

**MONOGRAPHS ON
EDUCATION IN THE UNITED
STATES, 6; THE AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY, PP. 253-318**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649341375

Monographs on Education in the United States, 6; The American University, pp. 253-318 by
Edward Delavan Perry

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

EDWARD DELAVAN PERRY

**MONOGRAPHS ON
EDUCATION IN THE UNITED
STATES, 6; THE AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY, PP. 253-318**

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

I INTRODUCTION. DO UNIVERSITIES OR THEIR EQUIVALENT EXIST IN THE UNITED STATES?

Professor Ladd of Yale university, in an essay originally read before the "Round Table" of Boston, about 1888, and republished in his little book, *The Higher Education*,¹ says: "Any one possessed of the requisite information knows at once what is meant by the university of France, the English universities, or a German university; but no one can become so conversant with facts as to tell what an American university is." And again: "— it is scarcely less true than it was a score of years ago, that, although there may be universities in America, no one can tell what an *American* university is."

A discouraging statement certainly, if true, for the would-be exponent of the American university! While not so accurate at the present day as when first made, it is still true enough, if one fail to free himself at the very start from dependence upon the *name* as necessarily indicative of the *thing*. It is incontestable that within the last ten years the conception of the natural and necessary relation of the "university" to the "college" has become much clearer, and that many and important changes of organization and administration have resulted, so that it is certainly easier than it was in 1888 to define, or at least to describe, the American university. However, there remain difficulties of many kinds; and it still is, and will undoubtedly be for years to come, if not actually impossible, at least very difficult, to give a definition broad enough to include all institutions of learning in the United States which possess true university character, and precise enough to exclude all others.

¹ N. Y., Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1899.

The first difficulty is this: The names "university" and "college," as used in the official titles of institutions, are absolutely worthless as indications of the character of these institutions. Among the scores of titular "universities" in this country most are merely colleges, some good, some indifferent, some so badly endowed and organized as to be not even good high schools. On the other hand, Bryn Mawr "college" has never assumed, even in informal use, the name "university," yet offers true university instruction of the highest order in most of the subjects covered by the *philosophische Fakultät* of a German university; and even Harvard and Columbia, though they have now acquired a true university character, of a very elaborate type, and are habitually spoken of as such, have retained in their corporate titles their ancient designation of "college." It happens that in the most eastern states the word "university" is much less used as a title, the higher institutions of learning having mostly been founded while the English influence was still strong, many of them indeed in colonial times, under direct English authority, and so having adopted the peculiarly English name of "college." In the newer states more ambitious plans prevailed, and the consideration of conditions in non-English European countries—notably those of Germany, where the universities had obtained a more commanding position and influence than elsewhere by the beginning of the 19th century—led to the choice of the name of apparently greater dignity. This consideration seems also to have been paramount with the founders of the countless purely sectarian institutions which sprang up all over the country, and still lead a precarious existence, striving to hold the attention of their brethren in the faith by promiscuously showering down honorary degrees. Yet it would be grossly unfair to assume that in all cases the name of university was adopted out of pure conceit; in many the choice of name was the proclamation of a purpose sincerely cherished, and resolutely carried forward, amid difficulties of which the European critic can form no conception, to a realization

more or less complete. It will be necessary then to get rid of this first difficulty by ignoring completely the difference in title. If we shall succeed in describing the *thing*, though we may be ever conscious of the unfortunate ambiguity of terms, now doubtless too firmly fixed in official and legal use to be easily changed, we may rest content.

Another difficulty is this. It is now clearly seen that, as institutions, the college and the university, having very different functions, demand a different organization and administration. Yet the full recognition of this fact is comparatively recent, and the logical consequences have been reached in only a few instances. The circumstances of foundation and the necessities of the hour have made it practically impossible for the university and the college in the United States to exist apart. There are still but two institutions which may be called even fragmentary universities entirely unconnected with a college: The Clark university of Worcester, Mass., and the Catholic university of America at Washington. Down to 1876, when the Johns Hopkins university was opened, whatever real university instruction was offered was organized at a college already existing, and even the founders of the Johns Hopkins, though their chief purpose was avowedly to provide for university instruction of the highest grade, felt it necessary or at least advisable to organize a college also. The wide scope planned for Cornell university, opened in 1868, from the first necessarily included a college, nay, many colleges, as part of the scheme. In all discussion of the American university, therefore, in this article it must be borne in mind that the term (with the two exceptions noted above) is used to include only certain parts of institutions whose organism is often highly complex, and that probably no two institutions coincide in theory or even in practice, though certain principles and practices are common to those of more complete type.

