

Being conscious of a movement at the other end of the room he naturally glanced in that direction over the rim of the glass. But the next instant his gaze fell and he took an abnormally large swallow of water. He had met the eyes of Miss Seymour directed straight toward him. In them was the sparkle of mischief, and her lips were curved in a faint, scarcely perceptible smile. The lady principal, who had preceded her on the way to the side entrance of the room, had not noticed the quick glance of her protegee, and calmly opening the door, stood while the girl passed out, then followed her.

Perhaps it is hardly necessary to say that in the dining room the merest semblance of intimacy between the young ladies and the young men was strictly forbidden. Steve Armstrong looked fixedly at the door where the two had gone out. He had been taken so completely by surprise that he scarcely knew what to think. Presently, however, as he gazed his face lighted up with a broad smile and raising his hand he gave his fingers a vigorous snap. Then he turned again to his meal and finished it hurriedly. That night he did a good deal of studying with a book in his lap and his eyes fixed on the wall of the room.

We may as well state at once that this was the beginning of, as we would express it to-day, a "case" between Steve Armstrong and Mame Seymour. It did not develop very rapidly, however, for lack of opportunity. Though he saw her many times a day, in the hall, the class room, the dining room, and occasionally out about the grounds, he seldom could pluck up enough courage to speak to her, though she occupied most of his thoughts. When out walking she wore a light brown coat with a black collar, and by means of this garment Armstrong always recognized her when at a distance. Many times when at work on the farm his heart would beat more rapidly at the sight in the distance of that black-collared brown coat.