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**EDITOR WRITES ON PRISON AT JACKSON; SEES PROBLEM OF UPKEEP FACING STATE**

Here are some of the observations made by Murl H. DePou, editor of the Charlotte Republican, on a recent trip through the state prison at Jackson. They are made by a man who has had experience on a parole board and who considers the problem of crime in its many phases with a cool and impartial power of observation. His articles follow:

Michigan State Prison, Jackson, Nov. 20, 1928.

It is not surprising that Governor F. W. Green and legislative leaders favor laws strengthening the crime code passed two years ago. Experience has suggested changes but the real reason state officers are urging more drastic legislation is based on the steady increase of crime in the face of all these efforts to curb law breaking. For example, the new cell block at the new prison are being filled up just as rapidly as they are ready for occupancy. At the present time just stand today the fourteen new cell blocks when finally completed will take care of 5,180 men and at the present rate the prison will be filled to capacity as soon as the last cell unit is ready. All this, remember, in addition to the accommodations at the old crime wave just checked shortly the prospect of abandoning the old prison is a long way in the offing. Back when the writer was executive clerk in the Chase S. Osborn regime and in that position served as secretary of the old board, the prison population of Jackson was around 800 (according to Mr. Latimer). The count November 1st stood at 3826, a gain approximately four hundred per cent. This condition is appalling, first of course, in the matter of crime increase, but reflect for a moment on what this mounting population is going to cost in taxes. In other words, state leaders are concerned with the terrific cost of crime and if the crime code isn't the remedy, where is society to turn for protection, not only for the safety of its members but the financial burden that follows all crime. A visit to this great prison project (sixty acres) enclosed within the walls) emphasizes the seriousness of the problem.

This growing population adds another menace to prison management, the question of furnishing labor (which should be productive) to this army of men. No problem of a prison quite equals idleness. It promotes the same mental and physical uneasiness that unemployment does on the outside and idleness of any char-

a type of employment that requires careful training in the various steps. For that reason all employees of this industry are doing no less than seven and a half years to life. The ordinary prison turnover could not be employed in this shop. The matter of jail through experience is an important consideration. One guard and a lifer are practically in charge of the plant which is most interesting in the aim of the prison commission is to make here as far as possible, to make the textile machinery at all being returned from prison camps, and in addition to these figures, whatever the total, 500 inmates are idle at the present moment, giving some adequate idea of what this means in costs not to mention the mental value. Industry makes for the best discipline because it takes the prisoner's mind off his personal worries and gives him something to think about. Outside industry, labor unions, etc., have been able to circumscribe the manufacturing possibilities of all prisoners to a very limited field, all of which adds to the complications of this item of industry within the walls.

In 1920 the state legislature authorized the State Prison Commission to submit a report on the requirements and plans of a new prison. At first, an institution accommodating 1,500 prisoners was planned, with expansion possibilities to care for 1,000 additional men in the future, but later, on account of the rapid increase of the prison population it was decided to change the plans so as to accommodate 5,180 prisoners. The building of the cell block number one was begun November 11, 1925; cell block number two, November 20, 1925, and of the power plant July 3, 1926. At the present time cell blocks one, two and three, as well as the power and dye plants are completed. The wall, which is thirty-four feet high, with a width of twenty-four inches at the bottom and fourteen inches at the top, is practically complete. The administration building, hall-master's control, one factory building, dining halls, kitchen and house, are under construction and with 196. The blocks number four and five has been started. The factory building is eighty by one hundred feet, with two stories and basement, it is of the most modern fireproof construction. The dining halls have a seating capacity of 1,500 men each, or 6,000 for four dining halls. The kitchen is adequate for the preparation of food for 6,000 inmates. Cafeteria service will be used and the idea comes from Joliet prison where this plan for feeding has worked out very successfully.

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The principal industry thus far at the new prison is the dye-works. Crime is a disease and until the state hospitalizes the criminally incompetent, little improvement can be hoped for. Most newspaper readers no doubt think of R. Irving Latimer, famous Jackson prisoner, as the oldest inmate of Jackson prison. Notwithstanding Latimer was 63 last month and will have served forty years next April, a man the name of Shivers is older in years and length of time served. His prison news is of more interest with Latimer in second place on the present records. Latimer is very gray with a French officer's moustache to match his hair. He is very careful of his personal appearance and has his hair combed up to a high intellectual level since he has been in prison. He has already written an order for engraved Christmas cards which fact perhaps as well as anything, depicts his attitude toward life. He never speaks of his crime; under the good time allowance to good

we heard it said by—  
T. C. Hotelling, assistant postmaster: "Removal into the new postoffice makes the fourth building that the village postal department has occupied in the past 11 years. In 1917 the post office was located at Maple avenue at Pierce street. Later it moved to 127 north Woodward avenue. Five years ago the building which we vacated last week was adopted as the mail center. The 11 years and four removals make a gradual expansion in the post office. The staff during this time increased from three to 22."

The present-warden, Harry H. Eccentric, Phones 11 and 12.

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