

he had charge of the standards of the weights and measures of the United States in Washington.

Mr. Wister's interest in clocks and their regulation rendered the possession of means to ascertain time accurately very desirable. Accepting the suggestion of his friend he built an observatory in 1835; and Mr. Lukens constructed and set up in it an astronomical clock and transit instrument.

They observed a transit of Mercury in 1845, and reported their work to the American Philosophical Society.<sup>1</sup>

To what degree, if any, his home surroundings had a formative influence on the character of Dr. Caspar Wister is uncertain, purely conjectural.

#### DR. CASPAR WISTER.

Caspar Wister, the first child of Charles J. Wister and his second wife, was born Sept. 15, 1818, in the Germantown homestead.

At an early age he was sent to a day-school kept by Miss Rooker. In 1828 he entered the Germantown Academy and remained in it five or six years.

Germantown was still a village. The deportment and ways of many of the boys while out of school were not satisfactory. Caspar had never been much restrained at home; was somewhat insubordinate, irascible, self-willed; and was probably a popular leader in mischievous pranks among his playmates.

He was in his sixteenth year when it was determined to remove him entirely from the influence of this connection. His father, accompanied by his mother, took him in his carriage to West Chester, and entered him there, June 4, 1834, in the Institute for Young Gentlemen, a boarding school, the proprietor of which, Mr. A. Bolmar, managed his pupils so judiciously that they properly observed the rules of his establishment, and the most wayward boys soon became amenable to discipline.

The correspondence between Caspar and his family portrays the prominent features of the boy's character, as well as the affectionate nature of the inmates of his happy home. It suggests that every thing there was redolent of harmony, the special interests of one being the common interest of all. While out of school each of the juveniles had

<sup>1</sup> Labour of a Long Life; A Memoir of Charles J. Wister. By C. J. W., Jr. 2 vols. 8vo., pp. 200-210. Germantown, 1866. This memoir, printed for private circulation only, is the authority for many facts and dates.