

the founding of a college is not necessarily a blessing to the community. Accordingly, the two most recent proposals for university reform have had in view a shortening of the undergraduate course to facilitate an earlier entrance on the professions, and a general elevation of the standard of culture for the whole country through a proper division of labour. The earnest discussion drawn out by President Eliot's recommendation to reduce the course of Harvard to three years has called attention to the arbitrary barriers still set up between the so-called "disciplinary" and the professional studies; while President White's suggestive plan for relegating most of our colleges to the rank of gymnasia, intermediate between the public schools and a small group of real universities, places before us in unmistakable terms the wastefulness and the inherent vices of petty endowments—the imperative need of large revenues in order to meet the demands of modern science. But in its details Dr. White's classification is impracticable, it seems to me, because it ignores organic and historical differences in the character of American schools. The smaller colleges and the smaller universities, whether sectarian or secular, whether resting on private endowments or created and supported by the State, will in due time, it is hoped, through a process of evolution, directed by "right reason" and wise "educational effort," take their places in the lower rank assigned them in this scheme. The differentiation of a class or classes of real universities as opposed to a more numerous body of intermediate colleges, frankly acknowledging themselves to be such, will indeed, there is reason to believe, be the result of social evolution. But that evolution must necessarily express, not ignore, the deeper lines of historical development. It must have as its vital principle a powerful social idea, a national

sentiment. Now, as a matter of fact, is not such an evolution really in process—an evolution whose roots are in past generations, which is sustained by national policy, and which needs only more conscious direction to enable it to produce the requisite concentration and a standard of academic culture which shall at any rate prove satisfactory to the people? Such an evolution may be seen, I think, in the rise of a close relation between the State and higher education. I venture to suggest that any hopeful plan for a division of labour among collegiate institutions must begin with the State universities. Even the oldest of these have had but a brief experience; yet so uniform and rapid has been their development that already two facts are plainly revealed: first, the State university is the latest and noblest product of the same tendency in American thought which has produced the common school; secondly, through its novel and close relation to the State, it has differentiated a distinct organism and a distinct character which entitle it to be regarded as the American type. If we fix our eyes on the six or eight foremost schools of the North-west, whose development has been guided mainly by the University of Michigan—not forgetting that some of our best institutions elsewhere, from Vermont to the Carolinas, are State schools—we shall see that the differentiation of the State university has been determined by its peculiar relation to society. Governed usually by a board of regents, whose members are either appointed by the governor or elected by popular vote, organized under the laws of the State, often dependent on the Legislature for present means of support, it touches the general body politic at every point, and its pulse beats in sympathy under every influence which affects the commonwealth for good or ill—*George E. Howard, in the Atlantic Monthly for March.*