

THE PLAY

By Alexander Woolcott

The New Ziegfeldism.

SALLY, a musical comedy in three acts. Book by Guy Bolton, lyrics by Clifford Grey, music by Jerome Kern and Victor Herbert. At the New Amsterdam Theatre.

"Pops".....Alfred P. James
Rosalind Rafferty.....Mary Hay
Sascha.....Jacques Rebluff
Ollis Hooper.....Walter Catlett
Mrs. Ten Broek.....Dolores
Sally.....Marilynn Miller
"Connie".....Leon Errol
Colonel Travers.....Phil Ryley
Blair Farquar.....Irving Fisher
Jimmie Hooper.....Stanley Ridges
"Babe".....Alta King
Fluff.....Betty Williams
Tot.....Barbara Dean
Kitty.....Vivian Vernon
Pickles.....Gladys Montgomery
Bobby.....Mary McDonald
Richard Farquar.....Frank Kingdon
Billy Porter.....Wade Boothe
Harry Burton.....Jack Barker
Ivan.....Earl Barroy

By processes of their own, which are made up partly of secret service and partly of premonition, the connoisseurs of musical comedy seemed to know in advance that "Sally," the new Ziegfeld production, would be worth going a long way to see. At least five or six times as many of them as could be housed at the New Amsterdam made a valiant effort to get into that theatre last evening for the New York premiere, and only those who were left outside were in any way disappointed. It is an amusing and tuneful diversion, this "Sally." It unleashes Leon Errol in his most comical mood, and the spirited and beguiling Marilynn Miller is like a jewel in its lovely setting. But above all it bears witness to the fact that the annual production of the "Follies" does not exhaust the energy and talent of a producer who knows a little more than any of his competitors the secret of bringing beauty to his stage.

It can be imagined that with his own namesake launched on its tour of the richer cities Mr. Ziegfeld, on turning his attention to this provision of an occasion for Miss Miller, he sent for the tireless Guy Bolton and that fount of melody, Jerome Kern, and bade them put together a pretty little piece after the pattern and in the modest manner of "Irene." Then, from sheer force of habit, he began to enroll comedians and dancers as for some pretentious revue, told Professor Urban to spare no pains and so gather about him such a splendor of curtains and settings and costumes as few theatres in the world dare dream of. The result is the gay frolic which was romped last evening on the New Amsterdam's stage.

Also, to judge from the result, he must have told his song writers and comedians that a little vulgarity would not be amiss, for "Sally" is one of these pieces wherein, amid all the profusion of beauty and incongruous daintiness, you keep coming on an occasional jest that belongs in a lower grade of burlesque show.

Mr. Errol is at his best. It was, if memory serves, the hero of "The Egoist" of whom the neighbors said: "He has a leg." So has Leon Errol. It is the right one and all last evening it kept refusing to support him in the manner to which he had been accustomed. Naturally it hampers him in his earnest effort to dance a Russian ballet all by himself. The pitchings and tossings of this sany, the antics of him are beyond description, but they are of no common order. They have style and charm and whimsicality.

So has Marilynn Miller, whose sprightly dancing and tonic freshness have enchanted us all before this, but who seemed to feel that her elevation to stardom called for a greater show of effort. Whereupon, for this occasion, she appears to have gone searching about and returned with a voice. She is singing now as never before.

Then there is the stately Dolores and the captivating Mary Hay (who is a treat to the eye in her Russian costume) and one Walter Catlett, very fresh from his London triumphs. He is like a curious blend of Ed Wynn and Eddie Cantor. To say that he reminds you of each and creates a nostalgia for both would be an unfair thrust and yet the truth lies somewhere within it.

But strangely enough, it is of none of these, not of Urban nor Jerome Kern, not of Leon Errol, not even of Marilynn Miller that you think first as you rush for the subway at ten minutes to midnight. You think of Mr. Ziegfeld. He is that kind of producer. There are not many of them in the world.

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