

President Wright's Chapel Talk

October 18, 1928

I have several matters of importance to you that I wish to talk about this morning. You have been requested to communicate with your home folks and friends and tell them about our regulations on our campus with reference to Sunday afternoon and visiting. We have waited patiently until now, hoping that they would stay off the back campus and instead of getting better it is getting worse. We are going to give one more Sunday to it, probably we will have a policeman up here next Sunday just as we have had to have every Sunday so far, and then we will probably be forced to shut up all the entrances to the college campus except the one entrance to Cotten Hall. If we are forced to do that, it will probably mean that no mail will be brought after six o'clock Saturday until after seven o'clock Monday morning. I want you to know what it means to you, because when we have to shut up the driveways the postman cannot get in because he drives an automobile - sometimes he drives a truck. If you cannot stop your folks, all right we can. We are not going to let this campus be like it has been for the past Sundays if we have to hire twelve policemen. Some things took place here last Sunday that were absolutely disgraceful and we are not going to submit to them. Again, ask your folks to stay away. I don't know that they were your folks, they may have been just taking advantage of you.

There are certain regulations of the faculty that have been made in a large measure for your convenience; to be sure, all of our regulations are made to help you in your work. If you ^{do} not come to college to work, then you are at the wrong place. Now that doesn't mean that we do not want you to enjoy your college life; we do. We are anxious for you to enjoy it, but to be a good citizen you must conform to the necessary regulations for a large student body. There is a faculty regulation, and I will read it to you: "Any student who misses 25 per cent of class work in any subject will not get credit for the term's work let the cause be whatsoever it may." If you are absent 25 per cent of the time from your work, then you cannot do the work that is all; it makes no difference if you are sick, it makes no difference what the cause is. That is the first regulation - the others work under it. "A student who misses 25 per cent of the recitations in any three credit subject for any month of four weeks (for any cause whatsoever) shall stand a written examination on that subject for that month before getting a grade in said subject." Four times 3 is 12; three recitations for any given subject means an examination or no credit. "A student will be allowed four unexcused absences per month of four weeks" and I understand the Student Handbook has put that in three. If so, it is just as binding on you as a faculty regulation because that is a Student Government regulation and should be conformed to. We want you to have the privilege of going home occasionally for the week-ends. For that reason we are striving with every effort possible to put no recitations on Saturday afternoon and no recitation up to the chapel period on Monday morning. I have been told that one or two groups of students have voted to

have one or more classes at this time. Well, you are just voting to stay here and not take any week-end visits and that is all. I don't know why some people put the kind of interpretations on things as they do. I think there are probably students in college who think that they must go home because it is provided for; I think there are students who think they must take a certain number of unexcused cuts just because it is provided for, and I wouldn't be surprised if there are not students who are determined to reach right up to the 25 per cent mark. Well, that is fine, then you will come up at the end with a pitiful tale, but you will not stand a chance - you took your chance and lost and tears will not do you any good. When you come in and shed your tears on Mr. McGinnis' or my back they will run off like water off a duck's back. As soon as you go out we will laugh. No, the truth is we will be very sorry for you because you did not have any more sense than to do the thing you did. We are always sorry for people who are short along the line of sense.

I want you to get the spirit of your college. You will be glad when the year is out if you have done your duty, and you leave here with serious regrets if you fall down on the job and you and your home folks will be very sorry. I expect sometimes Papa and Mamma comes and says, "just this time". Don't you want us to make a good citizen out of your daughter? "Yes, we do, but just this time won't make any difference." Yes, it does, just this time makes the difference between a good citizen and a poor citizen, and I wish you would write home and tell them that I said it. It is the difference between conforming to a law that is governing you and breaking it. We have worked this out carefully so as to give you every possible latitude we can give you and ~~insuring~~ insuring the work being done, and to provide for that case of a girl who gets sick but gets well in time to do her work. None of us have a guarantee of being well any length of time. The regulation is made to take care of all the emergencies that may arise; it is for your protection and for the guarantee that you will accomplish a given quarter's work. The regulations were made with the idea of being helpful and if they are not going to be treated in this way there is nothing to do but to change them and to bring them down until they are so binding that you will have to conform, but that is not the way to make a good citizen. The girl that cannot cheerfully conform to the few regulations that your college has, you know what I want her to do - I want her to walk in and resign her place as a student in the college and go somewhere else. We want to help you conform to those laws of good citizenship so that you will go out and teach the children of North Carolina how to be good citizens. In 1927 the prisons, chain gangs, etc. turned out one-third as many folks as the high schools of North Carolina and only a very very small fraction of those were high school graduates. I am talking from memory now but I believe only six out of the 4,000 - six may be wrong, but it was a very small number. All of which goes to show therefore that our public school system is striving to develop and is succeeding in developing a good type of citizen. Occasionally there is one you cannot do anything for and that is the girl I am talking about this morning. I don't know who she is, I hope she is not here, but if she is I hope she will leave - we do not need her. She is not only doing herself no service but she is a bad influence to someone else. I don't know yet how many students in the college are cutting chapel and how many times you are cutting, but I am going to know. The first thing you know you won't have any privileges at all, I am going to take them away from you. You come to chapel, or we will put the screws so tight you can't break them.

You were talking so this morning that I never did hear the bell, I don't know whether we started chapel on time or not - I couldn't hear. A word to the wise is sufficient and if you are not wise, or if you are otherwise, you better get wise.

This speech taken by Miss Westmoreland.

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