

DOLORES, SHOW GIRL DE LUXE--BY HELEN BULLITT LOWRY

The World Is One Dry Place, Says This Entertainer, As She Casts Languorous Eyes Across the City From Her Husetop of Gayety



WHY, oh why, didn't some practical scribe in England get around to interviewing the prize show girls in Mr. Ziegfeld Al Rachid's chorus just how the world really looked to them when they peeped at it through their marble lattices? It might have made even more surprising revelations, preserved in the back files of the first woman's page, edited by Scheherazade.

Least a like philosophic secret be swallowed up by the dusty centuries, I have hastened to see them all about it in best show girl circles on the Ziegfeld roof. First said I to Dolores, show girl as use of modern times:

"And how does the world look to you, proud, sautey, when you turn those disdainful eyes out across the city from your husetop?"

"Dry," replies Dolores. Only she does not say it flippantly. She says it earnestly--intellectually. For Dolores is a great thinker. She told me so herself, and that's how I know it. "Thinking" is her favorite indoor sport.

"Dry," reply Jessie and Dorothy and Olive and Alta, in whose dressing room I watched the "close-ups" of metamorphoses. "You have to work so damned hard to get across."

Dolores, who receives star-like privileges even if she has never been known to move the lower half of her face in public, received me in her private dressing room. Dolores is entirely altruistic in her protest.

"It is for the sake of the poor working man deprived of his beer that I resent this law," she grinds out passionately through her beautiful white teeth. (She really can speak, circumstantial evidence to the contrary--and very nice English, too, with quaint

"damns" thrown in with a British accent.)

"I began to prove that she is a Ziegfeld beauty--yes, even if she does wear a tweed walking suit and woolen stockings and flat heels." "As for me, I detest wild parties--and yet I would return to free England, if I did not have to earn money for my family in this prohibition country."

And at that she pulled out of her leather satchel that the most convincing invalid father, aged mother and war-worn sister that ever a theatrical person presented to the world--even through the hardy medium of a press agent.

"I began to support my family when I was 14½," states Dolores simply--just as if no office boy's grandmother had ever been buried on the day of the baseball game. "That is why my outlook on life is serious. I know responsibility so young."

She would stand me up against the wall to straighten my back--or an hour I might stay there, trying so hard, and the minute I stepped away from my support my neck would thrust forward and my shoulder blades would touch. We would almost weep together, because we both knew that I was trying so hard.

"Then one day she found the way--you see she always believed in me.

She told me to walk with books on my head, just as our grandmothers did. Try it--I wish that all girls in America would try it. You would have a race of women who would walk with the free and noble carriage of the Arab women, who bears her water jar upon her head. It takes patience--many hours are required to gain the poise which comes from a beautiful carriage."

And by the way, off stage Dolores stately walk becomes an out-of-doors, vigorous stride--where she ceases to be a dusky Spaniard and becomes a yellow-haired Saxon girl, "a natural blonde."

Suddenly, though, she remembers that she is being interviewed and states conscientiously that she adores her dog. But her opinions become personal again when the subject of clothes is mentioned.

"It is such joy to me to wear the beautiful costumes, which are as much works of art as a painting. I thrill proudly that in my hands is the fate of the artist's creation. Some nights I am conscious that I have walked well--again I know that I did not do credit to the art intrusted to my care--and I am sorry, more for the artist's sake than for my own."

You see, Dolores takes clothing as well as herself seriously.

"That is because I watched their slow creation when I was a young, impressionable girl. A shiver positively runs

through me when I see the girls drop the lovely things upon the floor. I cannot buy the clothes that I like. The dream of my life is a chinchilla coat." She turned to me with a quick, girlish, interested gesture. "I am so glad that your neckpiece is chinchilla. But my responsibilities are so heavy and money positively alphas terrible. So I never expect to have my coat. But I find happiness in my beautiful peacock robe."

