

**TEN YEARS AT YALE; A SERIES  
OF PAPERS ON CERTAIN  
DEFECTS IN THE UNIVERSITY  
WORLD OF TODAY**

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Ten years at Yale; a series of papers on certain defects in the university world of today by  
George Frederick Gundelfinger

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**GEORGE FREDERICK GUNDELFINGER**

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# Ten Years at Yale

A Series of Papers

on

Certain Defects in the University  
World of Today

by

George Frederick Gundelfinger, Ph.D.



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*What we need here at Yale is a little pessimism, a little destructive criticism. We do not want unintelligent, self-advertising criticism from the outside, but we do want intelligent, sincere criticism from the inside. We are too self-satisfied, too ready to sit back on the cushions and live upon Yale's reputation, too eager to take things for granted. Let us not be content to live in a house that our ancestors built for us, and above all let us drive forever from our midst those two words—smugness and self-satisfaction.*

—The Yale News (April 20th, 1912).





## PREFACE

I entered Yale in the Fall of 1903 and graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy in 1906. Three more years of graduate study led to my doctorate in Mathematics. After that I held the position of instructor in The Sheffield Scientific School for four years. During the ten years spent at Yale, I have always lived in those houses which were occupied by students, and, therefore, had ample opportunity to study student life outside as well as inside of the classroom.

While I was a member of the Yale faculty, I published two works. The first one was my thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy—*On the Geometry of Line Elements in the Plane with Reference to Osculating Circles*. The second one was a four-act play on college morals, entitled—*The Ice Lens*. I doubt if the latter is known very widely outside of Yale, where (I am told) it created a sensation. The Alumni Weekly declined to advertise it, and it was reported that the author was in danger of losing his mind. Had the same critics undertaken to read the thesis, which was published a year or two earlier, they would doubtlessly have decided that the author had already lost it (his mind). But what they mistook for mental debility was nothing more than ordinary everyday insanity, which is a very fascinating subject indeed. I have devoted the introductory chapter of the present book to a discussion of it. For the convenience of the reader, I have also had a scene from said play and the results of said thesis reprinted in this volume.

The present work is neither a "tin-pot melodrama" nor a "trumped-up narrative," as former semi-fictitious attempts to reveal conditions at Yale have been referred to. It is a series of papers constructed from thoughts, remarks and observations, jotted down by the author from time to time during his experiences at the university. In no case have my efforts to ascertain the nature of things been forced. I even hesitate to refer to them as efforts, for all my data have come unsought. The book is simply the natural outcome of having lived for a decade in a university world, where certain conditions stand in great need of improvement. The opinions expressed are not all my own. Many of them are the general views of both students and faculty, who, either through lack of interest or lack of courage, have not cared to publish them; and yet it seems to me that they should be of vital interest to the general public.

G. F. G.

Sewickley, Pennsylvania,  
November 3rd, 1913.