

January 25, 1929

On Wednesday of this week I had the exquisite pleasure of appearing before the Appropriations committee. I do not know, of course, what they are going to do. They do not know themselves. I am preparing a report of what I put before them and will try to get that off this week.

The Legislature heretofore has been appointing a committee sometimes from the Appropriations committee and sometimes from the Legislature at large to visit the various state institutions. They probably will do that this year; I do not know. It costs a considerable amount of money to do it and as they are working on an economy basis such as I have never seen a Legislature in North Carolina work on, I do not know if the committee will come this year or not. If that committee does come, they will want to go all thru this place. They will be interested in how you live so I am going to ask you to keep your rooms in good condition. You ought to do that any way. Some time ago I had occasion to go thru the dormitories and I saw some things on the walls that were injuring the property. If his picture will not stand up, dont stick him up. Take good care of your rooms for they are the property of the state and we have no right whatever to deface them.

There are some of us who are trying to conduct colleges who are doing our level best to hold down the cost of operating them. Twenty years ago a person could go to college in North Carolina for less than \$200.00 so far as the college charges were concerned. The increased charge is considerably more than 100% greater than it was some time ago. There are a large number of students borrowing money to get thru college. It shows that the cost of a college education is getting to the place that people cannot afford

to send their children to college. It is for that reason that I have been talking to you on various occasions to practice little economies. If you can keep the walls of your room so that we will not have to go over them, it will be that much economy for the state of North Carolina.

If you will stop and think for a minute, you will realize how much you can save on the electrical fixtures. Those fixtures are not put there to hang anything on. When the weight gets sufficiently heavy to make the two wires rub together then you have a short circuit. It may cost 15¢ to fix it and it may cost \$15.00. You say, "I am in a hurry to leave my room so I will just leave the light on." Every electric bulb has a certain length of time it will burn efficiently. Every hour it burns when nobody is using it, there is just that much time taken off of the life of the bulb. It costs us also for generating the current. Our electrical current for the month of December over and above what we generated was over \$600.00. That is a part of the administration end of it but it cost a great deal more than you realize. I am going to ask you again to practice every economy you can.

For this particular budget year it is going to be all we can do to live inside of our appropriation. We are being forced to cut in every way we can cut. We want to make a good impression on those who visit us but we want to do the right thing whether they come or not and we want you to help us hold the cost of a college education down to the minimum.

I suppose you occasionally get a letter from home saying, "Cut down on expenses." I know I have to write such a letter. You would perhaps be interested to know that I have to pay as much tuition for one of my children a quarter as you pay for a year plus \$25.00. I realize by actual experience with it that a college education is getting tremendously high and I suspect your father feels the same way about it. It is not always convenient to

send an extra \$25.00 a month and it is utterly impossible for us to get over the amount appropriated for us so I am asking you this morning to keep your rooms in good condition and dont do anything to deface the property, dont go off and leave the spigot running in your room or the lights burning. Help us in every way you can to keep the charges down. There is before the Legislature, and you ought to keep up with this, a bill to give the state an eight months school term. With all of the spirit of economy of this Legislature they are still determined if it is humanly possible to give the boys and girls of North Carolina a chance. Read the papers every day and keep up with it. These sixty days when the Legislature is in session is the most important time legislatively speaking that comes to our state every two years.

Robert H. Wright, President