"It was a wonderful moment when they first brought it to me--and I realized that it was mine--mine. I had been impatient to see it. I thought that the boat would never come that was to bring it from Paris. I have worn it two months now without dry-cleaning and it is as fresh as vestry robes."

Not so the four lesser show girls in dressing room 33.

"To get any real kick out of this blue dress, I'd have to get my hands on it for a private party," smiles Dorothy, who smiles nicely. "But you just try to make a get-away some night and see what happens."

"Some excitement the first time you get fitted." Olive's Chinese costume slides negligently to the dusty floor, and I am glad that Dolores is not present to suffer. "You see yourself in a gray cotton lining, and, if you're in bad, they won't even tell you what color your dress is going to be. It's about as exciting as these"--at which

she brings up a pair of black woolen leggings.

But Jessie cannot take even clothes seriously this evening, because on her throat hangs a fortune--a new diamond. She throws a negligee about her and slips into Dolores' room.

"Look! Do look!" It is so magnificent that it excites even a Ziegfeld dressing room, where diamonds are not so rare as in other dressing rooms--say those attached to Y. W. C. A. swimming pools. Dolores tries it critically on her forehead--on her throat, just below the chin--and finally Dolores decides that to set it in a ring will be best. The whole cast is generously congratulating Jessie on her luck. Jessie sees the world tonight through prism.

"Lands! She's just trembling all over with excitement," confides the wardrobe mistress, who is fastening up Dolores' "perfect jewel" gown of black. "And Jessie deserves it if anybody ever did, because she's got the sweetest disposition. Now, Dolores here, she's got an elegant disposition, but I could tell you about some"--at which she closes her mouth firmly and says that she "ain't going to, though."

"Some of them wastes their best years," the wardrobe mistress glances severely at her charge. "But I guess most of them gets rich husbands and it's away while they're still good. If they wait too long there's nothing for them to do but get passed on to cheaper shows on the road, like these here dresses will next season."

The show girl, indeed, looks out

from her high roof and she sees only ten years before her--at least so Dolores tells me, as well as the wardrobe mistress, who has watched show girls come and show girls go.

"I recognize perfectly that the show girl end of the stage has no future to it. We haven't histrionic ability and we don't delude ourselves about any visionary career." She gave a jolly laugh, for Dolores has a nice, tomboyish way about her when she is not posing as a white peacock or a slinky black vamp. "I'm here because I have looks, and I won't have enough looks after 30 to be here."

So Dolores would really like to get married and stop work some years before Cinderella's clock chimes that fatal hour of 30. But it would not pay to answer the advertisement this week, because Dolores is in love this week--with a person 49 years old. He's in Paris at present--and "not a damn bit like those foolish rich boys, that are always bragging about being drunk last night."

Dolores does not like them to do that--it bores her horribly. In dressing room 33 they don't like it, either. Jessie comes out of her prism conning tower for a minute to remark that "Bud never does that." That's one reason why she likes Bud. "And then nobody could say that Bud was a 'tightwad'"--taking another look at the world through her diamond.

"Being a tightwad is the thing I can't tolerate, and bragging about getting drunk is the next worst," yawns Olive.

There are some other things that bore Dolores. She's rather tired of having them tell her that she is beautiful. Also they bore her very much if they do not "think." Dolores really reads the "highest brow" morning paper in New York, and can chat about leagues of nations as carelessly as she would about lip-sticks. There is "another aspect," too, behind the scenes of the Ziegfeld world--besides the Morning Telegraph. The mother of one of the "ponies" takes it. "It's a cracking yellow sheet," says the pony, "and she reads it and tells me all about everything, so I'm up on events."

Dolores feels so strongly on this vital subject of brains that she mentions it even to the callboy when he summons her five minutes late (by Dolores' clock) for the Dearest num-

ber. "It's not your damn heart I object to; it's your damn head." And at that Dolores had to run--if anything so long and beautiful and black-robed and svelte may be said to run.