What then is that American university, a description of which is here undertaken, if it does not anywhere exist in completeness and exactness, unobscured by contact with

institutions of different character and divergent aims? It will be least misleading to say at the outset: It is nowhere. In so far, therefore, Professor von Holst's famous pronouncement is right; a university in the European sense does not exist in America. And yet, from Harvard on the Atlantic tidewater to the University of California, which looks out through the Golden Gate upon the Pacific, and from Minneapolis to New Orleans, will be found many institutions which offer training in the methods of scientific research, opportunities for the prosecution of such research, and abundant facilities in the way of libraries, museums and laboratories, to those individuals who have had such preliminary training as to be able to profit fully by these advantages, and which certify by the formal bestowal of a particular degree or degrees that the individual receiving one of them has proved himself or herself to have acquired the methods and habits of such scientific research. This is equivalent to saying, in the technical language in vogue in the United States, that these institutions offer to graduate students courses leading to advanced or higher degrees. Where such courses are well organized and equipped and successfully maintained, there is a university at least in part, and, it may be, in the whole. Whether the institution do only this, or this and many other things besides, and whether it be called university or college, may be important questions from some points of view; for the point of view of this discussion the existence of such organization for research work by graduates is the test, and it is its purpose to describe as clearly as possible such organization of this character as may be found in the United States of America. Apparent or evident divergations from this strict purpose will perhaps find readier pardon from the foregoing allusions to some of the difficulties in the way.

II DIFFERENT FORMS OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES. THE STATE UNIVERSITIES. CONTRAST WITH EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES

It has often been remarked by observant foreign travelers in the United States that among this young people many institutions change less rapidly than in the older nations of Europe. This conservatism, in large part an English trait persisting through many generations, is particularly observable in the field of education; experiments are carefully tried, downright innovations still less willingly adopted. Only where occasion is offered for new foundations are we apt to find a ready breaking with traditional forms. When, on reviewing the American institutions of learning to discover which of them give the opportunities for training in the methods of research that we have taken as our standard of measurement, we find them to be almost without exception colleges, or technical schools, or professional schools as well, or all of these together, we shall also find that they were generally colleges first of all, and that training in research was made a part of the system only later, very gradually and hesitatingly, the two institutions which disclaim all "college" work being almost the youngest, and one of them not yet displaying a very encouraging vitality. We shall find also that one of the oldest and most famous colleges of all, Yale, was also the first to institute regular courses of instruction for those who wished to pursue their studies after receiving the degree of bachelor of arts.

A. Universities unconnected with colleges

1 **Clark university, Worcester, Mass.**—Clark university was founded in 1887 by the generous gift of Mr. Jonas G. Clark, and the work of instruction was begun in 1889. From the first the range of the future university was strictly limited; there was to be no college, no technical school, no professional schools pure and simple. Only those who had taken a first degree were to be admitted, and of these only

such individuals as should give promise of high attainments in some specialty of scientific research. The design and organization of the new institution were intrusted to Mr. Stanley G. Hall, for some years professor of philosophy at Johns Hopkins university in Baltimore. Only a few departments were organized, and these were intended to cover subjects closely and organically connected, viz.: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology (including anatomy, physiology and palæontology) and psychology (including neurology, anthropology, criminology and history of philosophy). It was strongly emphasized in the scheme of foundation that so far as possible the line of demarcation between professor and student should be wiped out; the professors and other instructors were to feel themselves as merely older students, the students were to be expected to lecture occasionally on topics connected with their chosen specialties. The attempt to secure large numbers of students was expressly disclaimed. Seminar-organization was adopted as the essential plan of the institution, one which should bind together instructors and students into homogenous groups. For successful completion of certain requirements of research, including the publication of an acceptable dissertation, the degree of doctor of philosophy was offered. A number of fellowships and scholarships were established, making it possible for students of limited means to carry on their researches unhampered by the necessity of seeking lucrative employment outside of their university studies.

As was expected, the number of students has never been great; it has varied from 53 in 1892-3 to 38 in 1896-7 and 48 in 1898-9. The number of instructors has remained nearly constant, being in 1898-9 10. The departments at present (1899) organized are the following: Mathematics, biology, philosophy, physics, pedagogy, psychology and anthropology; it is intended to organize others from time to time, in logical order of development. Thus far Clark university, judged by its size alone, is a "torso of a university," to use Professor von Holst's famous phrase; its

methods, however, and the character of the work accomplished there, are thoroughly those of the most fully developed universities of the old world.

2 The Catholic university of America, Washington, D. C.—

The inception of this institution dates from 1884, when its establishment was decided upon at a Roman Catholic congress held in Baltimore. The actual work of instruction was begun in 1889, in the school of theology. The university is now constituted as follows :

1 School of divinity, comprising four departments : a Biblical sciences ; b Dogmatic sciences ; c Moral sciences ; d Historical sciences.

2 School of philosophy, comprising six departments : a Philosophy ; b Letters ; c Mathematics ; d Physics ; e Chemistry ; f Biological sciences.

For admission to the school of philosophy candidates must have received the bachelor's degree, or show by passing an examination that they have received the full equivalent of a collegiate course of training. Two degrees are granted, master of philosophy (Ph. M.), after two years' graduate study, an examination on a major and a minor subject, and the presentation of a satisfactory dissertation ; and doctor of philosophy, after not less than three years' graduate study, an examination on a major and two minor subjects, and a satisfactory dissertation.

3 The school of social science, comprising four departments : a Sociology ; b Economics ; c Political science ; d Law.

The first three of these constitute a school of social science, or political science, in a narrower sense. Three degrees are offered, bachelor, master and doctor of social science ; no specific period of study is prescribed for them, but satisfactory dissertations are required and examinations must be passed. The department of law is somewhat differently organized, and grants six degrees : bachelor and master of laws, doctor of civil law, doctor of ecclesiastical law, doctor of civil and ecclesiastical law (J. U. D.), and doctor