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WHOLE NO. 123.

SELECT POETRY.

SONG OF LABOR; THE MINER.

The eastern sky is blushing red,
The distant hill-top glowing;
The brook is murmuring in its bed,
In leucis flowing:
'Tis time the pick-axe and the spade
And iron "Tom" were ringing;
And with ourselves, the mountain's stream,
A song of labor singing.

The mountain air is cool and fresh;
Unclouded skies bend o'er us;
Broad placers, rich in hidden gold,
Lie temptingly before us:
Then lightly ply the pick and spade
With swiftness strong and lusty;
A golden "pill" is quickly made,
Wherever claims are "dusty."

We ask no magic Mida's wand,
Nor wizard-rod divining;
The pick-axe, spade, and brawny hand
Are sorcerers in mining—
We toil for hard and yellow gold,
No bogus bank-notes taking;
The bank we trust, though growing old,
Will better pay by "breaking."

There is no manlier life than ours,
A life amid the mountains,
Where from the hill-sides, rich in gold,
Are v'ling sparkling fountains:
A mighty army of the hills,
Like some strong giant laboring
To gather spoil by earnest toil,
And not by robbing neighbors.

When labor closes with the day,
To simple fare returning,
We gather in a merry group
Around the camp-fires burning:
The mountain song our couch at night,
The stars shine bright above us;
We think of home, and fall asleep
To dream of those who love us.

SELECTED STORY.

MRS. MUDLAW'S RECIPE FOR POTATO PUDDING; OR, GOSSIP FROM OUR TOWN.

From Godey's Lady's Book.
BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE DEBOTT PAPERS."

[The following story is not now published for the first time; but we re-publish it at the request of many subscribers, who want it in an enduring form, and because we wish to preserve a story so characteristic of the peculiar talent of its amiable writer, whose memoir we published in our numbers for July and August, 1853.]

Mr. John Darling, a worthy and intelligent mechanic, who has been, for two years past, a resident of our town, was somewhat surprised and considerably gratified one day last fall, at receiving an invitation to dine with Colonel Philpot, one of the aristocracy.

Mr. Darling enjoys that respect in our community which mechanical ingenuity and integrity united are always sure to command everywhere. These qualities, and a more than ordinary degree of information, acquired by the employment of much of his leisure time in reading, have given him an almost unbounded influence amongst his own class.

Though the invitation to Colonel P.'s created some surprise in his mind, he felt more disposed to be pleased at the honor than to question the motives which prompted it; for his nature is wholly free from suspicion and the petty feeling of jealousy which those in his station sometimes indulge towards the "upper ton"—feelings with which, we are sorry to say, the bosom of his better half was frequently agitated.

"We have been neighbors for some time, Mr. Darling," said Colonel Philpot; "it is time we were better acquainted. You must come and dine socially with me to-morrow. Mrs. Philpot and the children are out of town, and I am going to have a few friends to enliven my solitude."

So John Darling "saved his appetite," dressed himself in his best of clothes, and at the appointed hour—a somewhat later one than his customary time for dining—repaired to Col. Philpot's.

He met there several of his associates—had a "fine time and a grand dinner"—the utmost liberality and good feeling prevailed; and Mr. Darling entertained his wife with an account of it at every meal for several weeks.

"Hester," said he one day, as they were seated at a codfish dinner, "did you ever taste a potato pudding?"

was excellent; and, being made of potatoes, I thought, of course, it must be economical, and "Economical! That's all you know about it. What gumps men are! I'll warrant it had forty different things in it, and less potatoes than anything else. I'm no hand to fuss up. I like plain cookery, for my part."

"So do I, as a general thing. But then, you know, it's well to have something a little better than ordinary once in a while."
"Well, if you're not satisfied with my way of doing things, you must hire a cook, or go and board out." And Mrs. Darling put on her injured look, and remained silent during the rest of the dinner.

But, after all, she was not an ill-natured woman really; and, after her husband had gone to his shop, she began to feel a little pricked in her conscience for having been so cross at dinner. She wished she had not gone on at such a rate. But then, John had bored her so about that dinner at Colonel Philpot's—she was out of patience with it. Yet what right had she to be out of patience with John? He never was out of patience with her, and she could but acknowledge that he often had reason to be so. So she resolved to make it up as soon as possible.

