

Tanner, Alabama
October 18, 1934

My dear Mr. Walker, —

In all good spirit,
but frankly speaking, I think you are
due me an apology. Why? This is
the story:

My life, practically all of it,
for I have been married that long,
has been devoted to rearing my sons.
Even as a little girl, I used to imagine
myself the mother of two boys and
from the time I knew that I was to be
a mother the best that I had to give,
in thought and in deed, has gone
into their making.

The lack of educational
advantages in my own life, and
the keen interest I had in develop-
ment of a broader and more
abundant life, spurred me on to
open the way, if possible, that my
boys might take their places in the
world as constructive factors with
a purpose. Not necessarily "big men",

in the common sense of the term, but worth while men. For example, upon inquiring of a father about his young son I was told that he was doing splendidly, after graduation from high school, as a tobacco salesman on a good salary. I told my boys that doing well whatever they did was commendable but I could not be satisfied with them as tobacco salesmen if they made a thousand dollars a month.

I began training so early that the first son read fluently at the age of three and my zeal increased throughout the long period of years that meant drudgery - washing, ironing, cooking, sewing, and sacrifice after sacrifice to keep them in school! You have never been a woman, therefore, you can't know what it means to not to have a single new dress for as much as three years at a time! Neither have you been a mother, so you can't know the joy of a mother's heart when rewarded. Love has not blinded me

to my sons faults. They are evident and as I point them out I try to help overcome them.

To reach the goal set by the N.Y. a line of thought and work is required that exactly fits my program for my boys. Needless to say, I was most eager for them to be employed, to be a part, however small, in this great undertaking, and the last letter sent to one of them bore the request that he consider seriously his good fortune and the responsibility of his work, giving the best in him to that end.

Just when I began to feel most hopeful, you tell us that our sons are on the government. Coming from a person of lesser standing, intelligence and appreciation, that statement could be ignored, but you have a deeper understanding than that. Perhaps you have not considered the inner workings of the minds and hearts of simple folk in their efforts to express themselves. My products may disappoint me yet, and those

efforts may have been in vain but
please, don't tell me that I have thrown
them upon the government, but let
me, at least, think that they are
useful citizens.

Most sincerely your friend,
Bertha B. Allen

(Mrs. Wilbur)