

I am not very much concerned as to who appoints the guards. I believe that in the past we have made an excellent selection of guards and the country would have known of very few of them having failed if we had not had the report just submitted. Do not let us think that this is the first investigation we have had in connection with penitentiaries. In 1919-20 a new superintendent came in and we were told then that the whole thing was wrong; everything was inefficient, everything had to be upset, and the disturbance was just as great as it is to-day. We were told then that the selections that were being made would have an exemplary effect; we were going to have excellent guards and a system never before seen in our penitentiaries. But a new superintendent comes in to-day and he says, "They are useless; they are no good." Thirty or forty of them have been dismissed and he is waiting for a number of them now to give their evidence in connection with the trial of these prisoners before he boots them out. He is holding them until their evidence is in. As I say, I am not so much concerned as to the appointments; that is something which I believe will come out all right. I believe that some of the best men that have ever served in a penitentiary have been dismissed, and that by an inexperienced superintendent who never knew anything about a penitentiary. It looks to me as if the only thing he knows about it, the only thing he is interested in, is a rifle; but the rifle is the smallest part of the administration of a penitentiary. What I am more interested in is the dismissal of guards, and for twenty-five or thirty years I have been fighting this question in regard to the dismissal of guards.

I want to give the house an illustration of the way in which these men are treated on dismissal. Here is what one guard received:

This is to advise you that your services as temporary guard at this institution will terminate at the close of the prison year, September 30, 1931.

The above action is taken owing to the fact that you have failed to show the necessary initiative and interest in the duties assigned to you. For the past five months you have been given every opportunity to make good, but notwithstanding the warnings and advice you have received from the deputy warden and chief keeper, you have failed to show any improvement.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Who signed that?

Mr. ROSS: E. R. Jackson. I am going to give a number of these cases. Now, this man never was instructed; he never had a word from the deputy warden, never a word from the chief keeper except "good morning." That was the only instruction he had, and he is

thrown out. What is the result? It is not merely the fact that he is thrown out of employment, but he is blacklisted, so that he cannot get a job in any department. He is simply blacklisted, and that is allowed to go without investigation. The man has no chance to defend himself.

Here is another case. Here is a man who made a complaint in the present minister's time. He was charged with the loss of gasoline—the matter was looked into by some official. The question whether the gasoline had really disappeared or how it had disappeared was never investigated but the man was dismissed because he went downtown and asked whether a certain guard had received gasoline at that station. The finding is there. This man never had a chance, although he is one of the best appointments; he held a high position in the city of Toronto. I may say that he is not in my constituency. The question as to where the gasoline went was never investigated.

We see a man being dismissed on account of a little scrap of paper. This man was a fireman, and the strange thing is that this piece of paper cannot be located to-day. Fourteen years after his dismissal the blacklist is counted against him and he cannot get a job. To-day there are twenty or thirty guards who are going, and this is the manner in which they are being dismissed:

Acting under instructions received from Ottawa—

Now note this:

—I have to advise you that you will be retired from the staff of this institution to promote efficiency.

Is there no such thing as British justice, even though you are employed in a department of government? Cannot a man go and ask, "Why am I dismissed?" The question is important to the man because he cannot get a job in any other department. He is blacklisted and cannot even establish his defence. Statements are made in the report of the present superintendent which are absolutely false. I challenge him, this government and this House of Commons, to give these men a hearing. I know they will be able to prove that the charges are absolutely false. I am of the opinion that the warden should appoint his own guards, that he should be able to see them before they are taken on but I am also of the opinion that British justice should be shown to the men employed in the department and that they should be given a reason for their dismissal.

A keeper was suspended on November 29. The superintendent gave him to understand