

Dr Davis also told us of other schemes that she was hoping soon to develop. She felt the need of greater opportunities for classifying, according to their needs and capabilities, the women and girls placed in her charge. Some of those who were in the prison had come into conflict with the law under stress of great misfortune or temptation; some had failed to be law abiding and successful for want of training and opportunity to earn a living. Some had had no education; some had not had the right kind of education; but there were others who suffered from congenital defects. The Institution as then organised, could give an excellent all round education in the management of a home and the general academic and other knowledge necessary for ordinary life, as well as teaching a good many things that the average person does not know. It could provide technical training for expert laundresses, cooks, waitresses and seamstresses. But some of the inmates were not suited to earn a living in any of these ways. Some could not withstand the difficulties and temptations of domestic service, (when shall we learn that this form of employment is more fraught with temptation than any other?). Some of those whose brains were perhaps too slow for the rushing speed and precision and the heat of a steam laundry, too dull, perhaps, for the neatness and accuracy required for household service, had yet strong limbs and sinews fitted for the hard toil of farming and might have their dormant faculties quickened by the broad and simple things of agriculture and the life in the open air.

Bedford Reformatory itself was built on land unsuited to cultivation but just next to it was a farm for sale which had good fertile soil. On that land could be grown the food that the reformatory consumes and Dr Davis believed that the farm, could, in time, be made self supporting. Even more important, it would serve as a training ground for those of the women who would benefit by and are suited to farm life. In England one might hesitate as to whether there would always be openings for large numbers of women trained in dairying, poultry keeping and such things, but in America with its vast farming territories there can be no such doubts.

Since I was at Bedford the farm of which Dr Davis spoke and which consists of eighty-eight acres of land has been bought and added to the Institution and last summer from twenty-five to one hundred girls and women were set to do temporary work there with excellent results. Eighteen women living with their officers in a cottage on the farm are

now* engaged in the regular work of dairying and caring for the calves, the chickens and so on. Two other cottages, each to accommodate twenty-two inmates, are shortly to be built.

Much is being done also in the direction of scientific study. When I was at Bedford Dr Davis had recently obtained a grant from New York State for a resident woman pathologist, who would make careful tests and records, with the object of discovering the physical causes that have led the unfortunates to fall below the normal, and the means by which they may be raised up and made whole and strong. For some time, careful careful [*sic*] card catalogue records had already been kept, to report the progress of each inmate.

Since then on land adjoining the original Institution and the new farm the building of a scientific department has begun. This is to consist of a reception house to accommodate fifty women where all new comers will stay for a time under careful observation. There will also be a laboratory and a residence house for the staff who will work from the psychological, medical and sociological points of view.

I wonder how long it will be before such a work as that of Dr Davis, a practical genius of whom her country may be proud, is begun in Great Britain and before our British Parliament decides to give such an opportunity for usefulness to a British Woman!

* {SP} February 1913.