

The Tar Heel

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Thursday, December 9, 1926

GOLDEN FLEECE

The campus was very much surprised last Friday to learn that Golden Fleece had held an unheralded tapping in the dim hours of the morning. This sort of election is not without precedent, but such has not been the custom in recent years. The regular time is at the close of the scholastic year when seniors and rising seniors are eligible. There appear to be two reasons for the early tapping this year. The first is not generally known to the campus. According to reports that are believed to be well founded, another organization of national standard was about to invade the campus and gather into its folds the outstanding student leaders. The Fleece got word about the new movement, so the story goes, and fearing for the life and prestige of their organization, decided that something must be done and done quickly. So they went out and took in some of the men who would have caused the Fleece no end of trouble had they gone into a rival honorary organization. The Fleece got three good men, but these men no doubt understood full well why they were invited "within the portals" at this particular time.

The second reason is more obvious. Due to politics that are said to have played havoc with the selection last spring, when only four men were picked instead of the usual eight to twelve, the Fleece has enjoyed less prestige this year perhaps than at any time since Dr. Horace Williams founded the worthy organization back in 1904. As the result of last year's lean picking there were only two undergraduate members in the University this year to carry on

the work of the organization. In view of the fact that Golden Fleece was founded to bring the student leaders together in one honor organization, for the greater purpose of unifying the campus, it was evident that these two men—and they are worthy men—could not possibly be the only leaders in a student body of nearly 2500. Golden Fleece is supposed to represent the outstanding men in the various fields of student activity, such as scholarship, athletics, debating, religion, publications, and student government. Surely two men could not represent all these activities. Both are athletes; so the idea may have been that this early tapping would not only keep these three men just tapped out of the hands of another organization, but would make the Fleece a more representative group.

But let's see what has been accomplished. The three men just elected are able and deserving and should have been picked last spring, but we can't see that they have made the Fleece a representative organization. Of the three, one wears his monogram as captain of the football team, the second, his monogram as cheerleader, and the third to get his monogram next spring as track manager. It is probable that the last two were not picked chiefly for their athletic ability, but it is also true that all of them will be able to don athletic monograms and it is to be wondered if the campus won't be reminded of what a "yellow journal" said last spring; namely, that "It is rumored that Golden Fleece is considering consolidation with the Athletic Association." And the campus may be further reminded that following the tapping last spring, one of the outstanding members of the Fleece, who was editor of the Magazine, said in a page editorial that he "hoped to see the Fleece die."

If the basis for this organization is that it shall include the outstanding men in scholarship, athletics, debating, religion, publications, student government, et cetera, then the Fleece has lost its reason for existing as an honor body. The president of Phi Beta Kappa—who is also editor of the *Buccaneer*—is not a member. Debaters are not numbered in the ranks. Not a single one of the four University publications is represented in the group. And so far as student government is concerned, the president of the student body is not included in the membership. Nor is the president of the senior class. Now we simply want to ask: Is the organization representative?

After the farce tapping last spring the editor of the *Freshman Handbook*, in introducing Carolina organizations to the soon-to-be Carolina men, said that Golden Fleece is "supposed to be composed of the most outstanding men in various fields of college activity" and is considered by some as the highest honor that may come to a student in the University. Up until that time the words "supposed" and "some" had not been used. Golden Fleece—like the old grey mare—ain't what she "uster" be.

\$750 in Prizes for Essays about Roads

The American Road Millers' Association, with a branch office in Raleigh, is offering seven hundred and fifty dollars in prizes for the best essay on "The Benefits to a Nation by Improved Highways." The contest is open to all college and university students. Prizes will be awarded during the week of January 10th. Additional information can be secured from a circular which is to be found in the TAR HEEL office.

The Driftwood Fire

Dave Carroll

Here I gather up and store
Sticks that drift upon my shore;
And you may find what you desire
On salty rainbows of my fire.

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky.

