The University of Pennsylvania Bowl Fight.

In place of the general cane rushes and ordinary class rushes which prevail at most colleges, the custom at Pennsylvania is to settle the supremacy between the Sophomores and Freshmen by a series of athletic contests. The class which wins the majority of these is presented by the Dean with a very handsome red and blue banner. These contests include football, baseball, rowing, track sports, and, what is most characteristic, the bowl fight.

This fight occurs in the early spring, after the ground has become sufficiently muddy to ruin any clothes a man might wear. The bowl itself is a large wooden one, about two or two and a half feet in diameter. It is made of small pieces of hard wood, which are very firmly dovetailed together; there are several layers of these, and the finished bowl is about three inches thick and weighs about twenty-five pounds. It is painted and varnished, and the inside is decorated with fraternity emblems, and in the centre is the monogram U. P., '97, '98, '99, or whatever year it happens to be. The bowl is bought and owned by the Sophomore class, and usually costs about fifty dollars.

After the Sophs have provided the bowl and a date has been agreed upon by the two classes, the Freshmen elect a bowl man. He is usually a pretty stout athletic fellow, for upon him depend the Freshmen's chances of success. If the man is active and alert he may win the fight for his class.

All the preliminaries arranged, the two classes array themselves in various costumes. The possessor of a football suit is particularly fortunate, and the least a man dare do is to turn his coat wrong side out. The two classes arrange themselves on the field about fifty yards apart; the Freshmen make a solid wedge with the bowl man in the centre, while the Sophs have the bowl in the hands of a selected few in the very front. The reasons for these arrangements are found in the objects of the first half of the fight. It is the aim of the Freshmen to get their man off the field, while the Sophs try to "put him in the bowl," which means to touch him, even the slightest bit, with the bowl. When the referee gives the signal the two classes come together with a crash, and the real scramble begins. The Freshmen usually divide into two sections as soon as it is expedient; one half tries to rush the bowl man off the field, while the others try to force the Sophs to put the bowl on the ground; once down, it is very likely to stay down, because a crowd of Freshmen fall on top of it, and then it is a hopeless task to rescue it. The section which is rushing the man has the hardest work, because the Sophs devote their main energies to keeping the bowl man on the field. This half of the fight usually lasts fifteen minutes; it sometimes lasts twenty, and if the referee favors the Freshmen and wants to see them get their man off the field, he may forget to look at his watch until twenty-five or even thirty minutes have passed. Of course while the Freshmen are trying to get on top of the bowl the Sophs are trying to get on top of the man, but it is a harder task, and usually fails. In our recent fights both '98 and '99 got their men off the field. Last year, in the '98-'99 fight, the Freshmen surrounded their man with a rope, and ran him off in that way very easily; but the referee would not allow it, and the fight had to be started a second time. Of course, as soon as the man gets off the field the first half is ended, no matter how long it has been going on, because when he has gone there is nothing left to fight for. If he gets off, the Freshmen win the half; if he does not get off, and the Sophs do not touch him with the bowl, the half is a draw; if the Sophs touch him with the bowl the Sophs win the half.

While the time for the halves is stated, it is always a question when the second half begins. If the man gets off the field, then all