"John," said she, as she handed him a cup of tea, "I've a great notion to try that potato pudding. I believe I could make one."
"No doubt of it, Hester," said her husband; "you can do almost any thing you try to."

"I suppose it takes butter, and sugar, and eggs and spices, and so forth; but I wish I knew the proportions."
"It's very easy to find out all about it by calling at Colonel Philpot's. He said his wife would be delighted to get acquainted with you."

"So you've told me a dozen times; but I think that, if she wanted to get acquainted with me, she might call upon me. She's lived here longer than I have, and it isn't my place to call first; and I don't believe the colonel tells the truth when he says she wants to get acquainted with me."

"Well, I always think people mean as they say, and I wish you would, too, Hester."
"But it's very evident that she holds herself a great deal above me. She has no reason to certainly, for her family wasn't half as respectable as mine. Mrs. David Potter knows all about them, root and branch, and she says that Mrs. Philpot's father kept a very low tavern in Norridge, and Mrs. Philpot herself tended the bar when she was a girl. But, somehow, Colonel Philpot happened to fall in love with her, and he sent her away to school, and then married her."

"Well, that's nothing against her, is it?"
"No, of course it wouldn't be, if she didn't carry her head so high now. But it's always the way with such persons—they never know how to bear prosperity. There wouldn't be anything said about her origin, if she didn't put on such airs; but, as long as she feels so lifted up, folks will talk you know."

"Perhaps you don't do her justice, Hester. You know nothing about her excepting what you've heard. At any rate, it could do no harm to call upon her."

After repeated conversations and discussions of this sort, Mrs. Darling concluded to pay Mrs. Philpot a visit. She could make the potato pudding an excuse, and be governed by Mrs. P.'s reception in regard to her intercourse. Mrs. Philpot has been, for several years past, to use her own expression, "very unfortunate in her domestics." With the exception of her cook—up to the time of Mrs. Darling's call—she had seldom kept one above a month, and sometimes not as long as that. This frequent change of servants was not so much owing to any unkindness on Mrs. Philpot's part, as to the fact that Mrs. Mudlaw, her cook, could never agree with them. This functionary had been, for several years, a fixture in Colonel P.'s establishment; indeed, Mrs. P. declared she could not possibly get along without her. Mrs. Mudlaw was, in fact, a good cook, and so entirely relieved that lady from all care in that department that, rather than part with her, she was willing to submit to her petty tyranny in everything. The cook actually "ruined the roast" at Colonel P.'s in more than one sense. And she did not often find the subalterns of the household as submissive to her wishes as Mrs. Philpot herself was. She contrived to quarrel them away in a short time, for she had only to say to Mrs. P., "Well, either Bridget or I must quit, so you may take your choice;" and the offending servant-maid was dismissed forthwith, there being no appeal from Mrs. Mudlaw's decision.

A scene of this kind had just occurred when Mrs. Darling made her visit, and a new raw Irish girl had that morning been installed in place of the one discharged. The duty of this girl was to answer the door-bell, and help Mrs. Mudlaw. In fact, the hardest and most disagreeable of the kitchen-work came upon her—When Mrs. Darling rang, Mrs. Philpot was in the kitchen giving instructions to Peggy, or rather acquiescing in those which Mrs. Mudlaw was laying down.

"There goes the bell," said that important personage, and Mrs. Philpot hastened to an upper window to see who it was. Having satisfied herself, she came back and told Peggy to go and admit the lady.

"Why don't you start, you?" said Mrs. Mudlaw.
"Well, what'll I do now?" said Peggy, whirling round in that bewildered way peculiar to Irish girls.

"Do!" roared Mudlaw. "Don't you know nothin'? Hain't we jest been tellin' ye 'twas your duty to tend to the door-bell? Run to the front door and let 'em in, and show 'em into the drawin'-room. You know where that is, don't you?"

"Faith, I know that," answered Peggy, and away she ran, thanking her stars that there was at least one thing that she knew.

"It's no one that I know, I'm sure," said Mrs. Philpot, after Peggy had gone; "at least, the bonnet and shawl are not familiar to me. I presume it is somebody I don't care about seeing."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Mudlaw. "But I s'pose you couldn't do otherwise, as the curnel has given orders that no body ain't to be refused till after 'lection."

