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FALCONWOOD ENQUIRY

(Continued from Page One.)

he would not get into any talk with the others.

Q.—It was on your recommendation that he was sent from the dining room?

A.—Yes. Mr. Byrne said that it was difficult for him, Murphy, to get along with the others. He was quarrelling all the time.

Q.—Were there any others removed for the same cause?

A.—No; he was the only one removed for that cause.

Q.—What about the next charge, No. 6: "Permitting an old man 70 years of age to carry on scandalous actions with a deaf and dumb girl inmate in the presence of nearly eighty men and women, during meal hours."

A.—Yes, with regard to a letter he had written this girl. She produced this letter. I did not ask for the letter lately. The nurse who was present and who got that letter is here.

Q.—You were informed of that?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you see the letter personally?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you know what was in the letter?

A.—I can't just remember everything.

Q.—Very well. Take the next charge: "Allowing foolish inmates to carry victuals to a blind man; the meals being put up by the inmates in a contemptuous manner; the inmates also quarrelling with these men nearly every day."

A.—Sometimes the patients assist. There are a good many invalids around who get their meals taken to them. We have a proper cook and things are under the direction of the Matron.

Q.—What about the cooking? Are the meals well got up?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are the meals satisfactory?

A.—Yes; you gentlemen saw for yourselves to-day. The superintendent often comes around and he can speak.

Q.—And as regards inmates carrying victuals, do you know anything about that?

A.—Yes; I often saw them.

Q.—There was one man in particular he said was objectionable, one Lawler.

A.—I don't think so; I have seen him carrying food.

Q.—Did he appear to do it all right?

A.—Yes; quite satisfactorily.

Q.—Did you ever know him to quarrel with anybody—I mean Lawler?

A.—No; he is not liable to quarrel. He is a soft man.

Q.—Did any of them ever complain to you about Lawler's conduct?

A.—No. This is the first complaint I have heard against Lawler. He is a quiet inoffensive person. He does his work well. He is a good worker and does general work such as cleaning and so on.

Q.—How does he compare with the others as worker?

A.—Fully better than most of them. He seems to want to do all he can and is very punctual.

Q.—What about the statement that the inmates quarrel with those men nearly every day?

A.—I never heard of that.

Q.—The next charge I see here is No. 8: "Opening windows and letting in cold wind on those men in bed or in wheel chairs."

A.—I am not aware of that. I may say that I often come myself and direct them to open the windows because the air is apt to get stuffy in these places, especially when a number of patients are sitting in a room. The air becomes contaminated, and I find they would always prefer to

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have the windows down. That man Gass, in particular, does not want the window open at all. He is very much opposed to have the windows open. They don't want fresh air if they can help it.

Q.—There were some complaints made here, some evidence given, with regard to Berrigan and another man being in the hall-way?

A.—Yes.

Q.—It was said the window was left open.

A.—I never saw the window open any time; but the hall is quite warm. There is a large radiator in the hall; you can see it any time. Those men have dirty habits sometimes and they are often put out there to be by themselves; the other ones might be apt to give them a shove, perhaps. At times we have to open the windows to give the place an airing. They are removed there in the day time and back to their beds at night. I never heard any complaints about cold from any of the men; I don't see how they can possibly be cold.

Q.—Well, now, let us take up the next charge. I see here it is stated: "Allowing all the patients' effects, such as clothing, money, tobacco, matches, etc., to be stolen by inmates (who ought to be in the penitentiary). There are closets here with locks and keys and they are of no account whatever. Everything is stolen."

A.—Well, I don't think there is any foundation whatever for that. I don't know of anything being stolen. These patients quarrel among themselves sometimes, and they are in the habit of taking socks in their beds and having the mattress filled up with all kinds of rubbish if you allow them to. You have up, and these things and put them up, and they say that patients steal them. I don't know of any thefts whatever committed, and I never had any complaints.

Q.—Anything taken and put away like that could easily be found?

A.—Yes; sure.

Q.—Now, as regards charge No. 10: "Allowing trunks and valises (stored in the attic) to be burst open and no protest made by them against such villainy." What do you know about that?

A.—I never heard of any such case. I never heard of any instance like that before.

Q.—These charges seem especially directed against Mr. Byrne. He is singled out. He is the only man charged with anything. This document further says:

"We will undertake to prove to and convince you, that more than one here, receiving government pay are not performing their duties at all. The truth of the matter is, they are robbing the government (that is the people of the Province). They are grafting. We wish to praise Mr. and Mrs. Bonnell for their kind manner in dealing with inmates here and to our grateful lady nurses, we extend our gratitude."

How many are here, yourself and Mrs. Bonnell and two nurses?

A.—And the laundry girl, the cook and Mr. Byrne.

Q.—Did you ever hear of grafting or anything of that kind?

A.—None whatever.

Q.—By Mr. Byrne or any of these officials?

A.—None whatever. I never heard of it.

Q.—These are the only paid officials?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In the institution?

A.—This what it says also: "Another person in charge here is James Byrne of Peakes' Station King's County. He is the attendant of the Infirmary, looking after the men. We have no words of praise to offer to a man of his type but only censure. We know what we are talking about when we say that this institution has become very degraded under his management during the last three years, and this is brought about principally by Byrne." How long is it since Byrne was in the institution?

A.—About three years.

Q.—How does the institution compare now with what it was before he came here. Is it degraded?

A.—No. I think it is much about the same.

Q.—Has it been as good within the last three years?

A.—I think so.

Q.—As good as in previous years?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The witness to-day gave evidence that this last winter it has been exceptionally good.

A.—Well, things have not changed.

