



To the Senior Class of 1927

WHAT does it mean to attend a school in this country? Does it mean anything different from attending school in European countries? It means something radically different. The school systems of most European countries have been maintained to inculcate the prevailing national ideal.

In this country the school system has been the product of local communities and has only permitted such state or national relationships as do not infringe upon local support and local control. The schools of America are the product of democracy. They are founded upon the doctrine of equal opportunity; they have encouraged the development of the individual; they have sought to discover his special aptitudes and capacities. They have not attempted to fit him for any highly specialized form of state service, but on the other hand, they have attempted to instruct him in those things which would be of service to him as a citizen and which would lay the basis for successful practice in every walk of life. Our school system has been characterized by the conception that it was training the children of this country for the great adventure, the adventure of life, and that all those things which would serve to make life better, more wholesome, the individual genuinely happier, and more efficient, should be included in the program of instruction. Every school, the university, the school of agriculture, the high school, the elementary school is maintained with this fundamental purpose in mind. Democracy fosters and encourages education and in turn has a right to expect that the graduates of its schools will feel a peculiar obligation to maintain and to strengthen the institutions of democracy.

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