

**SUGGESTIONS IN REGARD TO THE  
PROPOSED REMOVAL OF THE STATE  
REFORM SCHOOL IN WESTBORO',  
AND THE STATE INDUSTRIAL  
SCHOOL IN LANCASTER**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649193233

Suggestions in Regard to the Proposed Removal of the State Reform School in Westboro', and the state industrial school in Lancaster by Anne B. Richardson & Elizabeth C. Putnam

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Cover @ 2017

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**ANNE B. RICHARDSON & ELIZABETH C. PUTNAM**

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SUGGESTIONS

IN REGARD TO THE PROPOSED

REMOVAL OF THE STATE REFORM SCHOOL

IN WESTBORO',

AND

THE STATE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL

IN LANCASTER.



BOSTON:  
ALFRED MUDGE & SON, PRINTERS,  
No. 24 SCHOOL STREET.  
1882.

314.7

1141 lb

Gittes Mrs. Felix Frankfurter

*For Mr Lyman's letters see ps 2, 1 to 2*

## SUGGESTIONS.

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THERE are two bills now before the Legislature, one for establishing a reformatory in the now unoccupied part of the main building at Westboro', the boys of the Reform School continuing to occupy their present quarters in the old building adjoining and in the two family houses outside. The other bill provides for removing the Boys' Reform School to Lancaster, for abolishing the Girls' School at Lancaster, and for sending the younger girls to Monson, those over fifteen, *i. e.*, nearly three fourths of those committed, being excluded for the future from the Industrial School and driven either to Sherborn or to houses of correction.

The bill for the reformatory meets a need long felt in the community and recognized by the courts for an intermediate institution between the Reform School and the prisons. Early in the winter the trustees united with the Commissioners of Prisons in proposing a plan for thus utilizing the Westboro' large building, with its cells and workshops, for a reformatory, asking an equivalent with which to build family houses for the Boys' School on another part of the Westboro' farm.

This plan being disapproved as too expensive, the trustees decided to withdraw the objection they had made to the experiment of the reformatory in the adjoining building, preferring this to the radical changes proposed in the bill "to abolish the Industrial School," etc., which, if enacted, would, they believe, prove injurious to all the three schools; while they object to changing the location of the Reform School from that approved by the generous donor from whom the State accepted \$72,500.



They refer to the following suggestions at length in support of their views:—

In 1846, need was felt for a Reform School for Boys, commissioners were appointed under an Act of the Legislature, and money was offered by a private individual, whose name was at that time withheld, to assist in the establishment of such a school, and the site was referred for his approval.

He writes, April 1, 1848, "If this last offer should be accepted I shall have paid for all the land,—a circumstance on which I reflect with great satisfaction."

In a second codicil to his will, dated in 1838, he said:—

"In addition to the sum of \$30,000, given in the preceding codicil to the Reform School established by the State at Westboro', in this Commonwealth, I now give the further sum of \$20,000; and I declare it to be my will that the whole and the sole object of these two donations, of \$30,000 and of \$20,000 respectively, made to my native State, in the two codicils attached to my last testament, is to aid in enabling the Legislature of the same to establish in the town of Westboro' an institution or institutions, on the most approved plan, for the proper discipline, instruction, employment, and reformation of juvenile offenders, whether male or female or both."

By St. 1848, Chap. 305, the trustees of the school were incorporated. The school was opened Nov. 1, 1848. In the hope of accomplishing more good, Mr. Lyman's suggestion that the age of admission should be limited to fourteen years was disregarded, and boys were admitted up to sixteen years of age. In March, 1862, the trustees were authorized by vote of the Legislature to expend any part of the bequests of the late Theodore Lyman for the purpose of adding to or enlarging the building, the expenditure not to exceed \$50,000, in order to make room for a set of older, harder boys. Trouble ensued; the new department

was burned down. Instead of rebuilding it, the school ship or nautical branch of the Reform School was established for the larger boys, those under fourteen years only being received at the Westboro' farm.

The number of commitments to the latter rapidly increased till again the old buildings became overcrowded. The number of boys in the two departments, school ship and farm, reached its maximum in 1867, — an average of 611 boys, at a net cost to the State of \$107,000.

In 1872 the school ship was abolished; the limit of age at the Reform School again extended, this time to seventeen years; stricter discipline was required; the new part, with its prison-like cells, was built and called "the correctional department." This again proved unsatisfactory to the public at large, to the courts, and to the trustees themselves, who have become convinced that every time the age has been limited, the school has prospered; every time it has been attempted to discipline boys mature in years and in vice, under a system planned for younger offenders, the attempt has failed.

The following figures will show the comparative cost estimated for the plans proposed: —

Plan to abolish the Industrial School and to establish an industrial department in a building or buildings at Monson . . . . .	\$20,000
(excluding girls over fifteen years, the latter to be supported elsewhere).	
For altering the Lancaster buildings for the use of one hundred boys from the Reform School . . . . .	5,000
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	\$25,000

The Westboro' buildings thus being vacated, the last annual report of the Board of Health, Lunacy, and Charity, p. 169, after approving

the course taken by the trustees in placing out so many of the girls, goes on to say, "If all the girls were now discharged or removed to Sherborn Prison who\* ought not to remain in the Industrial School," the actual number at Lancaster would be a little more than thirty, and these could be provided for in a single house elsewhere, and the industrial buildings vacated for the Westboro' boys. The Reform School buildings could then be left open to receive, instead of one hundred boys, one hundred criminal insane, at a cost for alterations of . . . . . \$30,000

For the reception of two hundred and fifty insane persons . . . . . 60,000

For a complete insane asylum (p. 197) . . . 200,000

This plan for future alterations at Westboro' is not, we perceive, alluded to in the Bill to abolish now recommended to the Legislature.

The Trustees had asked for an appropriation of . \$50,000 for building family houses, laundry, workshop, etc., for the younger boys, at a third of a mile from the main building. This plan having been disapproved, they have *no request to make for this year.*

The plan of the Prison Commissioners for a reformatory, a close institution, or nearly so, will involve an outlay of less than . . . . 5,000 for alterations of the Westboro' building, while the Reform School remains in its present quar-

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\* According to the opinion of the writer, the trustees not having been consulted.