

Robert H. Wright,

Chapel

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"When Shall I Resign?" I am going to use that as the subject of my talk to you this morning, "When Shall I Resign?" You young women are going out from this college into the state as teachers. Some of you at the end of the first year are going to want to move from the place where you are to some other place. The teacher as a rule in North Carolina stays only a short time in any one school system. There are exceptions to this rule. There are people who are now teaching in the same school they taught in 15 and 20 years ago. You young women need some of the fundamental principles that underly this whole scheme of education to help you determine just when you should move from one school system to another, or when you need to go into something else, and just what should be the fundamental principles that govern you in making changes. Too often the dollar mark determines the answer to this question, "When shall I Resign?" I want you to get that thought, too often the dollar mark, just because somebody else pays more money is all the reason I need for moving from one place to another. Now, let me say right at the beginning that there does come a time when a person ought to move out of one school system into another for no other reason in the world except because it pays more, but that is not always the case, and the dollar mark should not be the determining factor unless it can react favorably on the community from which you move. If by moving from A to B you can help to bring the salaries in A up to what they ought to be, you have done the people in community A a real service.

For our purposes this morning we will eliminate the dollar mark entirely and look at this question from a much larger and much more vital standpoint. Every system of schools must, of necessity, have an administrative head. There must, of necessity, be certain administrative policies, some scheme, some organization or the work will not be successful.

I am a teacher now in the community, I have been here for two or three or four years. I have been able to give the administration of the schools my undivided support. I haven't always agreed with everything that was said. I haven't always agreed with all the policies because thinking people do not agree. But, on the other hand, I have given my whole hearted support to the administration, even when I thought certain changes ought to be made. Now, that is going to confront each one of you. The administrator has to take the responsibility and the administrator cannot organize his schools so as to harmonize with the thoughts of every one who teaches in the city. It is impossible, that is, if he has thinking people. The question arises that I do not agree with him, but I am not the administrator, I am a teacher, what should be my attitude? First, I ought to go to the administrator and lay my views before him or her, whoever it is, with perfect frankness, without any axe to grind, without any motive other than the good of the service, giving the administrator my reasons as well as my views, and then accept the administrator's decision. Sometimes it will be in my favor and sometimes it will not be. If I cannot accept it and give the administration my whole hearted support, whether he accepts it or not, then I had better move on. I want you to get that thought because quite often people stay in a system of schools with just some little thing, it may be that has gotten on the teachers nerves, if you will let me use a slang expression, that becomes a hobby with the teacher -- this thing ought to be done this way instead of the way it is being done and it begins to rankle in the breast of the teacher until it takes away from the teacher the whole hearted support that the teacher should give to the administration and that the administration has a right to expect. Now, if you can't kill off that little thing, just the scratch of a pin it may be, if you can't kill off that you had better move to another city, but before

you move you had better see for sure that you are right about it and that it is going to work for the common good. Almost every day of my life as an administrator I find it necessary to do some things that I do not want to do, and you as teachers are going to find just that kind of thing facing you. Cooperation is absolutely essential to efficient service in school work. This means the cooperation of the administrator and all those working with the administrator. Sometimes an administrator will put a thing in because of the preponderance of opinion against him and he will let it work until he demonstrates whether he is right or not. The administrator capable of doing that sort of thing reaches a high point in administration, the demonstration of whether this thing is right or wrong, but if he will not demonstrate it and it still worries you to the extent of reducing your efficiency and making you not a whole hearted supporter, you had better move to another place.

I have known people to bring up a mighty little thing and lose their efficiency because they could not carry a minor point. That is always dangerous whether it be in the mind of a teacher or an administrator.

There is a great big problem before us in every school system, or sub-division of the great ~~state~~ school system in our state, and that great big problem is to get the largest amount of efficient teaching done for the children of our state and the whole mechanism organized with that one object in view.

Again, a teacher who is in thorough accord with the administration will find herself sooner or later beginning to get tired and to feel drained and dragged, begin to drop into ruts and begin to do the same thing over day after day and year after year, just the ~~is~~ same way. It is a kind of habit formation. When you fall into ruts of that kind it is time for you to do one of two things, either take a correspondence course, go to a summer school, take a year's leave of absence and go study or move out of

GREENVILLE, N. C.

the system into another one where you will have to break it all up and start over. The crystalized teacher cannot participate very much in the ~~exametism~~ solution of what to do. I mean when a teacher becomes crystalized, her usefulness to the children is minimized. We have seen them literally dry up in a school system and become ~~practiaally~~ worthless. The children have taken away from them all that they have that has any vitality or life and then they wonder why he or she is so dull and dry. There is nothing left, they are dry and dull. When you get in that position if you can't by study and work get some outside interest, anything in the world to break you up and to make you come back and rework and redo your daily work and class work. If you can't do that you had better move on. You can do it though by just living, reading journals, reading publications, reading books, reading anything almost that will tear you to pieces and make you rework the problem. Do not become a crystalized teacher. Do not stay in one place until you dry up. I know you girls have seen this kind of teacher. We have all seen them, and we say she has ~~been~~ been here ever since my mother was a student and she is teaching now just like she did when mama went to school. I don't know why in the world they don't get rid of her. That would not do, she has been here too long. There are other teachers who have been here just that long and they are doing good work. When you dry up, blow away and light in another community.