

Strangely enough, too, she kept all of them at the same distance. There was no one who might dare to lay claim to any special mark of distinction from her. Perhaps it was on account of this unvaried equality of treatment that she was so deservedly popular. Nevertheless she had been able to keep all on an even footing, while at the same time she was as gracious and amiable as she could possibly be. To some this policy was maddening. To others it was unalloyed joy. And the feelings of her admirer adjusted itself somewhere between these two extremes accordingly as he placed himself high or low in her esteem.

She was not a beautiful girl, if beauty consists in regularity of features. But she was remarkable, and as frequently happens, oddity of manner is quite as captivating as beauty. At least, so thought Muirkirk, who was one of her most sincere, albeit the most silent and undemonstrative of her followers.

It had often occurred to the latter that he was unlucky. And he had good reason to believe it. In the first place, his name put him at a great disadvantage. When the Freshman class was divided, he found himself in the first section. This in itself would not have been of so much consequence had it not been that she was in section two. If his name had only been begun with an N ! What a vista of probabilities the thought engendered. Then, too, in chapel, from the same perverseness of name put him at the very end of the row—but on the opposite side of the chapel, from which point of vantage he was forced to console himself with but an occasional view of her hat, towering above a sea of heads. Not a very inspiring sight to a stricken youth, to be sure.

This same strain of seeming ill-luck attended him throughout his entire course, until at last he became partially intured to it. Somehow it had never occurred to him that "it is a long lane that has no turning."

At the present moment these things returned to him with renewed force. He was seated on a rustic bench in the shadow of the broad trees in front of Old Main. And as his gaze wandered idly about, he found himself picking out the irregular line of trees which marked the ellipse. He noticed, too, that he was the only one within its limits.

In one hand, listlessly held between his fingers, a white sheet fluttered and crackled in the slight breeze. A single day before,