

Robert H. Wright, Chapel

January 29, 1926

I have chosen as the title or subject for what I want to say this morning, "How to Break with the Past". This generation of old people does not understand this generation of young people, so the young people think and so each generation of young people have thought from the time that we have any record of young people on the face of this earth. There is a foundation for that feeling, there has always been a foundation for it and I presume there always will be. So you are just taking your ~~time~~ turn in the field and it will come to you some day to stand up and talk about the subject of young folks, only you won't be an old man. As a matter of fact, we feel like it is a break with the past when it is not and should not be. "But papa you don't understand the girl of today." Every papa in North Carolina has had that said to him sometime in the last twelve months, if he is a good papa, that is if he is good enough to talk with his own daughter about the things that come in her life and in every life, he has had that said back to him. Papa knows more than daughter, but not half as much. I don't know whether I can verify that statement or not, but when papa came along the girls did not wear clothes like you wear today. They wore a great ----- much more clothes, they behaved differently from the way they behave today, I don't think any better than they behave today, but just differently. Human progress is measured by the changes for the good that we accept. Human progress is measured by the changes for the good that society accepts, but we don't want to make those changes too suddenly. In the good old days when people wore hoop skirts, or just a short time after that when they wore those long skirts that went trailing in the dust and kicked up a terrible ~~just~~ dust sometimes in the hearts of young men as well as on the streets, to suddenly change from that to the knickers of today is enough to break the heart of any old man of today, or old woman. It is like the girl often says "it is too sudden". The ~~glory~~ glory of a woman is her hair, and she has cut her glory off. Did you ever stop



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to think about it. Your mother did her hair up, and her mother and her mother and her mother and generations back for a century or two women's hair has been put up in some form or other on her head so that you could see only the head of her. Now it is bobbed, but you can see just about as much hair when you look at a woman as your great grandfather did when he looked at the head of a woman. So, after all, the change isn't so great. It is a process that has come along and every change for the dressing of hair has called for big letters on the front page of the papers -- somebody cussing it. A few years ago I stood up here and talked to you about the curled hair works where they were saving the tails of the cows that were killed for beef to put into rats for the heads of women. The rats are gone, they have even cut the rat nests out of their ~~heads~~ hair. Did you ever say when your hair was so tangled in the morning that it was full of rat nests, well, that is what they say at my house. The change was not so sudden after all, and the change from clothes, to less clothes and less clothes and less clothes hasn't been so sudden.

It is the same principle that you must apply to education. Young women, let's be serious for a few minutes because there is a thought here that I want you to get and use it for your growth. Here is a little child as a student. You are his teacher. You have got to find where he is mentally. You have got to find out something about what he knows, something about the environment in which he has been spending the few years of his life and then something over here to which you want to carry that child in an educational way. But you won't pick him up here today and turn him loose here tomorrow a university graduate. You have got to take him here today in the fourth grade perhaps and by a process of time and changes and work bring him through the grades and high school and into the college and on through to his university education. It takes time and growth and changes constantly taking place to bring about the desired end in the life of the child that we are trying to educate. Just so it is with these changes. Here's a thought



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R.H.W.

I want to tell you by reading a little piece of poetry that I like to read once a year, I am reading it to you this morning to tell you how to pass your examinations:

Quote "It Can't be Done"

That is just another nice way of saying that a person can accomplish any reasonable task that he may undertake if he will not know the word failure. There are so many people in this world who simply fail before they begin. They are like the pendulum of the clock who figured out how many times it would have to swing to mark off the seconds in 24 hours and he said, "It can't be done". Then somebody put a little ambition in the clock and he found that every swing had just enough time to mark off that time and at the end of 24 hours, he had marked them all off. It had tackled the thing that could not be done and had done it. If you look at the thing in toto, it seems to be so enormous, it masses itself before us and we are whipped before we begin. If we will just do the thing next and keep on doing the next thing -- if you have studied, as I believe most of you have studied, during the quarter, next week you won't have so very much trouble. If you will just tackle the thing with a grin and say that you are going to try, you will find that it won't be very much trouble for you to do the thing that can't be done. Before you know it, you will do it. I want you to pass your examinations. I want you to pass, not only these examinations, but I want you to prepare yourself to stand the examinations that you will have to stand all your life. They are going to come to you day after day and you will pass them if you never give up -- stick absolutely stick to the job. But if you give up before you start you are whipped to begin with and the chances are that you will not be a success.

There is one type of examination that it is always impossible for a



"I don't know what we are going to do with this generation, they are going to the bad." If they would take that attitude that I am trying to leave with you, there would be ~~an~~ understanding, a sympathetic understanding, running through the lives of both, and they would be working together for the common good, trying to serve, and the good of yesterday would be a foundation upon which to build a worth while tomorrow.