

associations that spring into one's thoughts at the very mention of that magic word. A very different thing it became in the hands of the busy, pleasure loving Americans; for Commencement is essentially American today and has been for more than a hundred years. Even in Colonial times and in the annals of Revolutionary days, we read of the festivities of Commencement week at Harvard when the village green was covered with gay booths, and the people came from far and near to this one social occasion of the year. The royal governor and all his train were present, and indeed there was as much rivalry over the securing of prominent men for the occasion as there is today. We can imagine then the feeling of exultation and triumph at Princeton when in 1783 General Washington, his staff, and the Federal Congress attended Commencement there. We learn, moreover, from old records that the spirit of revelry ran so high that the worthy authorities were obliged to forbid plum puddings, pies, and distilled liquors in order to keep peace.

Times have changed since then, no longer do the seniors hold forth in long "disputations," "Forensic Disputes," and discussions on weighty subjects beyond the comprehension of the average mind. The literary side of Commencement has almost passed out of existence. Even the honors which were once so highly prized as the mark of a successful college career have been abolished in many of the larger institutions. The seniors take no part in Commencement proper and on Class Day, although occasionally we find a Class Orator, or a Tree or Ivy Orator, the greater part of the program is devoted to humorous bits of class history, to a prophecy and perhaps a class poem. No, Commencement is not what it once was; it has become a splendid and expensive social feature, excelled in brilliance by few festivities.

The lover of simplicity may disparage the change which Commencement has undergone; but it remains what it is, to be accepted or not as you please. The gay round of excitement is, however, most welcome to the student after long winter months of digging and worrying over books; he evidently thinks the pleasure and benefit which he derives well worth the pains and labor they may cost. For days, and even weeks, before Commencement preparations are being made; the campus is put into unimpeachable order, the flowers brought to their prime and grasses and shrubs clipped close; arrangements are made for the Senior "Prom" or Alumni