"Sakes alive!" cries the wardrobe mistress, "if Dolores ain't left off part of her costume." I long to glance out on the world myself and see Dolores' reception with a part of her costume missing--but am reassured that it is not an "essential industry" but only a jewel.

To speak truth, the world just on the outside of the peacock curtains is the section of it that means the whole of it to the show girl.

"Does your work ever bore you?" I had asked Dolores.

"Oh, no--for there is always my audience--a different one every night. And then"--she almost blushes--"the audience is so intoxicating, you know. I can tell whether my entrance has been good by the breathless pause more than by the applause. But I'm afraid that I can't claim really to think when I'm on stage." (You must not forget that Dolores is a thinker, and honestly prefers the brand of party popularly labeled Darn Sit Arounds and historically known as salons.)

"Check your brains outside, dearie, and pull a smile when you round the curve," is the way that Olive expresses the same "emotion."

"Birds number," cries the callboy's voice from without, and the four show girls of 33 rise to their stately height. "Wait until we get back. We're going to have a spread." It might have been a boarding school instead of a Ziegfeld Roof. "Alta's made a mistake. She's some sick cook. Say, didn't you know Alta was married and settled? Oh, Lawdy!" So Alta's outlook, even from the Ziegfeld Roof, includes a kitchen stove.

And then--and not until then--did I learn the dark secret of Dolores, vampire show girl of the Ziegfeld Roof. The marble traceries of her window let her peep out upon a "delicately reared" side street. It's only a furnished room. And the Irish landlady protects her as her own daughter. Dolores told me so herself.

So maybe, after all, she's well that Scheherazade didn't "cover" that harem interview. The ladies might have gone and spoiled the whole story.

FIELD OF POLITICS DEVELOPS ABILITY FOR QUICK RETORT

Members of Congress Frequently Have Occasion for Sharp Words Which Answer for Extended Arguments--Sugar-Coated Criticism Used in Lieu of Harsh Terms Avoids Trouble.

SHAKESPEARE made his admirably wise fool Touchstone divide of giving one's adversary the lie into seven classes, ranging from the retort courteous to the lie direct. The field of politics, it would appear, is more prolific in famous instances of retort than any other.

An illustration of the nimble and caustic wit of Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia in a house debate, occurred on the floor of that body in a heated argument with Robert Toombs, also of Georgia. Stephens, although possessed of one of the most powerful brains of his time, was lame and wizened of body. Toombs was one of the largest men in the house, and was of a blustering, spluttering type. He had argued with Stephens until he was hoarse, and became so exasperated that he threatened to fight. However, consideration of the size of his opponent deterred him, and turning, he said:

"I won't fight you, but I could swallow you whole."

Whereupon Stephens quickly retorted: "If you did you would have more brains in your stomach than you ever had in your head."

General Charles H. Grosvenor, a representative from Ohio, was the hero of a hundred wordy battles in the house of representatives. He had a luxurious snow-white beard and a caustic tongue. One day William D. Vandiver launched into a furious attack upon "the gentleman from Ohio," and Champ Clark, nearby, innocently inquired, "Which gentleman from Ohio?" The Missourian shook his finger at General Grosvenor and replied: "I mean the gentleman from Ohio who looks like Santa Claus and talks like Satan."

Senator Ingalls of Kansas was attacking General McClellan and stand-

cock, who were afterwards democratic candidates for the presidency. Senator Blackburn of Kentucky arose and interrupted:

"When General George B. McClellan was leading the armies of his country and when General Winfield Scott Hancock lay wounded by the enemy's bullets under the flag of his country, the senator from Kansas, in the capacity of judge advocate-general, was prosecuting noncombatant Pawhawkers for robbing her roasts."

