

# TURNING JAIL SENTENCES FOR WOMEN INTO SUMMER VACATIONS

New Theory of Constructive Penal Institutions Developed for Connecticut by Opening of State Farm for Women at East Lyme—Old Idea of Punishment Substituted by Sojourn Amid Beautiful Surroundings of Bride Lake—How Sunlight and Wholesome Work Will Replace Jail Bars and Open Way to Better Lives.

## BRIDE LAKE, WHOSE SOOTHING INFLUENCE IS EXPECTED TO REPAIR BROKEN LIVES



HALF A MILE INSHORE from the foaming waves of the Sound at East Lyme, wrapped in the rolling hills of the shore country, where wild flowers grow and picturesque stone walls ramble up the slopes beside the dusty country roads, there is started an experiment in sociology that will bring good results in the years to come—the Connecticut State Farm for Women.

The 300-acre farm is an exponent of the new theory of constructive penal institutions which has gradually but consistently crept into American thought during the past few years. It is, in substance, that punishment for its own sake is no advantage and is a positive disadvantage both to the person thus indiscriminately punished and to the state which afterwards has to deal with more coarsened and stubborn moral perceptions. Reasonable restraint and training of the moral and mental perceptions in the right course is the new theory. Not making crime appear ugly so much as making the normal, law-abiding, productive and serviceable life appear beautiful is the new method. Just show the natural beauty of good, and evil will appear ugly enough of itself by contrast. That is the theory and it has worked out so well in other states and other institutions that Connecticut's reformatory will be an institution of that sort rather than one of the old-fashioned, confining, straight-jacket places. Few inmates had arrived at the

are painted a picturesque white. The house by the entrance gate of the farm is the administration building, which will also be occupied by twelve women. Near the administration building is the general barn for crops and hay and farm horses, etc. From this point good roads lead to the principal points of the vast acreage. The general area near the entrance and the administration building is in crops. There are about thirty acres of crops, including some good looking potatoes and well over 150 acres of hay. The general assortment of crops will go a long way toward feeding every one on the place for the whole year. As the farm is developed and labor secured more crops and a larger assortment can be raised including beef, pork and other meats. The place will be absolutely self-supporting as far as food goes, and the inmates will have the satisfaction of raising these eatables.

Cottage No. 2 is about a half mile north of the first cottage. Near the second cottage is a modern dairy barn equipped for the care of twelve cows. All the milk will be used on the place. Cottage No. 3 is another half-mile north of the second cottage. The three cottages are about the same size, having twelve rooms apiece and all are being renovated. The walls will be painted, new furniture, woven rugs, bathrooms, stoves and all the necessary equipment will be installed. An artisan well graces the outside of each house. Pink ramblers twine about the porches of all three of the old farmhouses, and shrubbery and trees make them homelike. Well-kept orchards promise fruit and shade for years to come. Forty head of cattle are being raised for beef.

For Bathing and Rowing. Bride Lake is one of the most attractive spots on the farm. A sandy beach promises sport, bathing and rowing. The rushes and encompassing trees add to the beauty of the sweeping hill line to the north. It is a lovely spot. There will be two matrons in charge of each cottage and the girls will do the housework and as much farm work as their sentences will permit. The girls will not be closely confined, although there is no chance of their escaping without getting into worse trouble. They will be more or less trusted, however, as that is part of the theory.

The girls will be taught sewing, domestic science, rug making, knitting and other tasks. It will unquestionably result in better health

## Ready to Welcome Sojourners at Bride Lake



Mrs. A. C. Littlefield, Temporary Superintendent, and Mrs. Emma J. Stiles, Assistant Superintendent.

ing under healthful surroundings. It will lessen the number of women in the county jails. The short sentence which is so frequently given does little toward reconstructing the delinquency of the women, for after serving the term, they return to the same conditions, under the stigma of the jail sentence, they often become discouraged and the same offense is repeated. There is no opportunity afforded in jail, for classification nor mental or physical examination; while the state farm affords just this, and also the advantage of a parole.