With much confusion and toe-stubbing, the unfortunate Peggy ushered Mrs. Darling into the nursery, which was also Mrs. Philpot's ordinary sitting-room. It was directly over the kitchen, and heated from the cooking-stove by means of a drum, or dummy, as Mrs. Mudlaw called it. Every word that was said in the kitchen could easily be heard in the nursery—quite a convenience to Mudlaw, as it enabled her often to communicate with Mrs. Philpot without the trouble of going up stairs. Many an interesting account of what she did when Mr. Mudlaw was living, and how they managed at General K.'s when she was staying there, has gone up that stove-pipe.

The nursery was in a state of the greatest disorder, as was usually the case, though the children were all out just then. Sukey, the nurse-girl, had taken the baby out to ride, and Philip Augustus had gone with them; and Zoe Matilda was at school. Playthings of every description, carts, horses, dolls, as well as children's books and clothes, were scattered about the room in what Mrs. Darling called "awful confusion." But she had not time for inward comments upon this state of things, before her attention was called to the conversation below.

"It's Mrs. Darling as wishes to see ye, mum," said Peggy.
"That Mrs. Darling! Did you ever?" exclaimed Mrs. Philpot.
"She ain't nobody, is she?" said Mrs. Mudlaw.

"Nobody at all. Her husband is a cabinet-maker; but the colonel has charged it upon me to be polite to her just now. He wished me to call upon her; but I wouldn't condescend to stoop so low as that, though he made me promise to treat her with attention if she called."

"Well, I wouldn't do it, if I was you," said the cook. "I'd be mistress in my own house, anyhow."
"But you know, it's for his interest now. He says that Darling has a great deal of influence among mechanics—can command a good many votes."

"Oh, I remember now! he's one of them coolidge that dined here while you was away, that the curnel was laughin' about af erwards, and tellin' you how awkward they handled the silver forks."

"Yes; isn't it provoking to have to be polite to such people? Well, I shall be glad when 'lection's over, for the colonel says I may cut them all then, and I think it won't be long before they sink back to their own level." And Mrs. Philpot arose with a sigh, and ascended to the drawing-room, arranging her features into a gracious and patronizing expression as she went.

Mrs. Darling's feelings during this conversation "can be better imagined than described," as the novels would say. Her first impulse was to leave the house without waiting for Mrs. Philpot's appearance, and she rose and made a few steps with that intention; but, on second thoughts, she resolved to remain, and let her know that she only came on an errand, and resumed her seat.

When Mrs. Philpot found no one in the drawing-room she returned to the kitchen, supposing that her visitor had gone.

"She's gone," said she, "without waiting for me. She doesn't know enough about good society to understand that a lady doesn't make her appearance the moment she's called for."

"I shouldn't wonder if she was in the nursery all the time," said Mudlaw; "for I heard a stepping up there a while ago, and the children hain't got home yet. Where did you take her, you?"

"Why, I tucked her in the drawin'-room, sure, as you told me, right overhid," said Peggy, in some alarm.

"You blunderin' Irish gumphead! Don't you know the drawin'-room from the nursery?"
"Och! but I thought it was the drawin'-room; for didn't I see the young masher a drawin' the lady about the floor by its feet, when I went up to take water this mornin'?"

"There, I told you she was a born fool!" said Mudlaw, in a rage. "She'll never know nothing—she'll never learn nothing—you may as well send her off first as last!"

"Hush! don't speak so loud!" said Mrs. Philpot, in a whisper. "She can hear all you say—she has heard enough already. Dear me, what shall I do? The colonel will be so provoked! How could you be so dumb, Peggy! Run right up and take her into the drawing-room. Stop! you needn't; you will make some other mistake. I'll go myself!"

In a state of mind not to be envied, Mrs. Philpot hastened to the nursery. But, as she entertained a faint hope that the conversation below had not penetrated through Mrs. Darling's bonnet, she endeavored to hide her embarrassment

under an affable smile, extended her hand gracefully, and drew out a genteel welcome to her visitor.

"Delighted to see you, Mrs. Darling; but very sorry you should have been brought into the nursery"—no wonder she's sorry, thought Mrs. Darling—"th se raw Irish girls are so stupid! Walk into the parlor, if you please."

"No, I thank you, Mrs. Philpot, I'd as soon sit here," returned Mrs. Darling. "I can only stay a moment. I called to ask for a receipt for potato pudding. Mr. Darling tasted one when he dined with Col. Philpot, and liked it so much that he wished me to get directions for making it."

