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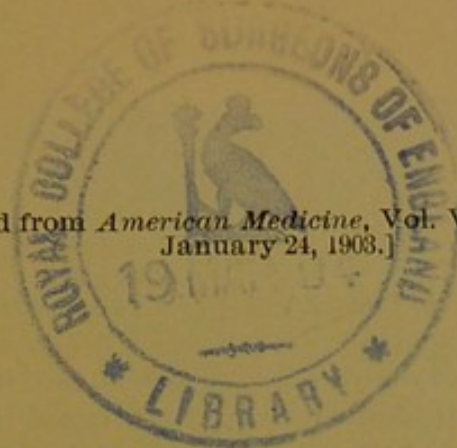
By
DE FOREST WILLARD, M.D.,
of Philadelphia

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WIDENER MEMORIAL INDUSTRIAL TRAINING SCHOOL FOR CRIPPLED CHILDREN.

BY

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of Philadelphia.

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The Widener Memorial Industrial Training School for Crippled Children, now under process of erection through the broadminded liberality of Mr. P. A. B. Widener, is in memory of his wife and son. It has for its object the special training and equipment for the struggle in life of a class of individuals seriously handicapped in the race. Thirty-two acres situated on the Old York Road, but within the city limits, has been purchased for the purpose and the buildings are already partially completed. The grounds are studded with magnificent old trees and the location is most healthful. The buildings being erected (designed by Mr. H. Trumbauer) are of the Colonial style of architecture and consist of a central convalescent department, an educational department and an industrial department, together with cottages and administration building; also heat, light and power house, machine shop, disinfecting and incinerating plants, isolation cottage, etc. All the appliances are of the most sanitary, helpful and useful character. The cost of grounds and buildings will approximate \$1,000,000, which together with an endowment fund of \$2,000,000, will make the total investment \$3,000,000.

The school is intended to individualize the physical disabilities of each patient and to give to that individual a thorough practical training in the occupation for which he or she may be best fitted, physically and mentally. With the serious crippling of muscular force so constantly found in this class, great discrimination will be necessary in deciding upon the most suitable trade or occupation. Each one will be studied with the view of bringing out the qualities best fitted to secure self-support, thus raising the individual from a condition of dependency to one of self-dependence, and not only relieving the State from a burden, but also making a good citizen.

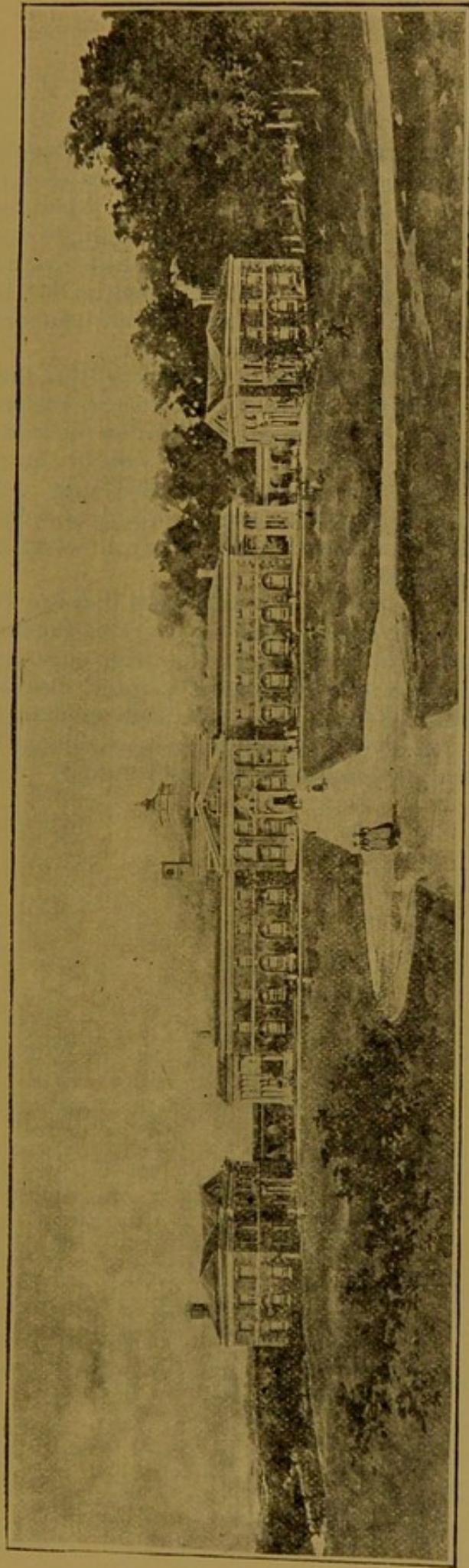
The institution is to be put upon the broadest possible basis, without discrimination of race, creed, or color, the intention

