

scribed as one. Given then facility of expression, the journalist must be an up-to-date woman, which is almost synonymous with saying that she must be a well read one. She must study politics, must acquaint herself with the best of the new books, and must always have an open mind to receive and to consider any new idea, or any new point of view which comes to her notice. It is obviously useless for her to discuss in the most facile language ideas which were exploded half a century since. She would have no clientèle, and her articles must of necessity fall flat. Here, indeed, the journalist comes to the parting of the ways. What line is she to adopt? Does she aspire to become a popular writer? Then she must study the public taste, find out what it likes, and cater for it accordingly; she must be willing, in short, to be led by public opinion.

There is another line to adopt, namely, to endeavour not to be led, but to lead. To play this part it is necessary to be not only up-to-date, which is a necessity for every journalist, but to be in advance of one's generation—never a pleasant position for the person so situated. If she elects this line then the journalist must realize that she is writing for a comparatively small section of the community—the thinkers. She will therefore never have so large a sphere as her colleague who is working for popularity, but she will be a force in the world, instead of having an ephemeral career. There is room no doubt for both classes, for the press exists that it may reflect as well as influence public opinion, but there can be no question that the second line is the higher one for a writer to take. Another essential qualification in a journalist is that she should see material for "copy," even in her dearest friend. She may not, she will not, always use the material at hand, but she should have eyes to see it. Do nurses possess the qualifications of successful journalists? How many can write a good letter? How many read their morning paper? How many keep their eyes open? When those who do none of these things are eliminated, we shall get some idea as to those who might develop the necessary qualities. If they have the latent possibility, its development is worth their consideration, for, in the present condition of nursing, a voice in the press is essential. Moreover, the power of the press is the greatest power in the world, and to be a member of it therefore is both an honour and a privilege.

## Annotations.

### MODERN LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

THE Lancashire Asylums' Board hope in June next to open a portion of a new Asylum at Winwick, for a thousand patients, and in the following June another portion for the accommodation of a second thousand. It is estimated that the total cost of the land, buildings, and furnishing will be no less than £400,000. Sites are also being inspected for another large asylum, and in order that this may be built on the most satisfactory lines the Board appointed, some time since, a deputation, consisting of Alderman Jenkins of Salford (Vice-Chairman of the Board), Dr. Cassidy, Superintendent of the Lancashire Asylum, and Dr. Wiglesworth, Superintendent of the Rainhill Asylum, to visit the asylums on the Continent, and they have now made their report, which is of great interest.

The report states that the deputation were specially struck by the large proportion of medical officers in German Asylums as compared with English ones, the proportion in the former being about 1 to 105, whereas in this country it is about 1 to 300. They are of opinion that many English Asylums are under officered, and that a more minute study of individual cases than is at present possible would be an advantage. In the German asylums there was also evidence of more scientific work than is common in this country.

They were shown rooms abundantly fitted up with elaborate apparatus for the investigation of the problem of insanity from the clinical as well as the pathological side, and this work was evidently prosecuted with earnestness by the medical staff. In the majority of English asylums similar apparatus is non-existent, and the medical officers are too much occupied with routine work to undertake much research. Attention is also called to the "bed-treatment" of insanity as carried out in Germany. The deputation were repeatedly struck by the large number of patients kept in bed not for bodily diseases, but as treatment of their mental condition. Another point which favourably impressed the deputation was the adoption of the homelike colony system. Where it is adopted more complete subdivision and classification is possible. They recommend the adoption of this system in the new asylum, and suggest that the villas should be built to accommodate from 25 to 40 patients.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)