"Potato pudding? Ah, yes, I recollect. Mudlaw, my cook, does make a very good plain thing that she calls a potato pudding; but I know nothing about her manner of preparing it. I will call her, however, and she shall tell you herself." Thereupon she pulled the bell, and Peggy shortly appeared, looking more frightened and bewildered than ever.

"Send Mudlaw here," said Mrs. Philpot. She would not have dared to address her "chief cook and bottle-washer" without the respectful title of Mrs.; but it was rather more grateful to omit it, and she always did so when not in her hearing.

"The missus said I was to send you there," said Peggy.
"You send me?" exclaimed the indignant cook. "I guess I go for your sending, it'll be after this."

Mrs. Philpot, although conversing in a condescending manner with Mrs. Darling, caught something of the cook's reply to her summons, and asked to be excused for a moment, saying that Peggy was so stupid, she feared that Mudlaw might not understand her, and she would go herself and send her. So she hastened down to the kitchen, where she found the head functionary standing on her dignity.

"Pretty well," said she, "if I am to be ordered round by an Irish scullion!"
"Mrs. Mudlaw, step here a moment, if you please," said Mrs. Philpot, meekly, opening the door of an adjoining room.

The offended lady vouchsafed to comply with the request, and with a stern aspect, entered the room with Mrs. Philpot. The latter closed the door for fear of being heard overhead, and began—

"What do you think, Mrs. Mudlaw? That Mrs. Darling has come to learn how to make a potato pudding, and you'll have to go up and tell her."

"I shan't do it. I make it a point never to give my receipts to nobody."
"I know it; and, I'm sure, I don't blame you. But in this case—just now—I really don't see how we can refuse."

"Well, I shan't do it, and that's the bull on it."
"Oh, do, Mrs. Mudlaw, just this once. The Col. is so anxious to secure Darling, and he will be so angry if we offend them in any way."

"But he needn't know it, need he?"
"He certainly will find it out by some means. I know it is real vexatious to you, and I would not ask it if election was over; but now 'tis very important—it may save us all trouble. The Col. is so decided, you know."

These last words of Mrs. Philpot had an effect upon Mudlaw, which no wish or entreaty of that lady would have ever produced, for they suggested to her selfish mind the possibility of a dismissal from her snug berth at Col. P.'s, where she carried it with a high hand; so she gave in.

"Well, jest to please you and the curnel, I'll do it; but I wish 'lection was over."
Mrs. Philpot returned to the nursery, and Mrs. Mudlaw took off her apron, changed her cap for one trimmed with pink ribbons and blue roses, gave numerous orders to Peggy, and followed. She was a short, fat woman, with a broad, red face—such a person as a stranger would call the very personification of good nature; though I have never found fat people to be any more amiable than lean ones. Certainly, Mrs. Mudlaw was not a very sweet-tempered woman. On this occasion, she felt rather more cross than usual, forced, as she was, to give one of her receipts to a nobody. She, however, knew the necessity of assuming a pleasant demeanor at that time, and accordingly entered the nursery with an encouraging grin on her blazing countenance.

Mrs. Philpot, fearing lest her cook's familiarity might belittle her mistress in the eyes of Mrs. Darling, and again asking to be excused for a short time, went into the library, a nondescript apartment, dignified by that name, which communicated with the nursery. The moment she left her seat, a large rocking-chair, Mudlaw dumped herself down in it, exclaiming—

"Miss Philpot says you want to get my receipt for potato pudding?"

"Yes, I always let the water bile before I put 'em in. Some folks let their potatoes lie and sog in the water ever so long, before it biles, but I think it spiles 'em. I always make it a pint to have the water bile—"

"How many potatoes?"
"Wal, I always take about as many potatoes as I think I shall want. I'm generally governed by the size of the puddin' I want to make. If it's a large puddin', why I take quite a number, but if it's a small one, why, then I don't take as many. As quick as they're done, I take 'em up and mash 'em as fine as I can get 'em. I'm always very particular about that—some folks ain't; they'll let their potatoes be full o' lumps. I never do; if there's anything I hate, it's lumps in potatoes. I won't have 'em. Whether I'm mashin' potatoes for puddin' or for vegetable use, I mash it till there ain't the size of a lump in it. If I can't git it fine without sifting, why, I sift it. Once in a while, when I'm overthways engaged, I sat the girl to mashin' on't. Wal, she'll give it three or four jams, and come along. Miss Mudlaw, is the potatoer fine enough? Jubiter Rammin! that's the time I come as near gettin' mad as I ever allow myself to come, for I make it a pint never to have lumps."

