

with either your wife or the wife of the Deputy Warden, but I will not permit either of them to besmirch the management of penitentiaries by gossip, and it will not matter which one transgresses, I will act and act quickly if another concrete case comes to my attention.

This letter, as I have before stated, is secret, confidential, private and must not be placed on file.

Now, this is a gem:

I would be glad if you would not tell your wife of what I have written, but see that this quarrel, which is past my comprehension, is stopped.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) W. S. Hughes.

So that the unfortunate man, on pain of dismissal—the very dismissal that has occurred, as promised in this letter, and with no other basis than the Superintendent's knowledge when he wrote this letter—this letter upon which his livelihood hinged—was to make that dismissal the occasion of a quarrel with his wife: he was to discipline his wife and make her do something which she was not inclined to do, and at the same time was forbidden to tell her what was the cause of his remonstrance.

It seems to me that a more shameful letter—I would like to characterize it otherwise, but I desire to be parliamentary—that a worse letter could hardly be written. I think that is parliamentary.

Now, I would call attention to this. This superintendent and his other two officers had made a thorough examination of the penitentiary last September, after Colonel Cooper had been Warden for five years. They spent several days there. I have read you three letters exchanged between the Warden and the Superintendent, without the slightest reference or suggestion in any sentence that there was any ground of complaint there except the lack of cordiality between the wives of two officials. The Superintendent might have said, if it were true: "Cooper, I have had to remonstrate with you about many incidents connected with your institution; I have not been satisfied; and now there comes this further cause of friction, disorganizing the staff, and I have to say to you that it is time for a change."

There is no suggestion of that. As I said to you, honourable gentlemen, a few minutes ago, I am informed that in his conversation there, he said: "Things are going smoothly here, and I have so reported, but I want this little friction on the side stopped; it is none of my business." There was nothing else wrong except the difference between those two ladies.

Hon. Mr. TAYLOR.

Well, of course Warden Cooper did not make matters any better by the letter he wrote in response to this. He wrote what any red-blooded man might be expected to write under the circumstances. On the 29th of October, after three weeks' deliberation, he wrote this, and he started it just as the Superintendent had:

Private, Secret and Confidential and not to be placed on File.

October 29, 1927.

Sir:

I have your letter of the 8th, which I note is unofficial, and cannot permit the matter to pass without one last attempt to settle the matter fairly, also in an unofficial letter.

I regret that your letter of the 8th conveys nothing to me but a repetition of the bias and prejudice accorded to me and mine throughout the whole matter. In fact, it is an epitome in demonstrating that gossip and secret accusation against Mrs. Cooper and myself is permitted; that we are denied the right accorded to a convict of knowing the charge and his accusers, and are condemned, not only unheard, but also not to be informed of the verdict. When a statement made over the signature of a Warden is referred to as "supposed," while gossip and tattling is accepted as "evidence," a serious situation has developed.

Permit me to review the situation:—

Soon after my transfer to this Penitentiary, it was only too evident that where-ever we met friends of Mrs. Trollope, we encountered antagonism. Not only were friends of your family brought into the matter against me, but, on the voluntary statement of an independent person, the name of Mrs. Hughes was not spared.

Towards the close of your inspection in 1924, you visited the quarters of the Deputy Warden at the request of his wife, presumably. Returning from there, you verbally castigated me as to my treatment of the Deputy Warden and also regarding the condition of his house. After you left the prison that day I was informed that Mrs. Trollope was transacting certain business claiming your authority to do so.

From that time onwards, antagonism on the part of this lady has been increasingly evident. You have brought the question up with me on every visit, and even upon your last inspection informed me that the influence of the Hon. Dr. King had been brought into the matter with a view to my removal, and that Inspector Jackson had twice been sent for by the Department in connection with it. Mrs. Cooper has even been accused of smoking a cigarette at the Club and other such trivial matters, which should have no place in the transaction of public business. This campaign culminated by a local lawyer waiting upon you at your hotel, making representations to you unknown to me and demanding my removal from the position of Warden of the Penitentiary. My written request for particulars as to my accusers has been denied and my attempts to amicably close the matter only made the occasion for further charges and warnings.

At last, however, I have something tangible to face in the statement of the occurrences at Mrs. Emery's tea on September 13th, after you addressed the meeting at the prison.