

ARDEN SHORE BOYS LOVE THEIR DOCTOR

Camp Is "Nutrition Home" For Weakened Youth

Editor's Note: This is the third in the series of Arden Shore articles. It tells the story of the nutritional side of the camp work, and is written by the camp doctor—provided by the Vocational Bureau of the Chicago Public Schools—who goes out every week to examine the boys, and is hailed with delight as one of their best friends.

By HARRIETT E. COOKE, M. D.

Approximately 20 per cent of the children who make application for employment certificates are found to be physically unfit for work and their certificates are withheld until such time as examination shows them to be in good physical condition.

Experience has shown that children permitted to enter the industrial world with physical defects do not develop as they should and do not make efficient workers. Industry demands efficiency and these physically handicapped children are soon discarded—thrown on the scrap pile as it were—to make room for skilled workers. They are constantly seeking employment and finding only errand jobs or undesirable factory work. What is to be done with these below-par children? They have finished their school life with physical defects uncorrected. They want to work, and for economic reasons should do so and yet they are handicapped by many physical defects. Some of these defects can be cared for by the family physician, or in necessitous cases by the various hospitals and dispensaries, but cases of malnutrition are not so quickly disposed of, and it was for this special group of children that an appeal was made to the Arden Shore association.

Physically Deficient

For many years the association has maintained a camp for mothers and children during July and August. In response to an appeal from the Certificate bureau they agreed to undertake the care of groups of undernourished boys during the winter months, and opened for this purpose in November 1919 with a group of thirty. These boys were all underweight for their age—most of them underweight for their height and underweight for their age—and presenting definite signs of malnutrition—pale, with dark circles under their eyes; dull, apathetic, tired-looking, with drooping shoulders, flabby and poorly developed muscles, and weighing from 10 to 20 pounds less than a normal child of their age should.

Physical defects, such as infected tonsils, adenoids, carious teeth, etc., were corrected as quickly as possible, leaving the boys free to gain.

Definite Schedule.

A definite schedule was followed. The boys got up at 6:30 A. M. and went to bed at 7:30 P. M. They were given extra milk at 9 A. M. and 3 P. M. and a mid-morning and mid-afternoon rest hour. They had two short school periods each day and definite recreation periods, with setting up exercise under an athletic director. They were weighed twice a week and measured once a month. Their weights were recorded on a week on special weight charts. During that first winter 66 boys were

put in condition to go to work.

The Arden Shore directors were so pleased with the results that when their summer camp opened they arranged space for a special group of undernourished industrial girls. The same routine of rest periods and extra milk was carried out and the gains were even better than in the winter.

"Follow-up" Effective

The follow-up work on Arden Shore cases has been most interesting, and we feel proves conclusively that the nutrition camp is worth while. On the two home-coming days that have been arranged many boys have come out from the city, even under the most adverse weather conditions, and almost without exception they were found to have continued to improve. They had held their jobs and were working for salaries that ranged from \$7 to \$21 a week. Many had been advanced in responsibility.

The girls who have been at Arden Shore are equally appreciative of what the camp life has done for them. The following letter was received from one of the girls who went to camp in 1921.

Dec. 14, 1921.

Dear Doctor:

I'm writing a few lines to let you know how I am getting along. I am trying my best to keep up my weight. I just rang up Miss L—and asked her if she was to see Miss F—and asked her about you and the girls. Gee! I sure do think Miss L—and Miss F—is a peach. I am still working for Sears, Roebuck and Co. I care a lot for my position.

My mother was operated on a week ago. She is getting along pretty good now. I think I would gain a lot more if Mother was home. I'm sure you understand how it worries a person.

How are the boys at Arden Shore? I'm sure they are getting along wonderful. I bet they are surely having their fun. Oh! Lord how I wish I was there having my fun. Believe me I will never forget the good old days at Arden Shore.

Give my regards to Miss F—and my best luck for the boys to gain their pounds and inches.

Hoping I hear from you soon,
I remain yours ———

Hattie—

P. S: Good-bye milk and rest. Believe me I sure do wish I could get my milk and rest again. I sure do miss it.

Well good-bye Dr.

Don't forget to write soon.

It is not at all unusual to have a boy or girl who has been at Arden Shore come in to ask about sending a younger brother or sister there—nor is it unusual to have them bring in a friend to see about camp.

