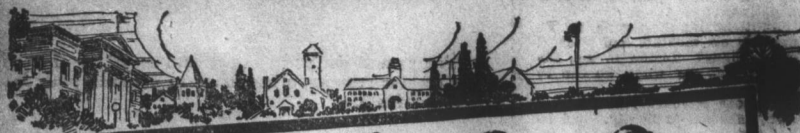


# Is This The Higher Education?

## Student Says That Universities Are Only "Varnishing Plants"



Editor's Note: Thomas W. Duncan, a senior at Drake University, Des Moines, Ia., recently elected "student philosopher" of the school, has aroused much comment recently by writing for his college paper, The Delphic, a biting criticism of university life. Accordingly, NEA Service asked him to summarize his views on modern college life in a special article, and that article is herewith presented.

To show that Mr. Duncan is not a student who has been soured by being left out of those college activities that he criticizes, the following excerpt from a letter from him is printed:

"This story is not written by an outsider looking in; rather by an insider looking out. For, here at Drake, I have been connected with the radical group, also with four fraternities—one of them a local social, one a local dramatic, and two national professional. This is not a sour-grapes attack!

"I have represented my college on the varsity debating squad, I have served as Delphic editor for over a year, and now I am Delphic columnist—I have known four o'clock dances, hot dances, etc. In other words, I am just the ordinary college student."

Lord Byron would be booted from the campus before a week had passed, and I doubt very much if Swift or Voltaire would be allowed to attend classes more than three days. The self-termed "ideal college student" of today must not be unusual

Left, Thomas W. Duncan, writer of the accompanying criticism of university life. Above, a page from "The Wampus," student publication at the University of Southern California. Branding the material as "shady," university authorities expelled the four students responsible.

or extraordinary if he expects to remain in the favor of his fellow students. He must be ordinary to the nth degree; he must be excruciatingly normal. Indeed, if he is just a trifle subnormal he is much more likely to "make" a good fraternity.

He must believe implicitly that the varsity football squad is composed of young gods, that the half-baked opinions of his instructors are final, that the "old school spirit" is "great stuff," and, above all, that his fraternity, his group, his university are above criticism.

The university of today is an immense varnishing works where one learns to dance, play bridge and poker, carry a load of alcohol gracefully, and, incidentally, to invent clever excuses for undone work. It is a convenient place to which John and Mary may go from East Butteville in order to have the rough edges and sharp corners smoothed down and sandpapered.

John dons a pair of wide pants, a checkered necktie, and becomes "collegiate." Mary learns from the "ac-



THOMAS W. DUNCAN  
By THOMAS W. DUNCAN  
Written Exclusively for NEA Service and The Tribune.

If William Shakespeare were a student in a modern American college he would be politely snubbed.

If Shelley were to enroll tomorrow at any one of our middlewestern universities, every fraternity would pass him up as "queer."

Lord Byron would be booted from the campus before a week had passed, and I doubt very much if Swift or Voltaire would be allowed to attend classes more than three days.

The self-termed "ideal college student" of today must not be unusual

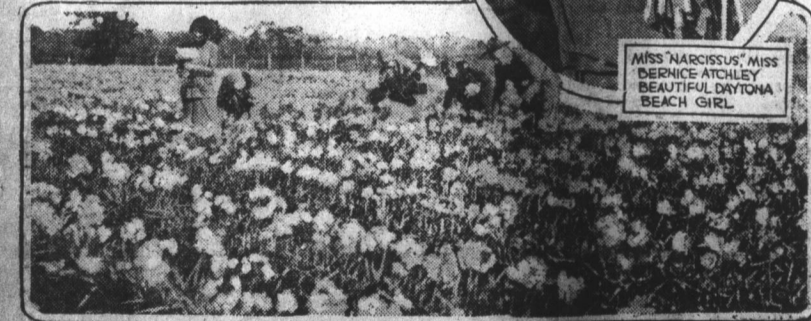
### Florida Bulb Growers Making Bid for Holland's Business

#### Fortunes Being Made on East Coast by Year Round Growing.

Florida has a flying start in a new industry. In two and one-half years she has planted 150 acres in flowers and has produced 16,000,000 bulbs that rival the best that Holland has been able to ship to the United States. The business of growing bulbs is destined to develop into a floricultural headliner in the land of flowers. Proof of the high profits that are being made from the rich earth of Florida is given by the experience of several Northern nursery men who have come to the East Coast of Florida and specialized in bulb raising. Mr. H. L. Goodwin who came to Fort Pierce in St. Lucie County is averaging \$3,000 profit per acre on Gladiola bulbs yearly. Mr. F. K. Godby in the northern part of the state with fourteen acres planted in narcissus, is the most successful individual grower in Florida, marketing in the neighborhood of \$20,000 worth of flowers bulbs and plant material from his establishment every twelve months. Carl Jurgens, C. J. Speelman at Daytona, L. A. Hakes of Orlando, and Tezlar



MISS NARCISSUS, MISS BERNICE ATCHLEY BEAUTIFUL DAYTONA BEACH GIRL



A NARCISSUS FIELD NEAR ORMOND BEACH THAT RIVAL THE BEST IN HOLLAND

Brothers in Central Florida are other pioneer operators who are winning success in bulb raising. The embargo on European bulbs caused by the diseases that foreign plants have brought into this country has given impetus to the bulb raising in the United States and especially its possibilities in Florida. The United States Department of Agriculture as a result of its research in plant growing in Florida reports that the bulbs of the paper white narcissus can be raised successfully there.

