

undeniable, especially for cut and dried office work.

Some of my staff have taken up bi-manual work with success and satisfaction to themselves as adult women. As is natural, the younger members achieve their end more quickly and perfectly than those more advanced in age.

*Never* has any physical inconvenience resulted to them from their self-imposed training. Far less has this been the case among the pupils, whose youth makes any new exercise easier.

The history of bi-manual education is curiously spasmodic. At various intervals we have seen it start into life, hailed as the one thing needful at the most diverse periods of the world's chronicle, and by the most diverse disciples.

It has been fanned by enthusiasts and has flared into life like a straw-fire, and, like a straw-fire, burnt out, has again sunk into oblivion to rise again, and again to sink.

It remains to be seen, whether our own cooler, calmer acceptance of ambidexterity as an important part of the school curriculum will be of lasting good, whether science will support us, teachers (much needed) be found to carry on the teaching of ambidexterity cautiously and consistently, and whether, indeed, generations to come will benefit by our efforts and reap what we have sown.

They will not remember us, but, with the fresh and charming egotism of youth, glory self contained in their own age, and their more harmonious culture.

#### NATIONAL FOOD REFORM ASSOCIATION.

The arrangements for the Conference of Matrons of Hospitals and similar institutions, which the National Food Reform Association is convening at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Saturday afternoon, November 5th, have now been completed. Miss Rosalind Paget will preside, and a paper on the "Feeding of Nurses," prepared by Miss Musson (Matron, Birmingham General Hospital) will be submitted. The discussion will be opened as under:—*General Hospitals*: Miss R. Cox-Davies (Royal Free Hospital); *Metropolitan Asylums Board Hospitals*: Miss Susan A. Villiers (Park Fever Hospital, Lewisham); *District Nurses' Homes* (Queen's Nurses): Miss Böge (Shoreditch).

Any provincial Matrons, who are able to attend, are invited to apply for cards of membership to the Secretary, National Food Reform Association, 178, St. Stephen's House, Westminster. The arrangements are being made by a representative Committee.

## German Nursing in the Army and Navy.\*

BY SISTER AGNES KARLL,

*President, German Nurses' Association.*

Our times have produced great changes in the provision for the sick in the army, during both war and peace. While, for example, we must allow that under Frederick the Great the provision for the wounded in time of war, certainly not of a high quality, was better than that of the sick in time of peace, to-day in both cases the same great care is shown, and in the medical system is continually improving.

In Prussia, in 1831, during the occupation of the Russian-Polish frontier, there were such a number of cases in the lazarets, that the lack of a trained staff made itself acutely felt. The result was that, in the following year, by an order in council, an institute was founded for the training of soldiers as nurses. They were given the name of surgeon-assistants. Firstly, they had to carry out the doctor's orders, and to help the doctor in the lazaret and on the battlefield, but they were not to prescribe themselves, or attempt to administer independently to the sick; secondly to give first aid, in cases of imminent danger of loss of life, until the doctor should arrive; thirdly, to do the regular nursing instead of absent relatives.

The following definition of a soldier nurse's duties is taken from an official medical report of the beginning of last century.

"The soldier nurse is to make illness, recovery, nay, even death easier to his sick comrade! He is to be on duty as a brother of mercy in the hospital wards by day and by night."

In every company or squadron one man was to be trained by doctors in the garrison lazaret. On being selected the men were required to be respectable, to be able at least to write and do accounts, and in general, to be mentally and physically such, that their training might be expected to prove successful. Love of their vocation was also required, "because of the disagreeable impressions connected with it." They still formed part of the active troops, as privates, and kept their regimentals.

The period of training was 2 or 3 years for those who remained in the military service for a longer period, for those who left the army, after serving their time of compulsory military service, an examination was held during the first half of the last 6 months of their active

\* Presented to the International Congress of Nurses, London, 1909.

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