Excellent Environment

Malnutrition is not always a question of insufficient or improper food. It is often a question of fatigue—lack of home control and unhappy home environment. Children will not gain unless they are happy—and they do not gain if they are over-tired. Correct the physical defects—give sufficient rest with proper food, fresh air and sunshine, with contented living conditions, and malnutrition will disappear. If this can be accomplished in the home, well and good. If it cannot, then a properly conducted nutrition camp is the solution of the problem.

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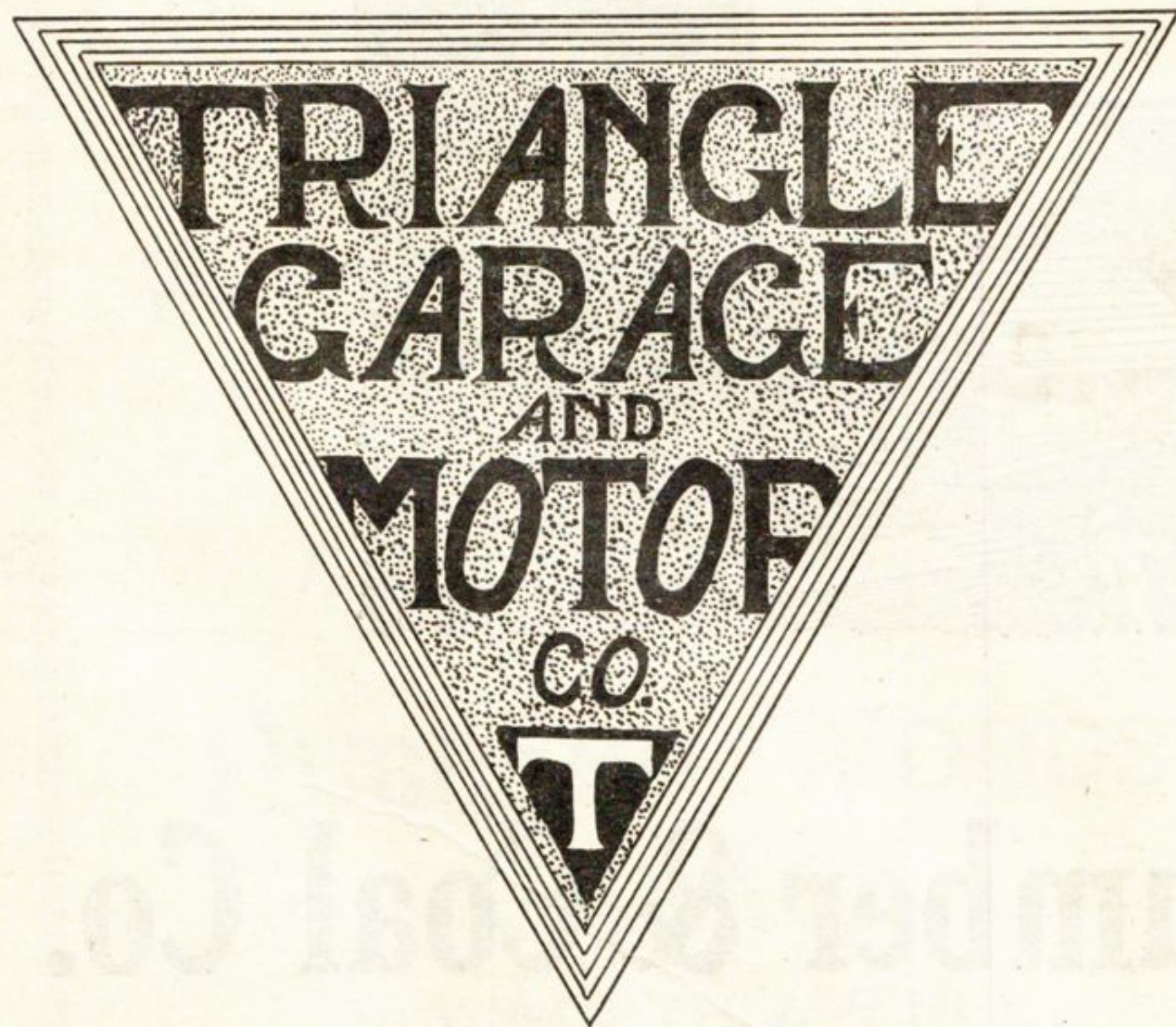
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