"Yes, I know it is very important. What next?"
"Wal, then I put in my butter; in winter time I melt it a little, not enough to make it fly, but just so's to soften it."

"How much butter does it require?"
"Wal, I always take butter accordin' to the size of the puddin'; a large puddin' needs a good sized lump o' butter, but not too much—And I'm always particular to have my butter fresh and sweet. Some folks think it's no matter what sort o' butter they use for cookin', but I don't. Of all things, I do despise strong, frothy, rancid butter. For pity's sake, have your butter fresh."

"How much butter did you say?"
"Wal, that depends, as I said before, on what sized puddin' you want to make. And another thing that regulates the quantity of butter I use is the 'mount o' cream I take. I always put in more or less cream; when I have abundance o' cream, I put in considerable, and when it's scarce, why, I use more butter than I otherwise should. But you must be particular not to get in too much cream. There's a great deal in havin' just the right quantity; and so 'tis with all the ingreiences. There ain't a better puddin', when it's made right, but tain't everybody that makes 'em right. I remember when I lived in Tuckertown, I was a visitin' to Squire Humphrey's one time—I went in the first company in Tuckertown—dear me! this is a changeable world. Wal, they had what they called a potatoer puddin' for dinner. Good land! Of all the puddin's I've often occurred to that puddin' since, and wondered what the Squire's wife was a thinkin' of when she made it. I wa'n't obliged to do no such things in them days, and didn't know how to do anything as well as I do now. Necessity's the mother of invention. Experience is the best teacher after all—"

"Do you sweeten it?"
"Oh, yes, to be sure it needs sugar, the best o' sugar, too; not this wet, soggy, brown sugar. Some folks never think o' usin' good sugar o' cook with, but for my part I won't have no other."

"How much sugar do you take?"
"Wal, that depends altogether on whether you calculate to have sass for it—some like sass, you know, and then some agin don't. So, when I calculate for sass, I don't take so much sugar; and when I don't calculate for sass, I make it sweet enough to eat without sass. Poor Mr. Mudlaw was a great hand for puddin' sass. I always made it for him—good, rich sass, too. I could afford to have things rich before he was unfortunate in business." (Mudlaw went to State's prison for horse-stealing.)

"I like sass myself, too; and the curnel and the children are all great sass hands, and so I generally calculate for sass, though Miss Philpot prefers the puddin' without sass, and perhaps you'd prefer it without. If so, you must put in sugar accordingly. I always make it a pint to have 'em sweet when they're to be eat without sass."

"And don't you use eggs?"
"Certainly, eggs is one o' the principal ingreiences."
"How many does it require?"

"Wal, when eggs is plenty, I always use plenty; and when they're scarce, why I can do with less, tho' I'd rather have enough; and be sure to beat 'em well. It does distress me, the way some folks beat eggs. I always want to have 'em thoroughly beat for everything I use 'em in. It tries my patience most awfully to have anybody round me that won't beat eggs enough. A spell ago we had a darkey to help in the kitchen. One day I was a makin' sponge cake, and havin' occasion to go up stairs after something, I sot her to beatin' the eggs. Wal, what do you think the critter done? Why she whisked 'em round a few times, and turned 'em right onto the other ingreiences that I'd got weighed out. When I come back and saw what she'd done, my gracious, I came as nigh to losin' my temper as I ever allow myself to come. 'Twas awful provokin'. I always want the kitchen help to do things as I want to have 'em done. But I never saw a darkey yet that ever done anything right. They're a lazy, slaughterin' set. To think o' her spilin' that cake so, when I'd told her over and over agin that I always made it a pint to have my eggs thoroughly beat!"

"Yes, it was too bad. Do you use fruit in the pudding?"
"Wal, that's just as you please. You'd better be governed by your own judgment as to that. Some like currants and some raisins, and then agin some don't like nary one. If you use raisins, for pity's sake pick out the stuns. It's awful to have a body's teeth come grindin' onto a raisin stum. I'd rather have my ears boxt any time."

