

Vermont Arranges for Study Of Weeks Industrial School

The Week in Vermont

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MONTPELIER, Vt., March 14— Roy L. McLaughlin of Meriden, Conn., nationally known expert in juvenile corrective education, has been engaged by the State to make a thorough study of conditions at the Weeks Industrial School at Vergennes, and will begin his survey this week, according to an announcement by Gov. William H. Wills.

Without commenting on charges of maladministration at the Weeks School, published last week by a Burlington newspaper, the Governor said that an investigation of the school was commenced by him more than two months ago.

As a result of this investigation, the Governor said he became con-

vinced that a comprehensive study of the school should be undertaken by a man thoroughly acquainted with this type of work. The Governor added, that in the intervening weeks he had carefully canvassed the field of men engaged in this type of institutional work before announcing the engagement of Mr. McLaughlin.

Mr. McLaughlin, who is Superintendent of Connecticut's Corrective School for Boys and a former President of the National Association of Training Schools, will have an "absolutely free hand" in his investigation, Governor Wills declared. It was Mr. McLaughlin's opinion that the survey would take about a month's time.

Commenting earlier in the week on newspaper charges of maladministration at the Weeks School, Timothy C. Dale, Commissioner of Public Welfare, said that such complaints were in no way unique and that various complaints had been investigated over a period of years. He added that there are "always a few boys who will not comply with rules," referring to complaints of former inmates of the school, whose statements were the basis of newspaper charges.

Insisting that such charges were the exception, Commissioner Dale pointed out that since Dec. 7, 1941, more than 200 Weeks School boys had entered the armed services, that many had been decorated for valor and better than 88 per cent of those who have attended the institution "have stayed out of any further trouble with the courts and are now respectable citizens."

The newspaper charged too severe punishment inflicted for trivial infractions of the rules, including severe corporal punishment and "persecution" of frequent offenders.

George C. Carpenter is Superintendent of the institution.