

THE PIG

I do not like to see thy nose
Turn'd up in scornful curve at yonder
pig,
It would be well, my friend, if we like
him,
Were perfect in our kind! . . . And
why despise
The sow-born grunter? . . . He is
obstinate,
Thou answerest: ugly, and the filthiest
beast
That banquets upon offal . . . Now
I pray you
Hear the Pig's counsel.

Is he obstinate?
We must not be deceived by words;
We must not take them as unheeding
hands
Receive base money at the current
worth.
But with a just suspicion try their
sound,
And in the even balance weigh them
well.
See now to what this obstinacy comes:
A poor, mistreated, democratic beast
He knows that his unmerciful drivers
seek
Their profit and not his. He hath not
learned
That pigs were made for men, . . .
born to be brawn'd
And baconized: that he must please to
give
Just what his gracious masters please
to take;
Perhaps his tusks, the weapons Nature
gave
For self-defense, the general privilege;
Perhaps . . . hark! dost thou hear
that horn?
Woe to the young posterity of Pork!

The last charge, . . . he lives
A dirty life. Here I could shelter him
With noble and right reverend precedents,
And show by sanction of authority
That 'tis a very honorable thing
To thrive by dirty ways. But let me
rest
On better ground the unanswerable
defense.
The pig is a philosopher, who knows
No prejudice. Dirt? . . . what is
dirt?
If matter, . . . why the delicate
dish that tempts
An o'ergorged epicure to the last morsel
That stuffs him to the throat-gates, is
no more.
If matter be not, but as sages say,
Spirit is all, and all things visible
Are one, the infinitely modified,
Think what that pig is, and the mire
Wherein he stands knee-deep!

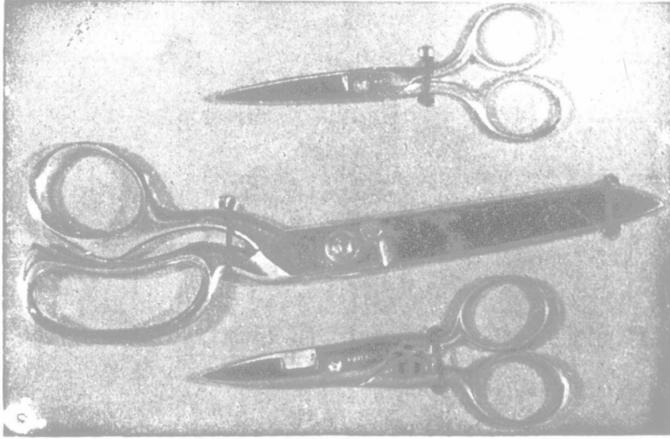
And there! the breeze
Pleads with me, and has won thee to a
smile
That speaks conviction. O'er yon blos-
somed field
Of beans it came, and thoughts of
bacon rise.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

* * *

A Milwaukee man and his wife recent-ly received a call from an old friend whom they had not seen for years. Just before the three sat down to a little supper in the German style, the wife, seizing a favorable opportunity, whispered to her husband:
"We have only three bottles of beer in the house—just enough to go round. Don't ask him to have more."
"Very well," answered the husband, who chanced to be thinking of something else at the time.
Half an hour later the host, to his wife's consternation asked the guest to take more beer. The invitation was politely declined, but still the host did not desist. A dozen times the caller was urged to drink; a dozen times he firmly refused.
"When he had departed the wife took her husband to task. "What on earth made you persist so? Didn't I tell you there were only three bottles? Why did you insist on his having more beer, more beer, more beer?"
"Mercy!" exclaimed the husband, "I forgot entirely."
"But," continued the wife, "why did you suppose I was kicking you under the table?"
"My dear," blandly replied the husband, "you didn't kick me!"—January Lippincott's.

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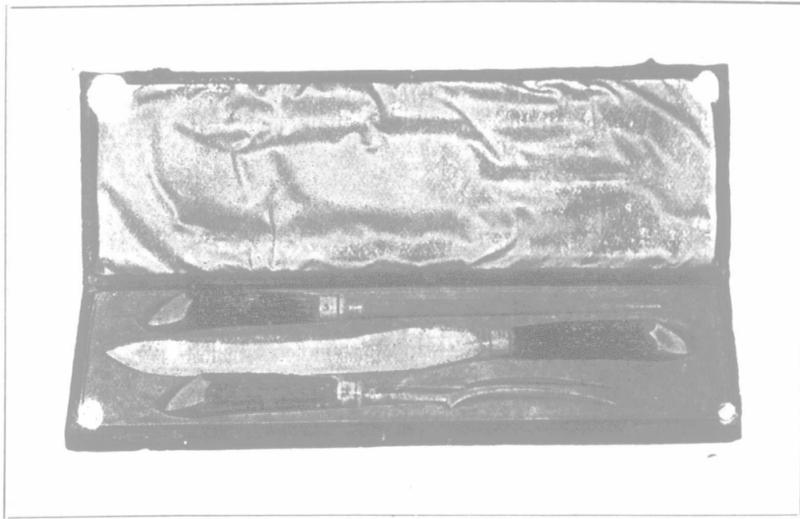
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