In the old days Tom Marshall and one Graves were rival candidates for congress in the blue grass region of Kentucky. Marshall was an aristocrat. Graves was the son of a cooper, and he was always making an appeal to the "peepu" by boasting of the humble occupation of his father. Marshall found it was hurting his chances and he decided to stop it by the counter-check quarrelsome. In reply to Graves he said:

"My opponent boasts of the humble calling of his father. For aught I know his father may have been a good cooper, but it is easy to see that he put a mighty poor head on this whisky barrel," clapping his hand on Graves' head.

Tennessee had two great orators in the olden days--Andrew Jackson, a democrat, once president of the United States, and Gustavus A. Henry, a whig known as the "Eagle Orator of the South." They ran against each other for the governorship, and when a long series of joint debates had reached its close, Jackson addressed the whigs in the audience:

"I have spoken with the boasted eagle orator from the Mississippi river to the Unaka mountains, and as I see no flesh in his talons or any blood on his beak." Quick as a flash, Henry was on his feet saying:

"The American eagle is a proud bird and feeds not on carrion."

Champ Clark Tells Story.

Champ Clark, in a speech on civil service reform, told a story of a sharp retort to an examination question propounded by the civil service board. A man was applying for a job to run an elevator. He was asked "How many troops did England send to the colonies during the revolutionary war?" His reply was "A d--n sight more than ever went back."

Lemuel Ell Quigg and James Hamilton Lewis, two of the most picturesque men ever in congress, were having a debate on the subject of trusts. Mr. Quigg, who was from New York, was openly defending the trusts. At the close of one of his fiery periods, Mr. Lewis interjected with fine intonation: "For the ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib."

Ingalls was always quick in retort, although he was himself the subject of some sharp sallies. Once he was attacked by Senator Eli Sausbury, of Delaware, the second smallest state in the union. He disposed of the whole matter by saying:

"I thank the senator from that great state which has three counties at low tide and two counties at high tide for his advice."

The effect of parliamentary procedure under certain conditions is illustrated by a story told of the Georgia legislature of the days before the civil war. James Hamilton Cooper was speaking and made a remarkable statement of fact. A modest legislator exclaimed half under his breath: "Whew! What a thundering lie!" Cooper suspended his speech, having overheard the remark, and challenged the offender to a duel. A court of honor was arranged, and the result was that Cooper gave permission to

the luckless legislator to modify his remark. The correction was made in this manner:

"Mr. Speaker, in an inadvertent moment I referred to a remark made by the honorable gentlemen as a 'thundering lie.' I desire to withdraw that statement and in lieu thereof will say, 'It is a fulminating enlargement of elongated veracity.'"

Thus sugar-coated the speech gave no occasion for a duel.

Populist Is Silenced.

During the free silver campaign in 1896 the republican party employed a number of monologues actors to go through Kansas entertaining audiences by mixed programmes of jokes and speeches on the monetary question. In one town a monologue man was emphasizing the fact that in order to be good money any currency must contain its face value in precious metal. At this point an aged populist, with long whiskers, arose in the audience and holding up a dollar bill in his hand said:

"Do you mean to tell me, sir, that the stamp of the great American government on this piece of paper does not make it worth one dollar?"

The actor "went back" at him instantly: "Do you think, my friend, that if you printed the word 'hay' on your whiskers your cows would eat 'em?"

Thomas B. Reed was a master of all degrees of retort. Once when Jerry Simpson, the sockless statesman from Kansas, made a speech claiming that the house had by some action violated the constitution, the speaker overruled him and was upheld by the house. Mr. Simpson then arose and solemnly inquired of the chair:

"Where am I at?"

Whereupon Mr. Reed scathingly retorted: "No mortal man could possibly

divine the answer to such a baffling question."

One of Reed's most amusing thrusts was delivered at William S. Holman, a member from Indiana. It was, perhaps the keenest witticism ever uttered in debate on the floor of the house.

