

"Please, Miss Fields, here's your fan-mail."

"Thanks, luv . . . And I'd do something about fan-letters, though I'm blessed if I know *what*. You see, I love getting 'em, and I want 'em all to be answered, and I know they can't all be answered by me ; there's thousands of 'em."

"What about bringing in a law compelling every girl who wants to go on the films, to *go* on the films . . . for a week, just to larn 'em ?" I suggested helpfully.

The star looked up very doubtful.

"You'd find most of 'em would want to stay," she declared.

"A few of the soft ones would jib, of course, at getting up at six on a cold winter's morning to be in the studio on time ; and at having their faces pushed backwards and forwards and inside out by a man in love with his art and strong in his wrist ; and at fitting on clothes for two or three hours . . . ay, I know, it's grand for the first ten minutes. You can peacock about in front of a glass, but at the end of the first hour, all the gilt's off th' gingerbread.

"But most of 'em would prefer such hardships to the mill or the typewriter, the counter or the ironing board, or the washing-up basin. I do myself.

"Some of 'em did have a try a few weeks ago, in Blackpool.

"Thousands of people on holiday were persuaded to join in the crowd scenes in *Sing as we Go*.

"They didn't take much persuading, I'll say that ; they did what they were told, too ; but the waiting . . . !

"I could hear 'em all round me—'Ee, I didn't know it was like this !' . . . 'If this is film-acting, give me the mill !'"

"I reckon those three weeks in Blackpool cured more girls of film-fever than all the gipsies' warnings in the world ; but then they saw the hard side of the job."

"Miss Fields wanted on the set."

"Sorry, I've got to go . . . Have we thought of everything a Dictator would see too ?"

"Everything," I reassure her, "except divorce and disarmament and the traffic problem and the Irish Question and the Tariffs and the Gold Standard . . ."

"I've got one rule for all those things, lad. I leave 'em alone . . . until I come up against 'em. Then I'd alter 'em, quick !"

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