Contents

List of Illustrations ix
Acknowledgments xi

Introduction 1

The First Decade
1. The Singing Saloonkeeper 11
2. Girls! Girls! Girls! The Entrepreneurial Manager 19
3. Performers Take Charge 28
5. Tripping the Light Fantastic: Dancers 48

Entertainment Comes to the Fore
7. Variety in Times of National Conflict and Economic Turmoil 72
8. Just to Please the Boys: Seriocomic Singers 85
9. Dutch, Irish, Minstrels, and Other Characters: Male Comic Singers 98
10. Just Ordinary Workingmen: Seriocomic Songs for Men 112
11. Champagne Charlie: The Fantasy of Leisure for the Workingman 127

Sustaining Business in Difficult Times
12. What’s in a Name? Vaudeville vs. Variety in New York and in Regional Theater 149
13. Sex Rears Its Ugly Head . . . Again: Female Minstrelsy 158
14. Moral Reform in Regional Variety: The Fight to Preserve Community Standards 168
16. Conclusion: Entertainment as Industry 190

Notes 203
Bibliography 237
Index 253