Q.—He gave evidence that two years ago there were some white blankets on his bed and they were light, but that they were better this year.

A.—Of course, there are blankets issued now and then and there may be an odd blanket heavier than the others, but I don't think there are any blankets very thin.

Q.—But taking it generally for the last three years?

A.—They are about the same; there is no difference.

Q.—Is there any difference between one year and another?

A.—No; we always have a certain supply every year and it is pretty much the same right along.

Q.—He also said that the furnace was not working well the two previous years, but that this last year it was working better. Is there any difference?

A.—I don't think there is any difference whatever.

Q.—As far as that is concerned it is only a delusion?

A.—The man is here and he sees to the thing.

Q.—You have been in the place and you know the conditions?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And you inspect the cellar too?

A.—I certainly do, especially cold nights. I am around seeing everything is right.

Q.—And do you find any difference in the heating?

A.—No. I don't think there is any difference whatever. It is just the same. The heating is perfect.

Q.—Going on to speak about Mr. Byrne this document says: "Since he was appointed there, over three years ago, he has given the inmates,

especially the worst characters, full fling."

A.—I never heard complaints against him by any of the inmates.

Q.—Who do you consider are the worst characters in the institution?

A.—I guess Murphy himself would be. He is troublesome and quarrelsome. He is one of those agitators.

Q.—What does he do?

A.—He would be talking to the others and would get up an agitation among them, and the first thing you know there is a row and a racket.

Q.—He says: "There is no discipline whatever in the place and we have been looking at those characters tormenting and persecuting blind men and helpless men."

A.—There is no ground for that at all. As far as I know, I think every patient is used well. They never complain to me. I don't remember one complaint.

Q.—"This was an every day and night occurrence." Is that true?

A.—No.

Q.—It says: "We wish to point out to you that this Byrne has no justification whatever for such actions. It may be said with all truth that instead of acting as a public servant he has become a master here." Who is master?

A.—Well, he generally comes to me for directions.

Q.—He takes directions from you?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What have you to say about the statement about his being "master"?

A.—I am not aware that he is master at all. I expect him to come to me for directions.

Q.—And does he come?

A.—Yes; he does.

Q.—Have you known him to do anything without your directions?

A.—No; I don't think so. He is cautious that way not to overstep the mark.

Br. Mr. McLellan: Q.—Do you find Byrne a satisfactory attendant?

A.—Yes; I find him faithful.

By Mr. McKinnon: Q.—There was some evidence given or attempted to be given, that Byrne was dismissed.

A.—I am not aware that he was. If he was dismissed I think I would know.

Q.—He was here under Dr. Goodwill?

A.—Yes.

Q.—If he was dismissed by Dr. Goodwill you would know?

A.—I would certainly be informed of it. I am always in touch with what is going on that way. I would have known.

Q.—Did you ever hear anything with regard to a man being hit in the bath room?

A.—No; there was no complaint whatever.

Q.—Did you ever hear of Byrne hitting anybody?

A.—No.

Q.—I suppose you know something about the time this man Murphy was put in the lock-up?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you know the circumstances that led up to that?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think it was justifiable?

A.—I suppose you know something about the time this man Murphy was put in the lock-up?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you know of his being put in the lock-up after that?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was that for, not scrubbing?

A.—No; that was not the reason.

Q.—What was the reason?

A.—He would try to go out in any weather, cold or frost, rain or snow, and this particular time he went into the field in the cold, and some steps had to be taken to keep him in. That time he was not in the lock-up more than two hours. There was one time he was in the lock-up for the best part of a day, but in my opinion it was perfectly justifiable. You know, you must take some steps to maintain order.

By Mr. Bell: Q.—Do you know whether it was on this occasion, after the scrubbing, that he was locked up for a day?

A.—I cannot be quite sure. No; I don't think it was that time.

By Mr. McKinnon: Q.—What is your recollection of the time he was in after the scrubbing? How long was he in that time?

A.—Of course, I didn't tell Byrne how long to keep him in, but I understand it was two hours.

Q.—It was under your direction?

A.—Yes; he told me how difficult it was to keep him in. He was liable to get frozen or chilled, it was so cold, and it was necessary to keep him in. He did not seem to think of the risk he was running. He would go right out, like one time this winter when he would have perished if we hadn't found him. He might have been frozen to death. We have to protect him the best way we can.

Q.—Taking all these charges together, is there any foundation for them, as far as you know?

A.—I don't think there is any ground whatever.

Q.—And as far as the conduct of this man Byrne is concerned, have you any reason to complain?

A.—No; he is very kind with the patients.

Q.—What is his general disposition?

A.—He is of a kind and quiet disposition.

Q.—Is he inclined to be cross?

A.—No.

Q.—Or inclined to hit them?

A.—No. I don't think he would hit a patient. Anytime I came upon him unexpectedly, I never found him doing anything whatever but what he should do.

Q.—What do you think of him as a man for the position he has?

A.—I don't think you could get a quieter man with the patients. There are many good and temperate men and he acts with them as kindly and patiently and as well as any man could be possibly wished to. I think he is a very good man; no better.

(At this stage the Committee adjourned until Wednesday 18 (yesterday) when the enquiry was continued and concluded. A full report of the proceedings of which will be published in due course.)

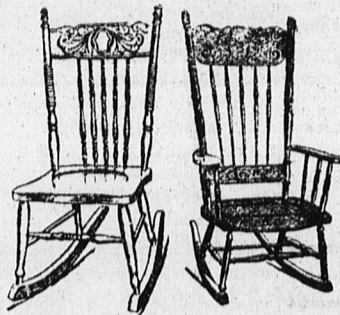
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