages among
The very closest blood relations
In very tender years ensure
A constant stream of "little strangers,"
Who, quickly grown to gallant rangers,
See that their families endure.

Not theirs to shirk paternal cares,
Moved by considerations sordid,
A child can always "be afforded";
The same applies to Belgian hares.

These noble brutes, pure Duty's pendants,
May live to see their blood vermilion
Coursing through something like a billion
Wholly legitimate descendants.

Knowledge's path is hard and stony,
And some may read who unaware are
That rabbit brown and Belgian hare are
Both members of the genus Coney.

The common hare, who lives in fields
And never goes into a hole,
(In this inferior to the mole)
In all things to the Belgian yields.

He will, immoral brute, decline

To multiply domestic "pledges,"
The family he rears in hedges
Is often limited to nine.

Such shocking want of *savoir faire*,
(Surely a symptom of insanity)
Might goad a Bishop to profanity
Were it not for the Belgian hare.

SONG FOR VINTNERS

THE Lion laps the limpid lake,
The Pard refuses wine,
The sinuous Lizard and the Snake,
The petulant Porcupine,
Agree in this, their thirst to quench
Only with Nature's natural "drench."

In vain with beer you tempt the Deer,
Or lure the Marmozet;
The early morning Chanticleer,
The painted Parroquet,
Alike, on claret and champagne
Gaze with unfaltering disdain.

No ale or spirit tempts the Ferret,
No juice of grape the Toad.
In vain towards the "Harp and Merit"
The patient Ox you goad;
Not his in rapture to extol
The praises of the flowing bowl.

The silent Spider laughs at cider,
The Horse despises port;
The Crocodile (whose mouth is wider
Than any other sort)
Prefers the waters of the Nile
To any of a stronger style.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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