"How many raisins must I take?"
"Wal, not too many—it's apt to make the puddin' heavy, you know; and when it's heavy, it ain't so good and light. I am a great hand—"

"Yes. What do you use for flavoring?"
"There agin you'll have to exercise your own judgment. Some likes one thing, and some another, you know. If you go the hull figger on temperance, why some other kind o' flavorin' 'll do just as well as wine or brandy, I s'pose—But whatever you make up your mind to use, be particular to git in a sufficiency, or else your puddin' 'll be flat. I always make it a pint—"

"How long must it bake?"
"There's the great thing after all. The bakin' 's the main pint. A potatoer puddin', of all puddin's, has got to be baked jest right—For if it bakes a leetle too much, it's apt to dry it up; and then agin if it don't bake quite 'nough it's sure to taste potatoery—and that spiles it, you know."

"How long should you think?"
"Wal, that depends a good deal on the heat o' your oven. If you have a very hot oven, it won't do to leave it too long; and if your oven ain't so very hot, why, you'll be necessitated to leave it in longer."

"Well, how can I tell anything about it?"
"Why, I always let 'em bake till I think they're done—that's the safest way. I make it a pint to have 'em baked exactly right. It's very important in all kinds o' bakin'—cake, pies, bread, puddin's, and everything—to have 'em baked precisely long enough, and jest right—Some folks don't seem to have no system at all about their bakin'. One time they'll burn their bread to a crisp, and then agin it'll be so slack tain't fit to eat. Nothing hurt's my feelin's so much as to see things overdone or slack-baked. It're only 'other day, Lorry, the girl that Miss Philpot dismissed yesterday, come within an ace o' lettin' my bread burn. My back was turned a minute, and what should she do but go to stuffin' wood into the stove at the awfulest rate? If I hadn't found it out jest when I did, my bread would be a bun spilt as sure as I'm a live woman. Jubiter Rammin, I was a-bum as much decomposed as I ever allow myself to git. I told Miss Philpot I wouldn't stan, it no longer—one of us must quit—either Lorry or me must walk."

"So you've no rule about baking this pudding?"
"No rule," said Mudlaw, with a look of intense surprise.

"Yes," said Mrs. Darling, "you seem to have no rule for anything about it."
"No rule!" screamed the indignant cook, starting up, while her red face grew ten times redder, and her little black eyes snapped with rage.—"No rules!" and she planted herself in front of Mrs. Darling, erecting her fleshy figure to its full height of majestic dumppiness, and extending the forefinger of right hand till it reached an alarming propinquity to that lady's nose. "No rules, do you tell me I've no rules. Me, that's cooked in the first families for 15 years, and always giv satisfaction, to be told by such as you that I hain't no rules!"

Thus far had Mudlaw proceeded, and I know not to what length she would have "allowed herself" to o. had not the sudden entrance of Mrs. Darling interrupted her. He bei g a person of whom she stood somewhat in awe, particularly "just at this time," she broke off in the midst of her tirade, and casting a look of ineffable disgust at Mrs. Darling, retreated to her own dominions to vent her fury upon poor Peggy, who had done everything wrong during her absence.

While Col. Philpot was expressing his extreme satisfaction at seeing Mrs. Darling, Mrs. Philpot emerged from the library, where she had been sinking in her shoes during the interview between that lady and Mudlaw.

"Matilda, my dear," said the Col., "this is quite an unexpected pleasure, for really Mrs. Darling, we began to fear that you did not intend to cultivate us."

"I did not come for that purpose," replied Mrs. Darling, who, now that she saw through Col. Philpot, despised him thoroughly, and was not afraid to let him know it, notwithstanding he belonged to the aristocracy of our town, "I came on an errand, and your cook has got very angry with me for some reason, I scarcely know what."

"Poor Mudlaw," said Mrs. Philpot, anxious to screen her main stay from the Colonel's displeasure, yet feeling the necessity of some apology to Mrs. Darling. "Poor Mudlaw, I don't think she intended to be rude."

"What! has the cook been rude to Mrs. Darling?" exclaimed Col. P.
"Not rude, exactly, dear; but you know she is so sensitive about everything connected with her department, and she fancied that Mrs. Darling called her skill in question, and became somewhat excited."

"Quite excited, I should call it," said Mrs. D. with a smile.
"And she has dared to treat Mrs. Darling

rudely!" said Col. P., apparently much agitated. "Shameful—disgraceful—the wretch shall suffer for it. To think that a lady like Mrs. Darling should be insulted by a cook, in my house, too!"

