

# The Mail Bag

## NEW ZEALAND'S EXAMPLE

Editor, Guide:—A great deal of advice is given farmers these times about how to produce by bankers, money lenders, doctors, lawyers, manufacturers, agricultural papers, in fact, by all classes and especially by those who profit from the products of our toil. There is no other industry that gets so much cheap advice as the farmers. The government has no demonstration factory making farm machinery such as farm wagons, binders, mowers, plows and threshing machines to demonstrate to the combines that are in the business that they could give the farmers better and stronger machinery at 50 per cent. less than they are doing and thus reduce the cost of farm products. Nor do the governments go into the loan business to prove that the farmers could get their money for about one third of what they are now paying. The public seem to realize that the bankers, money lenders and manufacturers have intelligence enough to run their own business without any advice from them. Then certainly we must come to the conclusion that all other professions do not acknowledge that the farmers have brains enough to manage their own business. They all give the farmers credit for having a strong backbone. The party politicians universally pat them on the back and tell them they are the backbone of the country. That seems to be all that is necessary for them to do to get their votes. They seem to forget that an old plug of a horse, a mule or a camel has a strong backbone. The function of a backbone is to carry loads or burden bearer. They are not supposed to have much intelligence or to dictate the amount of load they can carry. There are always a few that are not so meek and humble as the others and refuse to carry the loads that are placed upon them. The party politicians tell

the farmers plainly that they have not got men with intelligence enough to represent them in the halls of legislation, nor to know what kind of laws they want, nor how to fix the price upon the products of their own toil, and the farmers themselves acknowledge they have not. Any intelligent person must know that the laws of the country are made in the interest of the privileged few. I cannot go into details, but will cite one or two cases. More wealth is given to the railroads than the farmers are worth and they are allowed to make 10 per cent. on the capitalization of the roads when most of it is water and the capital to build them is furnished by the people. Then the people have been swindled out of their timber, coal and fishing rights. Yet the farmers are 90 per cent. of the population of this province and 75 per cent. of the Dominion, and yet what representation do we have in either Dominion or Provincial politics? Practically 00000000. You ask a farmer as he is seeding what price he will get for his oats, barley or his steers when he places them upon the market. He will tell you he does not know. The farmer's business is to produce, do the plowing, harrowing, harvesting, marketing, feed the cattle and do all the necessary hard work and drudgery, and take just what the combines are willing to pay him. Let any farmer go into a shoe factory and as he is shown around pick up a boot in the process of making and ask the manager what price that will be placed upon the market for. Suppose he should tell you that he does not know, that the price making was left

in the hands of others that knew nothing about the cost of production and that they would have to take what they choose to give them regardless of the cost, you would come to the conclusion that that man had escaped from the lunatic asylum. Yet that is what the farmers of Canada are continually doing. Is it any wonder that the politicians do not give you credit for having any brains. You ask me how can we help it. I ask you first to quit both the old parties and come up out of the party ditch and do your own thinking. Remember just as long as you allow others to do your thinking for you, you will continue to be their slave. Place any one in a dark dungeon for any length of time, they cannot stand the light of the noon day sun. Some of you farmers have been so long down in the party ditch, in the darkness and the gloom and filth and corruption of party politics, you cannot stand the light of independent thought and independent politics. Now let me call your attention to what the farmers have done in New Zealand by independent political action and it is an infant in age compared to Canada. The first bunch of immigrants went out in 1840. The government owns the railroads, coal mines and to a large extent the lumber business. But what I consider the most important of all is the loan to settlers and with that I will now deal. The Monetary Times stated that in 1913 there was \$200,000,000 of loans out in the three prairie provinces. It is safe to say with lawyers' fees and other expenses it would average 10 per cent. and would be \$20,000,000 each year.

At New Zealand rate, 4 per cent, \$8,000,000 would pay the bill, a saving to the people of \$12,000,000 and would more than buy up all the railroads in the three provinces, at 6 per cent. paying principal and interest in 36½ years. Now let me show you what a loan of \$1,000 at 6 per cent. during its life of 36½ years would make to each farmer. You see \$60 pays the interest each year, including a small payment on principal, which is all paid up in 36½ years, and a saving to the farmer of \$40. Now you pay \$100 to a loan company. That \$40 the loan company re-loans at 10 per cent. and compounds it each year for 36½ years would be \$1,335. Then add the principal which is still unpaid it would be \$14,335. In the face of these facts is it any wonder that the loan companies, banks and private individuals, whose income is upon usury, will link themselves together to prevent the farmer from taking independent political action. Now remember 11 cents a day will pay 4 per cent. interest on \$1,000 and it would keep a homesteader upon his land. It takes \$5 a day to keep a man at the front. But let me tell you just as long as we send men to parliament to make our laws who have thousands and in some cases millions of dollars out at from 8 to 12 per cent. interest we must not expect cheap money. The same will apply to our farmers' organizations. As long as we elect men whose principal income is from money they have placed upon mortgages, we will never get them as an executive to push the cheap money question. We must brush aside the surface and get down to bed rock in our deliberation. Remember, farmers that are paying 10 per cent. interest cannot expect to compete with those who are only paying 4 per cent. in the markets of the world. Let me call your attention

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## On the Screen

A SERIAL STORY

BY OLIVER SANDYS

Continued from Last Week

"I've no rooms to let," reiterated the woman stolidly. "Not for six weeks or more. I should advise you, if you're not well, to go into a nursing home. Good morning."

She closed the door. Daphne, utterly in the dark as to the reason for her hostility, turned away dispiritedly, and as she did so someone leaned out of a passing car and waved to her. It was Becky Mayer, the woman who had refused to help her on the stage. The car was stopped, and Daphne went toward it.