"I plant the bulbs," said Mr. Goodwin, whose flower farm at Fort Pierce has attracted great attention, "about October first to get them in bloom for the Christmas business, and then start a continuous succession of planting to catch the markets in January, February and April. It takes me about twenty days from the time I plant the bulb until I sit the flower and ship it. I plant 150,000 gladiola cubs yearly, and the total cost counting labor and shipping is about \$5,000. I sell the gladiolas to retail florists at \$15 per hundred and figure that my profits are close to about \$5,000. I till the ground, fertilize it, plant the bulbs and virtually forget about them for two and a half months." Mr. Goodwin has found a ready market throughout the United States in his bulbs, shipping them as far west as Colorado, as far as Bermuda and into the northern parts of Nova Scotia, clearing as high as \$15,000 in a single season.

Although the gladiola business, in which he has specialized, occupies only six months of his time each year, Mr. Goodwin has been engaged in raising other flowers in the remaining time. "There are over one hundred varieties which can be grown and shipped profitably," he said. "I think that St. Lucie County produces the finest flowers in the world. By expending the same energy and money that I did in the North I am making over 200 per cent more profit here in Florida and I can grow flowers every month in the year.

"Among the other flowers that can be profitably grown are asparagus plumosus, Bermuda Easter lilies, asparagus sprengeri (or fern asparagus), the sansevera xanthocoma, a tall, feathery plant that will stand in a living room for over three years without water or attention of any kind; the bryonhylum, popularly known as the Christmas Bell, the Jack-o-Lantern plant, and the chandelier, stalks of which will sell F. O. B. as high as eight dollars per hundred.

"The shipping of these flowers is remarkably easy," says Mr. Goodwin. "I cut them when the bud is closed, wrap them in paper, pack them in special boxes and put them on the Florida East Coast Railway trains to be shipped North. Even though they may be shipped to distant points requiring a week en route, they will bloom profusely when put in a vase of water. It is only necessary to cut off one-half inch of the long woody stems.

tives" the preferred "line" of her sorority, the proper fork to use, the technique of a moonlight date, and her education is complete.

When She "Pats," If her sorority "pats," she "pats," and the male half of the campus knows her as "a hot little number"; if her group refrains from "petting" for policy's sake, she remains slightly aloof when her boy friend crowds a bit too close, and she is known in fraternity halls as "a dam' good all-round girl." Of course she smokes, and now and then sips a bit of throat-screeching hooch from a silver hip flask—it is a very ordinary procedure, and, in fact, expected . . .

Now, to the sophisticated mind, these things are not a bit shocking. But here is the hitch: Mary considers herself a "college student" and is so considered by others. John readily admits that he is a "college student."

Back in East Butteville papa and mama are proud to refer to their offspring as "college students."

The term is a misnomer. John and Mary are no more students than Henry the Eighth was a woman hater. John and Mary are merely collegiates, certainly not "students."

John can tell you all about the works of Zane Grey, and Mary is well acquainted with the current "confessional" literature, but neither knows nor cares a whit about Henry Menckon, Carl Van Vechten, Edgar Lee Masters, Joseph Conrad, Sinclair Lewis, Rabelais, Ben Johnson, James Branch Cabell, John Keats, Robert Herrick, Rupert Brooke, etc., etc. To speak of Grieg, Wagner or Chopin is to open one-self to the danger of being classed a "high-brow." Rodin, Aubrey, Beardsley and Sargent are unknown. . . .

There are, of course, the outcasts, the thinking minority. Circumstances force them together. Invariably they are known as "the radicals." Sometimes they are rebels, it is true, but the college rebel is not possessed with a nefarious heart. He merely wants to poke into things for himself—cut and dried pedantry is obnoxious to him.

Degrees Are Easy. It is not at all difficult to obtain a degree from the universities in middle America—on the contrary it is almost unbelievably easy. Like stray currs into the sausage machine our young people are tossed into the college atmosphere; like the dogs they must

needs conform to the steel lines of the machine; and, like the dogs also, they emerge from the machine at the end of four years in strings of nice little link sausages, all alike, hopelessly alike. . . .

The courses in a modern middle western university are designed for the dullbell. The obvious is always insisted upon. Simple, patent, facts are emphasized. And these gullible youngsters, these Johns and Marys, labor under the delusion that they are becoming educated, cultured.

One can hardly blame the poor professors. It is what John and Mary wish, what their parents wish. Classes are meant to be only slight, unpleasant interruptions in the social whirl.

Over half of the people in our colleges should not be there. They have neither the inclination nor the capacity for a rigorous course of study.

Our universities need a general housecleaning. They should be cleared of the rubbish of athletics, fraternities and sororities, and four a'clock dates. Then, perhaps, we should have educational institutions comparable to such old world universities as Cambridge, Oxford and Heidelberg. Until then, the modern college student will remain a dolt.

I want to mention a remark once made by Bob Ingersoll. He said, in substance, that colleges were places where pebbles were polished and diamonds were dimmed. And, as usual, he was right!

"How do you know this is an age of prosperity?" "Because more people are being pinched by traffic cops than by poverty."

### RHEUMATISM

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