appeal with the Lord Chancellor against the decision arrived at.

At a crowded meeting held at the Women's Institute, Dr. Marion Hunter addressed those present on the burning question of domestic servants. She referred to an increasing contempt for domestic life, inimical to the interests of this country everywhere. The servant question, she said, was as perplexing in South Africa as in London, so that in tackling it she believed they would be doing not merely a national but an Imperial service. Dr. Hunter spoke in the strongest terms of condemnation of the enormous amount of organised fraud on the part of servants' registry offices and employment agencies. Such agencies, she said, are very often used as a screen for the most infamous practices. The Associated Guild of Registries had taken steps to remedy this evil by issuing a white list of recommended agencies, the proprietors of which consent to supervision. The number of girls drawn from the country by the allurements of so-called employment agencies and subsequently ruined both in money and character is the best evidence of the need of some such guarantee of *bona fides* as the Guild seeks to provide. It is Dr. Hunter's opinion that no useful settlement will be arrived at until servants' "agencies" are made amenable to State licensing.

Much interest is felt by readers of the *Guardian* in the announcement that that paper has acquired the copyright of the *Churchwoman*, and intends to publish pages for women under the supervision of the Hon. Mrs. Arthur Lyttelton, widow of the Bishop of Southampton. The *British Weekly* was the first religious paper to publish a department specially designed for women, and its example has been followed by the *Record*, *Examiner*, and other well-known journals. It is greatly to be hoped that the *Guardian's* pages may be really lively, and not occupied with dreary reports of drawing-room meetings and extracts from other newspapers. The events for each week in the Church ought to provide abundance of matter of the highest interest to women.

The amendment to the Employment of Children Bill moved by the Home Secretary in the House of Commons on Tuesday, and which was carried by a majority of twenty-three, makes it possible for children over nine years of age to be employed in theatres. Had the mothers of England been directly represented in the House, this amendment would unquestionably have been rejected.

Profound sorrow is felt at the untimely death of Dr. Isobel Sarah Bryson, Assistant Medical Officer at the Camberwell Infirmary, who has died a melancholy death. She cut her finger during an operation, and blood-poisoning ensued.

Mrs. Anne Thackeray Ritchie writes to the *Pilot* that millionaires are giving libraries and institutions to the toilers in the cities, but no one has as yet thought to give them air and light in the shape of more open spaces.

It is denied that Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands is suffering from tuberculosis, but her state of health is so poor that a year's absence is deemed necessary.

A Book of the Week.

CATHERINE STERLING.*

The author of "Mirry Ann" has in "Catherine Sterling" come very near to writing a great book. One hardly knows why one should not frankly name it so; perhaps one is a little outraged by the sense that, throughout, the problem which is handled so freely is, after all, merely handled, and never frankly faced.

Catherine Sterling, daughter of a rich man living in Japan, is educated in England on the most lavish scale, and goes out to Yokohama to join her father, only to learn on landing that he is just dead, and in a few days that, when his accounts are squared, there will be about enough to pay for his funeral. The only person to whom she can turn is a young man called John Paston, who has come out on the same steamer with her. This gentleman has a mad wife in England, but has fallen in love with Catherine on the voyage, and now suggests that, as the life of a young woman who has to earn her own bread is a thorny one, especially if she has not been brought up to it, she shall come and live with him in the native fashion in the wilds of Japan.

Now here, at the opening of the book, the girl is supposed to be quite young, unsophisticated, not having been taught to use her judgment, and, of course, quite ignorant of the social consequences of her action—that is, quite unable to realise what she is doing. But a fine nature will show fine qualities, even in immaturity, and the author makes her Catherine act like the most odious and despicable type of modern woman—the type so mercilessly shown in Mr. Pinero's "Iris"—the creature who, cat-like, must have her warm place by the fire, at whatever cost—must have ease, security, and luxury. She does not love John Paston, but she thinks it will be an enormous effort to go and earn her living among strangers. So she consents.

So far, so good; all this is perfectly possible. But to proceed. At the end of two years John Paston dies accidentally. So complete had been his selfishness that he had made absolutely no sort of provision for the girl whom he had robbed of all. He must have lived those two years in full consciousness of the fact that, if anything happened to him, Catherine would be thrown upon the world in a thousand times worse case than she was when he met her and took advantage of her inexperience. But, by another accident, Catherine's father had some shares in a company considered worthless, and suddenly these shares have risen in value, until she finds herself mistress of a fortune.

Now she goes West, and tries to bury her past; and her character is that of the noble, dignified, society-despising woman, who gives the idea of a cold, severe purity, and whose dominant characteristic is strength. We submit that the woman here depicted is not the same woman who could sell herself to a man she did not care for sooner than screw her courage to the sticking-point to face the world—which is usually kind to pretty girls in distress.

Herein lies the weakness of the story. But when you have granted it, the rest is admirable. The characters of Joan Gardner, Hugh Dowling, and Mr.

* By Norma Lorimer. Heinemann.

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