

1920

UA3/1/4 The Flag and the School

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Recommended Citation

Cherry, Henry, "UA3/1/4 The Flag and the School" (1920). *WKU Archives Records*. Paper 1832.
http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_ua_records/1832

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THE FLAG AND THE SCHOOL

When we look deeply into the sources of influence that must administer, rule and perpetuate our country, we discover that the education of all of the people for their chosen work is not a question of choice, conscious design or deliberate mental act, but an inevitable and inherent relation from which he cannot escape. The Declaration of Independence is the greatest educational program ever presented to the world. Its own fundamentals depend upon universal intelligence and righteousness. When Thomas Jefferson, the world's champion of a practical democracy, declared the consent of the governed to be the true foundation of all just authority, he affirmed his allegiance to a school system that articulates with the masses and gives each person an opportunity to prepare for his chosen work. Government by the consent of the governed demands a government built upon a system of education that seeks to develop ideals of justice and service. In a democracy consent in the hands of a starving, unproductive, intolerant, ignorant citizenship would become an anarchy. There is no such thing as a free country without free men, and we cannot have a free and enlightened citizenship without free and efficient schools.

The school, like the stars and stripes, inherits unity, patriotic unity, community spontaneity, sacrifice, and loyalty. When the people understand that the school is a citadel of freedom, a fundamental necessity to life, liberty and property, and that it would be as east for an individual to live in the center of the Sahara Desert without shelter and food as it would be for a free government to exist without moral, intellectual, and physical support, they will rally around the school for the same reason they fight for the flag. NO CITIZEN CAN TURN HIS BACK UPON THE SCHOOL WITHOUT TURNING HIS BACK UPON THE FLAG.

No man who is for his country, who is for the accomplishment of the ideals of a free democracy, can consistently be against the school. He cannot be even negatively for it, for he has inherited a progressive relationship and cannot escape this responsibility. With the exception of the public school, most organizations in this country are largely exclusive. "The family, the church, the political party, the social classes, the endless social groups and organizations, commercial, industrial, fraternal, purely social--all are exclusive and have exclusive interests. They can never develop the ethical spirit as a community spirit, a spirit that transcends all such bonds and feels that its supreme membership is in the whole community and that the greatest good is that which may be shared by every human being in the community." The public school is inherently a community center, a common ground upon which all of the people can unite in the interest of spiritual and material progress.

The mission of education is to interpret democracy into life by aiding the people in having healthy bodies, poised and trained minds, and sound consciences--the hope and future of democracy. Its mission is to aid the child in making a larger preparation for service and appreciation and to secure more and better training and equipment for life's work. Its mission is to work on the individual, the unit of democracy, until the ideals of democracy are expressed in the thoughts, the property, and the conduct of the people. Its mission is to put a lamp in the hands of every human being that will light up the way to success and freedom. Its mission is to illuminate the country with intelligence and integrity, with principles and ideals, and with optimism and good health.

The larger democratic community must be accomplished through the larger education, and the larger education must be accomplished through the larger democracy. Education and democracy are "members one of another", inevitably and inextricably bound together. The first duty of democracy and its first necessity is to provide for training which will safeguard the health and guarantee the intelligence and promote the integrity of its citizens. It will take a full-grown democracy to make a full grown education, and a full-grown education to make a full-grown democracy. Education to the informed and real American is a conviction, a duty, a responsibility, and a program of patriotic deeds. He realizes that when the school is down the citizen is down, that when the citizen is down, the flag is down, and that when the flag is down, everything is down, and hope and freedom are gone.

There is a patriotism of education, of service, of fellowship, of brotherly love, of human initiative, of self-mastery, of individuality, and of deeds, as well as a patriotism of war. Every human achievement in the outward world is a mirror that shows us a picture of the intelligence and integrity and industry of man. We see the qualities of patriotism of the home-maker in the home, of the minister in the church, of the teacher in the school, of the student and citizen in the Foundation, of the doctor in his practice, of the author in the poem, of the farmer in the crop, of the blacksmith in the horseshoe, and likewise we see the patriotism of all other human beings in their achievements, whether they be engaged in their chosen work in time of peace or on the battlefield in time of war.

Patriotism is not unhorsed sentimentality, but it is a principle, a divine and human fundamental. It is not a frenzied spirit that has lost its moorings on the sea of life, but it is a constructive, intelligent soul that is guided by a high sense of justice. It is not a hollow voice that speaks without a conscience, but a conviction, a depth of life that is prompted by the spirit of love and service.

The real flag of a democracy cannot be seen with the physical eye. It is spiritual, it is invisible, it is a vitalized, human personality. We are not discounting a sacred approach to and an appreciation of the material flag, the emblem of liberty, that unfurls its sacred folds before us, but we are emphasizing that the roots of pure and undefiled patriotism run deep into the laws of the spirit and into personal conduct. The visible American flag may be floating before us out in the open world, while it is down in the invisible world of our own soul. Our deeds are mirrors in which we should see the flag. Anchoring "Old Glory" to every steeple in our land will not go far toward the development of civic character unless we carry "Old Glory" in our hearts and defend its sacred honor in every act of our lives.

The patriotic father who earnestly and patiently hammers thought and conscience into his chosen endeavor, and causes the red blood of American life to permeate it through and through; the noble mother who loves home and who works for physical and spiritual sanitation in the home, and points all the members of her well-ordered and sweet-spirited household to Christ and the flag; the son who feels the responsibility of citizenship and with God in his heart and his eye on a high purpose, labors for the accomplishment of his purposes; the daughter who values woman's influence and opportunities in a democracy, and gives her country the more abundant life, and the other person, whoever he may be, add

whatever honorable endeavor he may follow, who realizes that the strength of a democracy is in the unity, virtue and justice of her people, and then gives his country one great life and one noble endeavor,--these are the soldiers of America who defend this land of liberty, the land where our fathers died, the "land of the pilgrims' pride", and the "land of the noble, free." These are the real patriots, whether they be in the army or in the navy, on the land or on the sea, in private or in public life who bear "Old Glory" to victory.

The units of a democracy are human beings. If the citizen occupies the hilltops of his own life, the flag will have a commanding position on the hilltops of American life. Make your chosen work, however humble, radiant and redolent with high and beautiful life, and you will be one of democracy's heroes, a soldier of high rank, who bears the flag at the head of the army of progress. It takes sterling character to support and perpetuate liberty, to make "freedom ring", to love with nature's devotion our "rocks and rills." Make the people free and our land will be bright with "freedom's holy light." DO WHAT YOU CAN FOR THE FOUNDATION TO GIVE THE EDUCATIONAL FLAG A COMMANDING POSITION ON COLLEGE HEIGHTS AND YOU WILL AT THE SAME TIME DO MUCH TOWARD GIVING "OLD GLORY" A COMMANDING POSITION IN THE HUMAN HEART.