The reappearance of this column so early after our denunciation of the Golden Fleece can be attributed to no girlish glee which moves the writer to sensational ventures. For the second time we hope to show that the University's highest honorary organization for students is bitterly unworthy of confidence and esteem. The fight for the slaughter of these gilded sheep was begun sincerely; it shall be prosecuted with no less earnestness of purpose. If ever a wolf masqueraded in sheep's clothing, that wolf is Golden Fleece. Today we consider other aspects of the body.

Lordly Disdain

It has been intimated that an organization so high of prestige will not condescend to notice any attack upon it. Perhaps an ostrich head-burying policy of refuge from criticism will be adopted. But if Golden Fleece thinks it can withstand this movement against it by cocky indifference, let it try that defense. While we fire, others load their guns, and leaders of the leaders should see that their powder is dry. At its next meeting, the Dialectic Senate will consider a resolution favoring the abolition of the Golden Fleece. Gentlemen of the Fleece, you dare not evade the issue.

Victims of the Fleece

After a survey of unwholesome interest by the ambitious in election to "Fleece baits"; the officers who become unconscious after the Fleece has tapped them; the inconsistency in their morals after the Fleece has been won by men with good principles; and generally speaking, the decline of leaders after their entry into the organization, we charged that Golden Fleece; by its lure, made office-grabbers and charlatans of politics. Now we ask: What becomes of the men who are beaten by politics and by less scrupulous Fleece seekers? Some of these near-Jasons are capable men, prematurely crippled and denied deserved positions by others who crush them with political machines on their selfish way to Golden Fleece. The men who barely lose out are forced upon the shelf by their failure to reach this honored body. They are made to feel a much greater breach between them and Fleece men than that which really exists. Those whom they equal perhaps in work, merit, and all but office, are their lords in the realms of honors and social prestige. This difference, the lack of an office and consequently loss of Golden Fleece frequently is due to fickle fortunes of politics.

Therefore, we arrive at this conclusion: Even if Golden Fleece were to establish a fellowship among a few leaders, such as it claims, it sets them up so high above their less fortunate erstwhile associates that co-operation between lesser leaders and Fleece men is made impossible. And even the gods (tin) of a campus cannot carry out the best plans claimable by this organization if they have only resentment among other leaders.

Kid Gloves and Work

How can Golden Fleece expect to work and be so honorary? It must, if it functions properly, assume the heaviest—and perchance—the most

disagreeable tasks on the campus. Men who are true leaders make enemies. The present organization has no work to justify its existence. If it ever assumes its responsibility, it will court unpopularity instead of disgusting worship. If these Fleece men have so much ability, we know that they can cure existing evils without such pomp and splendor. Golden Fleece sets congratulations above the actual merit, offices above ability.

How It Exists

But the Golden Fleece actually depends for its existence upon the melodrama of its ceremony, mysticism, and voodooism. What interest would students show in their glorious leaders were it not for their weird black robes, tense rites, and childish black-hand procedure? Men of intelligence dare ridicule the Ku Klux Klan, but the cream of this student body stages an insult to reason every year. Why does the list of initiates not appear in some newspaper or impersonal agency of the whole organization? Why must an appeal to emotions by kindergarten bug-a-boo tactics at a public spectacle be adopted? You of the student body know the reason. Golden Fleece thrives on publicity; it gloats over the sensation it creates.

Hero Idols

Why must a University student body be fed upon heroes made by brawn or politics? Some say Golden Fleece sets up the best ideals students might follow. No individual who has begun to think for himself should be taught to follow any mortal man as his ideal. Must growth of bones take a boy away from apron strings only to be tied at this University to ideals chosen by others? Some might even rebel at the variety of "ideals" which Fleece men represent. North Carolina's legislature refused to limit this University intellectually; but the men of Jason dare to pose as idols for us.

Why should the faculty, which has

more freedom of enterprise than students, not set up a group of ideals for its professors to follow? Or why could the faculty not tap the group of men whom it considers good leaders of students? This classification of campus heroes is an institution to be relegated to the sling-shot age and not to university students who strive upward. But new critics are considered only literary abortives here.

