

THE GRADUATES.

BY MARY ANGELA SPELLISY.

CHAPTER V.



VISITORS were announced immediately after Frank Harrington's departure. Mr. and Mrs. Butler were old friends of Mrs. Redmond's when both her brother and husband were young men.

"We have you to thank for this visit, Edward," said Mrs. Murphy. "We have not seen these friends since you were here last."

"I am kept so busy," replied Mrs. Butler, "you know the girls are in society, and when the boys are at home they like to invite their Harvard friends. We had some there spending the Christmas holidays with us. It is very nice for the girls to get into that set. You know there are no marriageable Catholic young men any more."

"Is that so, Kate? What epidemic carried them off? We have some splendid young fellows in Montana."

"Catholics?"

"Yes."

"Of good family?"

"As good as our own, and I consider there are none better."

"O, Edward, you always were a wag."

"Let us understand each other, Kate. What do you mean by good family?"

"People that have had money for generations."

"Some of the most dishonorable people I know reach your standard, and I should be sorry to call them good stock."

"I think I can help you to a statement of the case, if you will forgive a little plain speaking—Precious are the wounds of a friend, you know. When you see young men and women whose aim is fashion, who dress elegantly, spend money lavishly, and assume a superior tone, you are possibly fired with an ambition to see your sons and daughters attain an equally dazzling position."

"I don't see why they shouldn't."

"Nothing to prevent it."

"Why do you take me up then?"

"Because I am sorry to see you so low down. I will try to give you a nobler object for your ambition. I thought I knew a good deal of life when I went west, but I have added to my experience since then. When I was in my twenties there were young bloods who lived gaily, or as the scripture says, 'riotously,'—jovial men, and fast women, abounded then, as now, and the end of such is usually the same—loss of honor, of fortune, and of health. I have seen the last of more than one prodigal, who began here in glory and ended out west in shame. Do you know anything of the morality of these people, whose companionship you desire for your children?"

"Edward, I thank you from my heart," said Mr. Butler. "I have been too indulgent, and my children have got beyond me. Their mother favors all their notions, and I am of interest to them only as the source of supplies. I should not speak this way but that I am among true friends. The people who fill my house now-a-days are not friends, and I have never been at home since I left the old house next door."

"The sooner you turn your horses the better."

"I find a great change in the tone of our people," said Mr. Redmond. "My long absence from the city furnishes me with an opportunity of comparing the two eras dispassionately. I have not witnessed the growth, I see but the results, and look for the influences that caused them. Some of those who were our familiars when we were boys and girls, attending the same Church, and finding our amusements in the societies connected with it—have made money very rapidly. The sudden inflation of values during the war brought wealth to many. The feverish race for riches dates from that era. The Centennial exhibition succeeded it, and with it came artistic taste, and