

*“The 136th Annual Bob”—A Pipe Dream*

“SOMNIATOR,” ’09.

FROM the capacious depths of an easy-chair, I speculatively watched the greyish-blue fumes curling upwards from my pipe, and reviewed once more the various scenes of the “Bob.” Outside, the city’s roar had given place to its nightly lull; nothing was to be heard save the occasional wearied hum of a street-car, mingled with the approaching or receding step of some belated pedestrian. Briefly, indifferently, the great clocks announced the fact that the first hour of another day had become a part of the silent past.

Whether it was due to the traditional witchery of the hour, or whether the cynical Mephisto of “Love’s Labor Lost” had cast one of his weird spells upon me, I know not; but by some magic power the time was suddenly changed from the twentieth to the twenty-first century. Instead of the inexorable judges of “Quo Vadis” and the coy Irish waitress of “Vanity Fare,” I now saw the presentation of the “One Hundred and Thirty-Sixth Bob in the History of Victoria College.”

Of the class of 2012, I need say little. As it was in the beginning, and is now, so, I suppose, it ever shall be. In they trooped for all the world like their great-grandparents of a century before, save in one respect. Thanks to 21st-century inventive genius, they were provided with a kind of particularly diabolical trumpet, by means of which they succeeded in creating a din which outclassed all the tumultuous achievements of past generations.

Neither is it necessary to describe in detail the chairman’s address. It was composed chiefly of reminiscences of the “larks” of his undergraduate days, “away back in the eighties,” accompanied by seasonable advice to the class of the hour. After a reference to the ancient and honorable origin of the “Bob,” such as, perhaps, had been made on one hundred and thirty-four similar occasions, came the performance itself.

In this part of the programme, however, I was surprised. I had expected to see merely a slightly varied repetition of ancient glories. But “different times, different manners”; even such