"And just before election, too; it is a pity!" said Mrs. Darling quietly, as she rose, and wishing them good morning, departed, leaving Col. Philpot lost in astonishment. Her last remark rendered necessary some explanation from Mrs. P. She was compelled to repeat some part of the conversation that had taken place in the kitchen, which, though softened down as much as possible, was sufficient to rouse the Col.'s indignation to the highest pitch, for he saw at once that Darling was lost. He gave his silly wife a hearty blowing up, but upon Mudlaw his wrath fell heaviest. No entreaties of her mistress could save her: she was commanded to quit the premises, to troop forthwith "for being rude to visitors." But Mudlaw knew well enough the real reason for her dismissal, and when she went forth in rage and sorrow, she found some consolation in spreading it far and wide, thereby making Col. Philpot very ridiculous in the eyes of the community.

"Well, I'm surprised, Hester," said John Darling, after his wife had given him a circumstantial account of her visit. "And I'm right sorry, too, to have my good opinion of a man knocked in the head so, for I did think well of Col. Philpot. I really believed we couldn't send a better man to Congress. But it won't do. A man that can stoop to such conduct isn't fit to go there. I can't vote for him, and my influence, what little I have, must go against him. If he gets there, it must be without any help from John Darling."

Col. Philpot did not go to Congress, and what made his defeat the more aggravating was the fact that his opponent was elected by the small majority of three votes. And so Col. Philpot lost his election; and Mrs. Philpot lost her cook; and Mr. Darling lost his esteem for Col. Philpot, and all through the over-politeness of the latter.

And was there nothing gained? Oh, yes; Mrs. Darling gained something. Not much information in regard to the potato pudding, certainly; but she gained some knowledge of the internal arrangements of Mrs. Philpot's household, which proved of great service to her, for she confessed to John that she was never so contented with her own home and her own husband as she has been since she made that memorable call at Col. Philpot's.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE PRAIRIE FIGHT.

BY MRS. E. F. SWIFT.

It was that most delicious season of the year, the "Indian Summer," when seated by some travelling companions on the deck of the steamer Otto, bound for the Upper Mississippi, we perceived three Indians in earnest parley with the captain of the boat. They were fine specimens of exact symmetry. Their keen dark eyes glittered with excitement, and with their rifles in their hands, and each one foot advanced, they appeared as if preparing to spring overhead into the deep and turbid waters of the river.

With furious gestures they point to the prairie, that lay stretched out before the view until it seemed to meet the glowing sky. Covered with rich grass and wild flowers—lonely and wild—it looked like a vast extent of silence and solitude. But as we gazed through the shimmering mist that, like a transparent veil over the face of beauty, enveloped its green luxuriance, we observed not in the single file at a rapid rate.

They were Sioux, whose tribe at that time were in deadly feud with the Chippeways. The Indians on board the Otto were chiefs of that nation returning to their homes. As soon as the Chippeways saw the Sioux, they knew from their mode of travelling that they had been on a war expedition to some of their villages; hence their impassioned gestures and pleadings to the captain to be set on shore. They said they would take their scalps from their foes, and rejoin the boat some distance ahead.

After urging their request for sometime, the captain of the Otto complied with it, and they were landed, and soon in quick pursuit of their enemies. At the solicitation of many of the passengers, backed by the potent influence of sundry odd dollars, which found their way into the rough hands of the captain, he consented to the boat's slackening her speed, that we might view the result.

The Chippeways crept stealthily but swiftly along the shore, concealing themselves in the brushwood that lined the banks of the river, until they came near enough to the Sioux, and then, with a spring like a panther's, and a whoop that filled the air with its murderous echo, in an instant each rifle brought down a foe. Three of the Sioux fell dead upon the prairie. In return, the Sioux, though taken by surprise and thrown off their guard, turned in pursuit of the Chippeways, who fled for their lives, determined to avenge the death of their fallen companions.

The intense excitement on board the steamer was beyond description. Ladies were borne half fainting with terror to the cabin; mothers were screaming for their children; children crying and nurses scolding—all dreading instant massacre from their near proximity to the Indians. Men gathered in groups on the deck; some betting high on the result of the fight; some blaming the captain "for permitting murder;" others