The members of the committee on delinquent women are: Chairman, Mrs. Mary A. Goodwin, Mrs. Henry H. Bridgeman of Norfolk, Mrs. Emily H. Whitney of New Haven, Mrs. Frederick C. Platt of New Britain, Mrs. Arthur K. Rogers of New Haven, Mrs. Frank O. Mitchell of Norwich, Mrs. Anne R. Minor of Waterford, Mrs. Myra M. McFarland of Winsted, Mrs. Lee Wilson Dodge of New Haven, Mrs. L. S. Cummings, Mrs. Augustin A. Crane of Waterbury, Miss Mary S. Bushnell, Mrs. Appleton R. Hillyer and Mrs. R. L. McLain, all of this city, and Miss Helen M. Hall of Middletown. Professor William B. Bailey is chairman of the board of directors and the other members are: Dr. Valeria H. Parker, secretary; George C. Clark of Plymouth, treasurer; John H. Goss of Waterbury, Edward L. Hazen of Haddam, Mrs. Anne Rogers Minor of Waterford and Mrs. Arthur K. Rogers of New Haven.

and better habits of all sorts. The useful knowledge and training gained at the school together with the inspiration of the clean outdoors and the chance to make good cannot be without good effects. The girls will

The most important feature of the state farm at East Lyme, according to Dr. Valeria Parker, who is secretary on the board of directors, is the ample opportunity for giving the women individual care and train-

An appropriation of \$50,000 was made by the Legislature for purchasing the site and maintaining the farm until October, 1919, and later the board of control added \$20,000 for the hospital. The board of directors hope to impress the Legislature with the need of more money



ADMINISTRATION BUILDING FROM ENTRANCE GATE ON THE ROAD

farm at the time of writing. No new buildings had been put up, but the beautiful, natural site is already taking shape, and the natural advantages of the spot loom large with

possibilities as yet unfathomed. The farm was bought this spring. It is made up of four old farms worked by East Lyme folks for years. It will be used for the care of delin-

quent women at the present, but it has unlimited possibilities for the future. It can easily take care of 1,000 women without crowding when properly equipped for such work with enough buildings. It will clear the jails and possibly even the state prison of many of the women who are thought suited to the experiment and likely to be benefited by life on the farm. Whether it will cure them all is not the question. The jails certainly will not cure them, and many people think that the jail life is exceedingly harmful, especially to the younger girls who are still in their formative years. No matter how depraved a woman is, it stands to reason that her development will be better and the growth of normal impulses stronger out in the beautiful fields of East Lyme, where birds sing, the sun shines brightly and the summer breeze blows salt from the Sound—better there than behind the bars of a jail, none too clean, where foul minds set the standard in spite of anything the keepers can do in such restricted, unnatural quarters.

The farm will receive girls from 16 years to the age of discretion which is an elastic term, permitting the court to commit women of any

age it chooses. The minimum age will probably be raised to 18 years, later. This is the indication at present, anyway. The farm is ready for twelve women now, the first cottage being in shape, and they may arrive anytime between the date of writing and going to press. The other cottages will be got into shape as soon as possible and more women will be committed as circumstances demand it. Women from the towns around the cantonments are the first offenders, who will be taken to the farm, but delinquents from all over the state may be committed at the court's discretion.

The farm is within a half mile of salt water and about two miles from the Niantic railroad station. It is all farm land except for the lake and a couple of hundred acres of woodland. The land rolls back from the shore and presents a pretty picture, giving many splendid views over the water of the Sound and of the lake. The sweeping vistas of the hills and long stretches of the fields are very impressive.

There are three cottages for women, and one for the head farm manager, who lives on the place. The land is in the approximate shape of a square, with the three cottages at about half mile intervals. They



Cottage No. 3 of the Connecticut State Farm for Women

## WHERE THE CROPS OF THE STATE FARM WILL BE STORED



THIS IS THE GENERAL CROP BARN NEAR THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

be better housewives and better women when they are discharged at the discretion of the farm authorities.

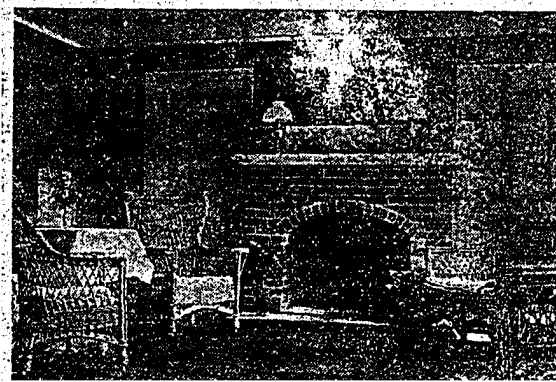
There will be a hospital on the farm some day, and then it will be possible to bring some of the diseased women there. They are the ones that need first-class hospital treatment the most, but they must be separated from the others of course.

The temporary superintendent now in charge is Mrs. A. C. Littlefield, matron of the State Prison, now on leave for the new work until the fall. Her assistant is Mrs. Emma J. Stiles.

The lake offers opportunities for skating and cutting ice in the winter, too, so the place will be independent. Berries, grapes and other fruits add their bit. The farm has a big mission which will continually expand as the problems and possibilities are worked out.



Cottage No. 2 of the Connecticut State Farm for Women



Living Room in the Administration Building