



An Octette of Sirens from the Summer Season of "Little Old New York." "None of them married, none of them twenty."

SUMMER SHOWS IN NEW YORK

Hits and Misses in the Wheel of a Great City's Amusement

By SYDNEY DALTON



Lew Fields,
In "The Summer Widower."

THE summer show is naturally supposed to harmonise with summer conditions; theatrical fare at 90 in the shade is required to have some characteristics that do not obtain to the same extent when thermometer is nodding familiarly to zero. And, judging by the kind of plays that are to be encountered at this season along Broadway, one is forced to the conclusion that the chief condition catered to is a sort of mental torpidity, of plot, and any logical sequence of events there is little sign. Of course, this has its conveniences. One can drop in at a theatre half an hour or an hour late and enjoy the balance of the per-

prestige would be lost were it advertised that a "review of the follies of 1910 is being enacted in the Garden of Paris"—or Hoboken). This Revue, which is a yearly affair, consists principally of chorus girls, electric lights, beautiful costumes and more or less novel "stunts," and is for the most part innocent of good music and acting. It burlesques any old happening of the year that the producer thinks of, from well-known plays and Broadway stars to Roosevelt in Africa and James J. Hill running railroads. Through some extraordinary oversight it does not touch on the tariff question, but probably the President asked that that be forgotten. The performance is interspersed by acts by well-known vaudeville and musical comedy stars, including the vagaries of that very proficient coloured comedian, Bert Williams. The particular hit of the performance is the rehearsal of the Roosevelt Band, an organisation of instrumentalists who can play more wrong notes in a minute without obliterating the tune than any other combination in the business. The whole show is noise and nonsense, but it is really beautifully staged, and there are numberless pretty girls, and the roof garden is as cool as anything outside the ice house, and the lemonade is cold, and smoking is permitted, and—what more does one want in hot weather?

"None of them married; none of them twenty," is the way a show that prospers under the title of "Girlies," is advertised. And there is a story in connection with these sixty young ladies whose matrimonial proclivities are said to lie in abeyance, and whose ages about correspond with their weekly salary—a story that seems to exemplify the words of Mr. Shakespeare:

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we may."

For some days ago the husband of one of the girliques shot her on Broadway. Apart from the injury he inflicted upon the young lady—fortunately not a very serious injury—it was an unkind advantage for a fellow to take, for he gave the whole show dead away, and I hear the kind offices of the bill poster have been enlisted, and he has been going the rounds pasting a piece of white paper over the first letter of the first word, making it "one of them married; none of them twenty."

It is another typical summer show; music and dialogue mixed up in a most irresponsible manner. Each new song is introduced in a manner something like this, for instance:

The precedent scene has been a tropical landscape, during which there has been a chorus of frogs singing one of the popular songs of the day, say. Then enter, the frogs having been kind enough to disperse, two students, a boy and a girl, of a co-educational college, from opposite wings. The fact that they are both college students is suggested with extreme subtlety. The boy's trousers are turned up four or five inches, he smokes a pipe, walks with his hands in his pockets and wears a negligible cap balanced on the back of his head. The girl wears a flowing college robe and a mortar-board. These are the summer and winter costumes of stage "co-eds." They greet each other affectionately, and after a short conversation about elopements, the fourth dimension and the physical peculiarities of some professor, the girl glances around the stage.

She: "Ah, what a beautiful scene."

He: "Beautiful, indeed. See that bird on the wing, poised motionless in the air."

She: "It reminds me of an aeroplane." Orchestra immediately dashes into the prelude of a duet which the two nature-lovers sing, entitled, "Will You Take a Ride In My Aeroplane?"

This, of course, is not an actual scene from "Girlies," but the method is suggestive of the conscientiousness and relevancy of ideas in the summer show.

The main features of the performance are, naturally, beautiful costumes and girls—or should I have said beautiful girls and costumes?—and it affords an evening of careless amusement.

At the Broadway Theatre, just around the corner from "Girlies," who are summering at the New Amsterdam, the "Summer Widowers" are drawing many of their kind. It is undoubtedly one of the best hot weather attractions in town. Lew Fields, who manages the production, is one of the chief attractions. There was a time when Weber and Fields was an inseparable combination that was known from one end of the country to the other. Now the partnership is dissolved, and each has his own theatre on Broadway. Fields still has his German accent, and his perennial laugh.

formance as if nothing had gone before, with a fan in one hand and a glass of—lemonade (?) in the other, one can sit and be amused, and all that is demanded of one—apart from the tax left at the box office, or more often with the ticket speculator outside—is that a laugh or two will be forthcoming. The majority of the performances are of a vaudeville-musical-comedy type, and it is but natural that breeziness and light airs should be the chief attractions, and it is always a satisfaction to know that one can get them at the theatre when the weather man fails to supply them.

On top of the New York Theatre, for instance, in the Jardin de Paris, Ziegfeld's Revue of the Follies of 1910 is in full blaze. (Observe the impressive display of French in this announcement, and think what



Impersonations of United States public men, including President Taft, Col. Roosevelt and Pierpont Morgan, in "The Follies of 1910."