The Change

Golden Fleece, as we have it, must go. Why, if it exists for praiseworthy functions, is it unwilling to act as an executive committee with business-like procedure instead of fanciful gestures? Do you who are members of it prefer sheepishness to human identity? Can you value your black robes and horseplay as influences which bind you to benevolent duties? We doubt your ability to convince men with whom you deal in life that such tommyrot is part of business. Why can you not meet in simple monthly sessions as a non-mystic group of students? Why can you not do work without making yourselves appear so supernatural?

Our fundamental grievances with

the Golden Fleece, we have said, originated thirteen months ago. Therefore, let it be understood that the conflict between Golden Fleece and Sigma Upsilon yesterday only adds to an old case against the organization. We see only a new cheapness, probably not officially sanctioned, to be found in the action of the two Fleece men. Sigma Upsilon (and certainly this columnist) will never bow to such impulsive tactics. Our case is not one of an organization opposed to Golden Fleece, however just Sigma Upsilon's side may be. We oppose the Fleece, not for its rottenness of sportsmanship, but for even its best representations of supposed virtues.

Golden Fleece will never deceive the campus again; its rumored fear of competition from a new honorary society and latest behavior against Sigma Upsilon, unless an official explanation is forthcoming, will damn it in the eyes of all thinkers. The torn sign belonged to Sigma Upsilon, but our thoughts are ours. We defy anyone to destroy our thoughts—for no power can dictate our opinion of University institutions. Let it try.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

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Paul John Weaver, Director

IN CONCERT

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Thursday, Dec. 9th.

8:30 P. M.

ADMISSION \$1.00 - STUDENTS 75c

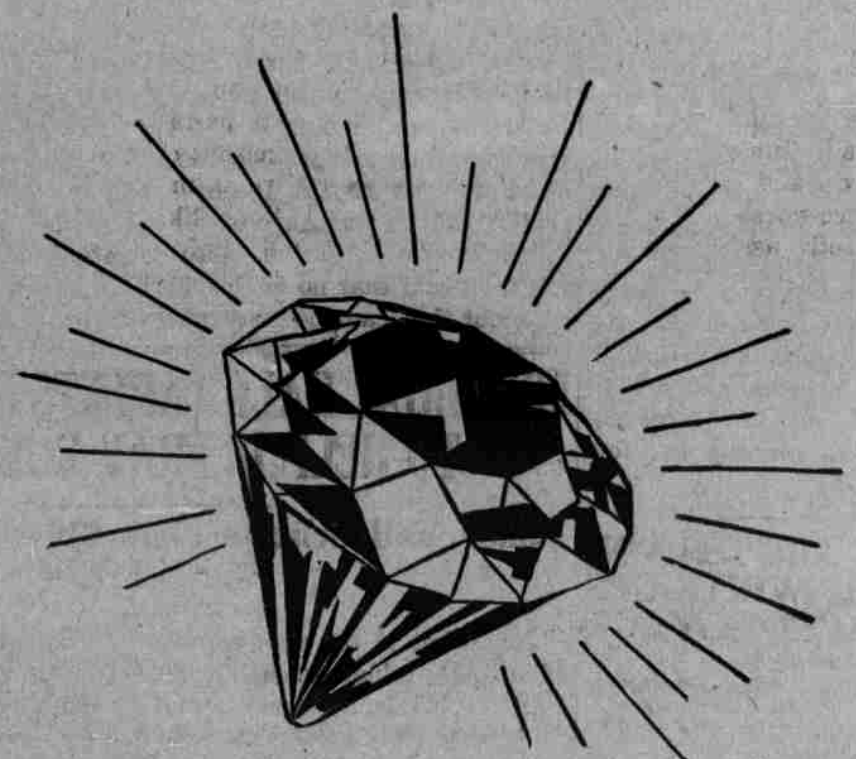
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A sermon in stones

CECIL RHODES, the diamond king, had a real idea which he passed on to diamonds in the rough.

"Be well-rounded men, broad in your sympathies," he said, and he made this the basis for selection of Rhodes scholars.

Surely there's a lesson for every man—graduates alike in arts, in pure science or in applied science—to balance the student in him with the athlete, the individualist with the man of sociability, the specialist with the "citizen of the world."

For Rhodes' idea was no theory. It is shared by hard-headed business men today.

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