

The mantle of truth falls upon the Grove Orator on condition that he wear it wrong side out. For the Grove Oration is intended to give a glimpse of the only true side of college life—the inside. And how can this be displayed but by turning things wrong side out? That is the grove prerogative. We came out of doors to have plenty of room. Reconstructed Amherst has not yet decreed that “fools may speak wisely what wise men do foolishly”. Yet let no one expect that this is an occasion for feeding the multitude—on small fishes. I only bring the impressions that we gather by the way, whether they be pleasant as the breath of society roses from over the meadows of Old Hadley or disagreeable as the ancient odors that filled Athenae Hall.

Now college life has three relations—the relation to the class, the relation to the faculty, and the relation to other things. The class relation begins with a cane-rush, where the undergraduates use Anglo-Saxon, and ends with a diploma, where the faculty use Latin, if it does not end before by a communication from the President in just plain English. When we had our first rush the streets of Amherst were lit with matches. We lost the rush but we found our class spirit. Those were the days when we looked with envy at even Professor Charlie,² and cooled our fevered brows at the college well. Let memory draw us back once more to the college well. Deep as the wily schemes of “Sleuth” Jaggar, the crafty man, cool as the impudence of “Jeff” Davis, refreshing as the sparkling wit of “Chipmunk” Hardy! The freshman’s first love! Many a man goes home when he finds the college well is not dug in Northampton.

But sophomore year came at last. Probably nearly everyone would maintain that the proper thing to do when one comes to a description of sophomore year is to let the voice fall, count four, and begin some other subject. In fact I have always been inclined to believe that some impecunious sophomore, who may have enticed him into buying a book on ornithology or some kindred subject, first led Horace Greeley to classify college men as horned cattle. Still we have to excuse the sophomore worm, for he comes out of his vacation cocoon a junior butterfly. Probably it is better to be a junior than not to be. He is the incarnation of all the attributes of the college man. The plug hat is his. He goes about “seeking the bubble reputation even in *his own* mouth”. The only trouble with junior year is that it leaves one a senior. He needs no description. You have all been looking at him for the last week. Here are some living pictures representing the senior in repose.

‘Gentlemen of the Class of ’95: Oh, you need not look so alarmed. I am not going to work off any song and dance about the cold, cruel world. It may not be such a misfortune to be out of college. It is not positive proof that a diploma is a wolf because it comes to you in sheep’s clothing. . . . But wherever we go, whatever we are, scientific or classical, conditioned or unconditioned, degreed or disagreed, we are going to be Amherst men. And whoever sees a purple and white button marked with ’95 shall see the emblem of a class spirit that will say, “Old Amherst, doubtless always right, but right or wrong, Old Amherst”.’