

THE STAGE

HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

THE HARRY RICKARDS' VAUDEVILLE COMPANY.

That Aucklanders dearly love a good vaudeville entertainment was amply demonstrated on Monday night, when His Majesty's Theatre was simply crammed with humanity to give a rousing welcome to Mr. Harry Rickards' Vaudeville Company. This well-known amusement caterer always sends round something good, but on this occasion, so far as the principal turns are concerned, he has excelled himself. Nothing better has ever been seen on a variety stage here than the three Sisters K.os. Indeed, some of the feats performed one would imagine to be impossible but that it is done before one's eyes. Done, too, so gracefully and with such apparent ease that there scarcely seems to be any effort in their accomplishment. For instance, one of the sisters hung from a rope by one foot in the meanwhile extending her arms at right angles to the body, and on these the other two did some clever horizontal bar work. This, it is almost unnecessary to say, fairly took the house by storm, there being a perfect whirlwind of applause. Another remarkable feat was one in which while one sister hung head downwards by one foot, she held the other two by her teeth, they in the meantime doing some gymnastics. The turn is, however, difficult to describe, but it was wonderfully clever, and was, withal, carried out so daintily by the three sisters, who all, by the way, have more than their share of good looks, that it is easy to understand how Mr. Rickards came to think it was the most popular engagement he had ever had anything to do with. The Miles-Stavordale Quintette was a refreshing original musical turn. The four banjos used were so skilfully manipulated that the effect was almost that of the human voice. This, with a harp accompaniment, was really beautiful, and the party were encored again and again, the extra number, "Come Back to Erin," being a perfect gem.

Another star attraction was that of the Brothers Artois in a strikingly clever comedy bar act. The work on the horizontal bars by one brother was quite brilliant, while the amusing performance gone through by the other

caused roars of laughter. The turn was one of the best of its kind seen here, and the huge audience was quick to appreciate its merits, judging by the heartiness of the applause. Miss Lottie Kay, who was described on the programme as a brilliant Yorkshire soprano, was found to be a very winsome singer with a voice which, although lacking in power, was wonderfully sweet and pure withal. Her ren-

dering of "Spring is Coming" and "Annie Laurie" was quite a treat, but one could not help regretting that her repertoire did not include something a little more modern. We have all heard those two songs hundreds of times, and are, perhaps, beginning to weary a little of them. Our old friend Mr. Leonard Nelson made a welcome reappearance, his "mendicant" song and gags in the first portion of the entertainment being in his best style. The "Melbourne" song was somewhat spilt by the audience insisting on applauding the accompanying views of Victoria's capital city. Miss Alma Gray, one time known here as a clever child artist, made a reappearance. She is a dainty little Australian, who can dance with the best. The Australian bush setting to the turn and Miss Gray's bush-ranger get-up proved very effective. The Sisters Collier gave the usual song and dance which seems inseparable from all variety entertainments, but they introduced a few novelties, notably in the "Where I Met You" song. Mr. George Dean sang a number of new songs of a more or less amusing nature, while the entertainment closed with bioscopic views of the Grand Prix Motor Race. This was the only item which was not up to the Rickards standard, for the pictures were badly shown, and have been seen here before. Very large audiences have been seen during the week, and for the three remaining nights it would be well for intending patrons to book their seats to prevent disappointment. The show should most certainly be seen.

"THE TEA GIRL."

This musical comedy attracted good houses at His Majesty's Theatre all last week. After the first night the weaker items were deleted, and this reduced the playing time by a full hour. The effect was to greatly accelerate the action of the play, which was, consequently, much brightened. Also the performers gained more con-

fidence, the result being that towards the end of the week they were able to infuse more dash and vim into their parts, with very beneficial results. If only all this could have been done prior to the opening night matters would have been greatly improved, and there would have been no cause for the somewhat adverse, and in some cases absurdly harsh, criticism the piece received at the hands of critics. When the book is brightened up "The Tea Girl" should easily hold its own with more pretentious pieces of the kind.

"THE PRINCE CHAP."

There is no other instance in the theatrical history of this country which affords a parallel to the case of Mr. H. R. Roberts, who will appear at His Majesty's Theatre on Tuesday, July 14, in a new London comedy, "The Prince Chap." Mr. Roberts has the unique distinction of being the first actor who has left the Australasian colonies to become an accepted star on the English and American stage. In the course of nine years' experience abroad he has been associated with some of the leading artists of the English-speaking world, and within the past two or three years has taken front rank among them. For 150 nights he starred at Sir Charles Wyndham's Criterion Theatre, London, in "The Prince Chap," creating the part of Peyton the sculptor. No actor has ever returned to his native land with such eclat as Harry Roberts, for he was received immediately upon his arrival in Wellington by the Mayor of the capital city, in the presence of at least a hundred prominent citizens, and with the patronage of the Prime Minister. He was again accorded a public reception in Christchurch, and on the occasion of his first appearance in that city on June last he received an ovation of which any actor might well be proud. The Mayor of Dunedin, desirous of welcoming back one of that city's most brilliant sons—for it was in Dunedin



MR. H. R. ROBERTS, and MISS VERA REMÉE in "The Prince Chap."



MISS ANGLIN, the famous American actress, who has just commenced a tour of the colonies.