Holman was a constant objector to the expenditure of money by congress, and had honestly earned the title of "Watchdog of the Treasury." One day, when the committee was perfunctorily putting through a number of bills for the creation of government buildings in various cities, Holman was constantly on his feet objecting to their consideration. But when Indiana was reached, and the committee began to

propose appropriations for buildings in the towns of that state, Holman's objections came with much less spirit, and finally ceased altogether. When at length a bill was offered that chartered a building in Holman's own town, he rose and expressed hearty approval. Hardly had he taken his seat when Reed was on his feet. "Mr. Speaker," he shouted; and then, in gently sentimental tones, he recited Byron's familiar lines:

"'Tis sweet to hear the watchdog's honest bark.
Bay deep-mouthed welcome as we draw near home.
And the 'great objector' forgot to object any more that day."

There was seemingly nothing else to do, but in recent months the big telephone companies have been deluged with complaints from subscribers and phone users as to the indifference of the service, until it has become evident that something must be done; but, if more and better girls are not to be had, what?

In answer, not long since, the New York Telephone company made an interesting announcement to its thousands of subscribers when it stated that automatic telephone switchboards will be used exclusively in three big new exchanges it is shortly to open, and if they work out, as it confidently is expected, then good-bye to the hello girl, not only in New York but elsewhere. In Portland, too,

a gradual change to the automatic system is planned.

Thus it would seem that an idea--the automatic switchboard--born some 20 years ago in the twisted brain of a crazy undertaker, was about to be called upon to solve one of the great problems of the day--better telephone service--and, incidentally, to bid good-bye to the hello girls.

He was crazy, this Chicago undertaker named Strowger--there can be no doubt of that. What sane man of his calling would have conceived the idea that the girls in the telephone exchange had formed a conspiracy to divert from him business coming over the telephone? Yet it was this delusion which drove him to contrive an automatic device which would eliminate the girls, who, he believed, were robbing him of his business. With such rough material as he had at hand, including nails driven into an old plank, he built a model which would actually operate.

Strowger died in an asylum, driven into madness by what became in him an uncontrollable obsession, but he had succeeded when men highly trained as electrical engineers had failed and given to the world an invention now apparently destined to revolutionize the telephone practice of our continents. Before the final breakdown of all the faculties of his unhappy mind some men of business had become interested in his project and an automatic telephone company had been formed to carry on the work. So it is that the wonderfully complex mechanism of today, which picks out automatically and sundering the one of perhaps 10,000 telephone subscribers whose number you indicate is but the big brother of that model of wood and nails made 20 years ago by the luckless undertaker.

How the gods must laugh on their fee-off moulters at the idea of a fate which gave to Strowger a divine gift of thought, the power of inventing a machine destined to add to the convenience and comfort of millions of people, but carried with it the curse of madness.

AUTOMATIC PHONE MADE BY CRAZY UNDERTAKER

Delusion That Phone Girls Had Conspired Against His Business Leads to Invention, but Finally Drives Chicago Man Insane.

Is the hello girl soon to become obsolete--a thing of the past? Are we to be deprived of the questionable pleasure of being told by a dulcet-voiced maiden, after waiting patiently for an indefinite period, that the wire is "busy" or that "the party don't answer"? It now seems so, and there are those who are not sorry.

The fact is that ever since the early days of the war hello girls have apparently deteriorated; besides, they have been hard to obtain, many having turned to other occupations. Consequently the telephone service in most all the large cities has been poor, often to the point of exasperation. During the war most folks sided it without serious protest, as

there was seemingly nothing else to do, but in recent months the big telephone companies have been deluged with complaints from subscribers and phone users as to the indifference of the service, until it has become evident that something must be done; but, if more and better girls are not to be had, what?

In answer, not long since, the New York Telephone company made an interesting announcement to its thousands of subscribers when it stated that automatic telephone switchboards will be used exclusively in three big new exchanges it is shortly to open, and if they work out, as it confidently is expected, then good-bye to the hello girl, not only in New York but elsewhere. In Portland, too,