"Hello!" was Miss Mayer's greeting; and then, seeing Daphne's flushed and troubled face, she went on sympathetically. "Up against it? Get in and tell me. You'll have lunch with me at my place. Now, don't say no."

Daphne got in. The car moved on. Miss Mayer laid a hand sparkling with rings on one of Daphne's for a moment and gave her a searching glance. "The Magic Third, eh?" she said in a soft, understanding voice.

Daphne bent her head.

The two women sat on in silence. "Now," said Miss Mayer, when the car stopped at a little house in Green Street, "lunch first. Then you'll lie down, and when you're rested we'll have what the sentimental penny papers call a 'heart-to-heart' woman's talk."

She kept to her program, chatted merrily herself, and allowed Daphne to do very little talking. The journey from Grasmere, short as it was, had tired her, and after lunch, comfortably ensconced on a big sofa, she fell into a deep and refreshing sleep.

She found Miss Mayer beside her when she opened her eyes.

"Feel better?" asked the actress. "Ready for tea?"

Daphne got up. "I've had such a good sleep," she answered. "But—it's late—I've got to find somewhere

to stay. I mustn't waste any more time. It's—rather important."

"You're going to stay here with me—if you will," said the actress.

"But I—You don't understand."

"Oh, yes, I do, my dear!"

She sat down beside Daphne.

"It isn't often a woman like me gets the chance of holding a baby in her arms." Her voice had taken on a new softness. "I'd count it as a favor if you'll stop. Afterward, you must go back to your husband."

"Afterward—" began Daphne, and then choked. "Suppose there's no afterward—suppose—"

"Suppose we talk sense," said Becky Mayer.

Jameson Greening reached the house in Gower Street an hour after his wife had knocked at the door. He had driven in hot haste, spurred by hope, and so great was his impatience that he could hardly wait for the door to be opened.

"Mrs. Greening!" he inquired.

"Mrs. Glenister's my name. Rooms? I've a sitting-room and bedroom on the first—"

"No, no!" Greening interrupted testily. "I want to know if Mrs. Greening is staying here. I'm Mr. Greening, her husband."

"There's no Mrs. Greening here."

The landlady began to regard him with suspicion.

"Then perhaps a—Miss Barry—"

"A Miss Barry was here seven months ago, and a Miss Barry called just now. I don't often take in theatricals, although my daughter—"

"Then where is she now?" cut in Greening.

"That I can't say. I saw her get into a car a few doors down. A very flash kind of lady was in it, and they drove off together. No, I can't tell you where to find her, I'm sure."

Greening departed, horribly disap-

pointed. He knew of nowhere else to make inquiries. Daphne seemed utterly lost to him. He went home and brooded all the evening, wondering what he should do now, whether there was anything to be done, until he was roused by the telephone-bell. A strange voice began speaking.

"You Mr. Greening? It's about your wife. She's with me—quite safe. Thought you'd like to hear. My name's Mayer—Becky Mayer; the actress, you know. No, I met her by chance. Some months ago I—Yes, she's as well as can be expected. No, you can't see her yet. She doesn't know I'm telephoning you. Just at present her nerves are all to pieces. Yes, I'm looking after her. Don't worry. No, nothing serious—really. I'll ring you up every day, but you must promise not to see her until I tell you you may. Can you curb your impatience for a week?"

"I'll try," said Greening fervently.

Miss Mayer's arms were full.

"Scrumptious joy!" she exclaimed, and bent her dark head over the baby.

"And I'm going to be your god-mother. It's the nearest I shall ever get to one or the other! And now I'm to have the supreme joy of bathing you."

"Don't forget the violet powder, Becky, dear," said Daphne from the bed.

"Is it likely?" scoffed Becky, her mouth full of safety-pins.

She tested the warmth of the water with a bare elbow.

"Now, Sir Baby!"

Sir Baby had aquatic tendencies. He loved water. He lay supported in the palm of Becky's capable hand and suffered the 'slooshing' with manly forbearance.

Dry-patting, violet-powdering, flannel-wrapping, day-dress donning, fluff-brushing—he went thru the whole performance without a mur-

mur. Becky had a mother's way with her.

In half an hour the baby lay dressed, fed, and asleep. Becky, in a low chair, rocked gently to and fro. Daphne, her eyes alight with the gentle rapture of motherhood, lay with her arm crooked, ready for the precious bundle when it should be surrendered to her.

Becky looked up, met her eyes, and smiled.

"It isn't often a woman like me gets the chance of holding a baby in her arms," she said, using the same words she had used a week ago. "I'm greedy of him. Oh, Daphne, it's the joy of the world!"

The front door-bell rang. Becky gave the baby to his mother and left the room quickly. Daphne touched the little face with tender, reverential fingers.

"Oh, if Jimmy could see you!" she murmured softly.

In the hall, at the foot of the stairs, Becky Mayer laid a detaining hand on Greening for a moment.

"You don't quite understand," she said, laughter and tears in her voice.

"There's some one with her. A very little person of tremendous importance—your son!"

Greening went upstairs three steps at a time.

When she heard the bedroom door close Becky sought her own room.

The sound of happy voices reached her there. It was her own house, and in it, besides herself, were three other people. But she felt isolated—alone.

She went to the glass on her dressing table, darkened her brows a shade with a pencil, passed the hare's foot over her cheeks, crimsoned her lips.

Then, with a sudden, savage gesture, she seized a sponge and wiped her face, leaving it innocent of paint and powder.

THE END.