

It is said that it never rains on Class Day. There have been showers, but that does not count, and foggy days of damp drizzle, but that is another matter. No one will admit that it can rain, though each one watches the sky anxiously. Think of the disaster of rain, with all those beautiful dresses!

The Gymnasium is crowded, for there is held the great spread of all the noon spreads, and whoever is invited to that may count himself happy. In the dark alcoves at the sides stand fir-trees, and behind them are ranged the long tables, loaded with cold meats, salads, cakes, ices, and all good things to eat and to drink. Around them presses the crowd, each trying to get some dainty, perhaps for himself, perhaps for the girl who sits waiting in a quiet corner under the evergreens.

The center of the wide floor is vacant, except for the wandering crowd, and the band plays in the gallery, where the runners have been toiling through the winter. Perhaps a few dance, but it is not hour for dancing yet. It is the time for food and for talk, and it is hot, too, as the wilting of the broad shirt-bosoms shows only too well.

This is but the prelude, the preparation, for the festivities that are to follow. The crowd grows larger every minute till about two o'clock, and then it gradually diminishes, as all drift apart to prepare for the afternoon and evening.

In the yard meanwhile, all has been activity. Groups of men under the direction of old Jones the Bell-ringer, are hanging long strings of lanterns between the trunks of the great elms. Others are busy filling with double fences the spaces between the buildings that enclose the long rectangle of the yard, and between these fences they set dark fir-trees, to shut out the gay sights from unprivileged eyes.

In every room there is activity and anxiety. Mothers and sisters and cousins from all parts of the world are assembled, preparing for the spreads and receptions that are to come later. Now is the triumph of the senior who rooms in the college yard.

About half the students room in private blocks or houses outside of the college grounds, and the college rooms are assigned by lot to those who apply for them. But on this day every senior must have a room in the yard, and if he does not occupy one himself, he simply borrows one, by right of eminent domain, from any friend among the men of the lower classes.

By four the yard is crowded, and the band is playing on the stand just built in the centre. Such a crowd! There are three hundred seniors, with an average, perhaps, of some fifteen friends apiece, and then there are the friends of all the other students.

Already the people are beginning to crowd into the little amphitheatre, with seats arranged like those of a circus, between Hollis and Stoughton. Every seat is sold, not for the sake of exclusiveness, but because the space cannot accommodate more than a certain number of people.

Then the class yells begin, "Ninety-five this WAY!" or the long drawn "Ninety-five," mingled with the regular Harvard cheer, the deep, slow, steady, "Ra ra-ra; ra-ra-ra; ra-ra-ra; HARVARD!" Each class gathers by itself, each trying to out-cheer each other. The Seniors come running up last of last of all, in rough foot-ball and gymnasium suits, in old clothes, bare-headed, with ruffled hair, ready for trouble.

First comes the march around the yard, the formal leave-taking of all the buildings, each now with so many associations. In front of each the seniors halt, and give the college cheer, the name of the building taking the place of the "Harvard" at the end. They begin at Holworthy, the favorite dormitory, and then march on to Hollis and Stoughton, to Harvard and to Massachusetts, the old buildings with ancient brick and dense ivy as evidence of their age, for they have seen the army of Washington drawn up on the green common behind them, and the muskets of the continentals have been stacked in their hallways. Matthews' comes next,