

THE GRADUATES.

BY MARY ANGELA SPELLISSY.

THE GRADUATES is a collection of composite photographs, and has been prompted by my disinterested love for young people. They attract me as do the flower buds. The canker worm of passion early manifests itself. It is with real concern I see a fine character marred by folly, which usually ends in vice and desolation. I entertain the hope that my story shall be not only pleasant, but profitable to The Graduates of to-day, THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER I.

"Lady Mother, here is an invitation from somebody to something. I hope I am included. This letter is from Aunt Fanny. Bless her heart. This one looks like an advertisement. May I open your envelopes?"

"Yes, dear, if it is any pleasure to you, but I think we should not keep breakfast waiting."

"Oh! we can eat that any time."

"Oh! we can read these any time," said Mrs. Redmond, laughing, and turning into the dining-room.

Mr. Redmond entered from the library at the same moment, and Kathleen regretfully resigned herself to await the unfolding of the mysteries, that she had brought from the table in the hall.

The room in which they sat faced the west. From its lofty windows could be seen the Blue Ridge mountains, now white with snow.

A small stream ran past the house. It was silent this morning, hushed by the frost. Without, the scene was exquisitely beautiful. The trees incased in crystal, their branches bowed by the pendant icicles which shone resplendent in the January sun. Over all, the dome of blue. In mid-air an occasional cloud, floating serenely. Everything combined to form a picture especially impressive.

"Is not this a glorious morning, my dear," said Mr. Redmond, as he concluded "the grace."

"It is truly beautiful, thanks be to

God. There will be fine sleighing for those who enjoy it."

"I hope the Sargents will call for me," exclaimed Kathleen. "Jennie said they expected to go to Doubling Gap to-night, and she thinks they will have a dance."

"Will you be much disappointed if you cannot go?" said her father.

"Well, to bare my heart to you, I think I shall."

"You had better wait until you're invited," he answered, teasingly.

"Did the mail bring you anything, John?"

"Yes, a fat letter, as Kathleen calls it."

After the fruit and oatmeal had been disposed of, Mr. Redmond having finished carving, began his "serious attack" on the substantial of the morning meal.

Commiserating Kathleen's impatience, Mrs. Redmond opened her letters. She gave first attention to the invitation. It read:

"Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Murphy.

"The Misses Murphy.

"Tea

"Wednesday

"January 27,

"4 until 7.

"600 South 40th St."

"Shall we go, mother? I hope you will take me."

"Bless my soul, Kathleen, what a 'going' creature you are."

"No v, father, you did some 'going' yourself, I am told, when you were my age."

"Don't believe all you hear, daughter, or your capacity will be exhausted."

"Who is the other letter from, Elizabeth?"

"From Fannie. It is too closely written to read now, but I see they expect a visit from brother Edward."

"I suppose he had good luck with his sheep last year, and is giving himself a treat. But finish your breakfast, woman alive, I never saw the beat of woman for curiosity."

"I think some one, not a woman,