

DR. DALY.—It is singular—it is very singular. It has overthrown all my calculations. It is distinctly opposed to the doctrine of averages. I cannot understand it.

ALINE.—Dear Dr. Daly, what has puzzled you?

DR. D.—My dear, this village has not, hitherto, been addicted to marrying and giving in marriage. Hitherto the youths of this village have not been enterprising, and the maidens have been distinctly coy. Judge then, of my surprise when I tell you that the whole village came to me in a body just now, and implored me to join them in matrimony with as little delay as possible. Even your excellent father has hinted to me that before long it is not unlikely that he, also, may change his condition.

ALINE.—Oh, Alexis, do you hear that? Are you not delighted?

ALEXIS.—Yes. I confess that a union between your mother and my father would be a happy circumstance indeed. My dear sir, the news that you bring us is very gratifying.

DR. D.—Yes—still in my eyes, it has its melancholy side. This universal marrying recalls the happy days—now, alas, gone forever—when I myself might have—but tush,—I am pining. I am too old to marry—and yet within the last half hour, I have greatly yearned for companionship. I never remarked it before but the young maidens of this village are very comely. So, likewise are the middle-aged. Also the elderly. All are comely—and all are engaged.

ALINE.—Here comes your father.

ALINE AND ALEXIS.—Mrs. Partlet.

SIR M.—Dr. Daly, give me joy. Alexis, my dear boy, you will, I am sure, be pleased to hear that my declining days are not unlikely to be solaced by the companionship of this good, virtuous, and amiable woman.

ALEXIS.—My dear father, this is not altogether what I expected. I am certainly taken somewhat by surprise. Still it can hardly be necessary to assure you that any wife of yours is a mother of mine. It is not quite what I could have wished.

MRS. P.—Oh, sir, I entreat your forgiveness. I am aware that socially I am not everything that could be desired,

*Cabinet Albums at F. H. Dufton's.*