

cells, and if there is no other way of subduing him and keeping him quiet, an extra wooden door is placed over the steel door in order that he may not be permitted to disturb the rest of the prisoners. Murray Kirkland is not in the hole, and was not. The hole itself, or the so called hole constitutes the punishment cells. These cells have been examined by many competent and trustworthy people during the last twelve months, and I am going to state why this has been done.

The letter written by Mr. Nickle became public throughout Canada. Canon Scott preached a sermon on it a year ago. It was copied extensively in the newspapers, and in addition Mr. Nickle went to Toronto, appeared before the Social Service Council and laid his plea before them, repeating and elaborating the statements contained in his letter to Canon Scott so that the Social Service Council was made aware of all the allegations of Mr. Nickle. I mention that now; I will give my reasons for doing so a little later on.

The wooden door of which I speak has been closed I think only three times in six or eight months, and then only for ten, fifteen or twenty minutes at a time. It is only closed when the prisoner in the punishment cell is disturbing the rest of the prison by his shouts and noises. Let me tell you that in England they have the same system of extra doors; before I am through I am going to refer to the latest work upon English prisons. In the United States they have a more elaborate system, by which they can absolutely exclude both daylight and noise. In the cells at Kingston daylight is not excluded, but dim light is the result of the closing of the wooden door. I do not suppose you could read by it, but at other times one can read in these cells without difficulty. They are light, airy and well ventilated, but there is a bucket in these cells as they have no toilet arrangements. Neither are there any toilet arrangements in any of the best cells in the English prisons; the covered slop pail is adopted throughout all English prisons. In Kingston we have only these nine cells which, up to the present time, have not been equipped with the ordinary toilet requirements.

Now I should like to say a word in regard to the paddle. The paddle or leather strap is imposed as a last resort when prisoners become boisterous and unmanageable and defy the officers of the institution. We have a number of such prisoners. When they are sent to work they refuse to do so; any order given to them they resent, and in resenting

it their language sometimes is beyond description. Such prisoners must be brought under discipline in some way, and the last resort is an application of the leather strap commonly called the paddle. When this question was last up, one of these straps was exhibited in this house by the hon. member for Kingston city. I noticed that it received great prominence throughout the country; photographs appeared in the *Toronto Star*, and other papers. This paddle is a leather strap, as hon. members of the house who were present on that occasion were able to see. This punishment can be inflicted only after the man has been tried and permitted to enter his full defence and after the evidence has been submitted to the superintendent in Ottawa and finally to myself; I have to read it. If I am satisfied that the infliction of this punishment is proper I confirm it. It frequently happens that the warden's court imposes a sentence of from fifteen to twenty straps, but these are seldom given. Three to five strokes, or at most ten, is about the usual application of the paddle. The medical officer must examine the prisoner before the punishment is administered and pronounce him fit.

There is nothing brutal about it. What the prisoners resent is the indignity of it; they will tell you so. I have made a careful inquiry of the officials who would know about these things in every penitentiary in Canada and never, in a single case, has the skin been broken, nor had any wound resulted or any blood flowed, notwithstanding the statements made by Mr. Nickle in his letter to Canon Scott, Mr. Nickle does not state anything of his own knowledge but merely gives the statements related by prisoners in the Kirkland trial, and which are absolutely untrue. You strap children at school. My mother used to strap me at home—yes, and in the same place as they strap the prisoners. But the prison officials are very careful in the administration of this punishment, and in order that there may be no injury inflicted the man is securely fastened to a frame so that the strap may be applied in the proper place without injury to the individual. There is a certain indignity about the process which prisoners do resent, but so far as the records of Canadian penitentiaries disclose there is no record of any injury, any skin broken or any blood flowing. The warden and medical officer must be present upon all such occasions. I give that statement in Mr. Nickle's letter a categorical denial.