being to avoid as far as possible the errors of institution life and to follow the best conditions of family home training. The sexes will work, study and play together, but in their house life will be placed in separated small cottages, in numbers of twenty, under the direct influence of a housemother, where the normal conditions of home will be approximated as closely as possible. Individual rooms will be assigned to older scholars.

The primary object will be to train the hands or feet or body for some useful occupation, while at the same time a moderate brain education will be enforced. Any child showing decided brain power will receive higher education at already existing institutions in the city. The whole training will be eminently practical. As sunshine and fresh air are the most important of helpers in the restoration and continuance of health, outdoor occupations will be favored for both boys and girls, and the 32 acres of ground will be utilized in floriculture, agriculture, the care of stock, dairy products, poultry, etc., all these industries being taught by the best methods. Girls will be taught all branches of cooking, housekeeping, etc., together with sewing, millinery, dressmaking, mending, and the more delicate needle decorative arts. Boys will be instructed in machine work, the manufacture of braces, shoes and clothing, printing, engraving, silver marking and various like trades.

The place will be emphatically a school and not a hospital, but convalescents and cured patients will be received from any hospital. In case of relapse the patient will be returned to the hospital for further treatment. During the convalescent stage, patients will be under the constant supervision of a physician, while at the same time their education will be advanced to a greater or less degree, as strength of brain and body will permit. When possible, children will be taken early in life, and will not be graduated until they have attained some means of partial or entire support. As the work is along new lines which have not been attempted to any extent in this country, and only very moderately in Sweden and Finland, the adaptation of mental and physical powers will require careful study in order to raise the individual in the moral as well as the physical scale.

Among the plans suggested for elevation of the standards, as soon as the boy or girl has developed a certain amount of proficiency it is proposed that he or she shall be paid wages and shall pay board, thus developing a sense of responsibility and self-respect. Economical habits will be fostered, while regularity and method will be secured by an accurate keeping of yearly personal accounts. The establishment of a penny savings bank, etc., will stimulate the desire to earn and to accumulate.



The Widener Memorial Home for Crippled Children.

A gymnasium especially arranged for the development of weakened portions of the body, and sunny winter playrooms and porches will be provided, also smooth asphalted outdoor exercising grounds, etc. Each building is supplied with elevators, and each cottage will have a homelike evening sitting-room, with books, games, etc. The auditorium will be used not only for secular and religious purposes, but also for the teaching of music, both vocal and instrumental.

As the work develops it is also expected that the necessity will arise for a boarding-house for graduates, where plain but healthful and clean accommodations can be secured at a price graded consistently to the earning powers of the individual. These handicapped workmen and workwomen will thus be placed conveniently to the region of supply and demand, and can continue their home life in close daily contact with the center of graduate instruction.

From the above outline it will be seen that the work of this school is, briefly, to supplement the work of the hospitals; to strengthen and physically renew the weak ones, and then to educate them into habits of industry, order, cleanliness, self-respect and self-reliance; to apply such mental, moral and religious training as will render them true, honorable, useful and self-sustaining members of the community.