



THE STAGE

HIS MAJESTY'S.

RICKARDS' TIVOLI VAUDEVILLE COMPANY.

MISS ROSINA CASSELLI AND HER DOGS.

The premier "star turn" at H's Majesty's, where Rickards Tivoli Vaudeville Company opened under Mr. Allan Hamilton's management to an excellent house on Monday, is beyond question that of Miss Rosina Casselli and her famous Chihuahua dogs of Mexico, said to be the smallest canine race in existence. They are advertised as "educated" dogs, and certainly Miss Casselli has taught them many wonderful things that no one would ever have dreamt dogs were capable of undertaking, such, for instance, as driving a motor car, walking a tight rope, scaling ladders, swinging from a trapeze, and engaging in acrobatic exercises that are seldom seen off the stage. The show is both picturesque and unique. The curtain rises upon a travelling platform covered in red cloth, white metal fixings holding in position the horizontal bars and other appliances usually found in a well-equipped gymnasium. This platform remains in the background until a miniature motor car—a perfect model of its kind—is driven on to the stage by the canine chauffeur, who is in charge of the contingent of dogs that jump out on all sides and make straight for the platform, at the back of which Miss Casselli and her assistant stand. The "chauffeur" drives the car back and then the fun begins, the midgets seemingly vying with one another in their anxiety to distinguish themselves. One walks a tight rope, another balances himself by the forelegs on a thin cane, while yet another walks over the tops of a row of perpendicular sticks, the while others run in and out and roundabout the sticks themselves. Then one of the smallest of the dogs does his trapeze act, swinging first by his chin, then by his forelegs, and again by his hind legs, and in the latter position holding a smaller trapeze by his teeth while another dog swings on it. Then a big wheel, with a long bar protruding from its axle, is placed in position. One dog mounts upon the wheel and the others push it round by means of the bar, the top dog maintaining his position as the wheel goes round, while another dog threads his way in and out of the spokes of the moving wheel. And so the thing goes on until the chauffeur returns with his car, the dogs take their places in it once more, an unruly dog who persists in occupying the wrong seat is thrown out, and the car moves off the stage. An explosion follows in the wings; the chauffeur limps along to draw Miss Casselli's attention to the disaster, and the car is pushed back upon the stage by the other members of the troupe, one of whom helps by hauling it along with a rope. It is all very clever, essentially diverting, and is keenly appreciated by the crowd, Madame being recalled again and again with her dogs.

Another "turn," sensational in the breathless interest it inspires, is that of the Kremka Brothers, described as "the leading Continental comedy and eccentric acrobats." They are marvels of agility and daring. The stage is set in the fashion of a reception room, and as the curtain rises a boy in buttons (the younger Kremka) is seen dusting around chairs and tables. To him enters a gentleman dressed in light tweeds, to whom the "buttons" offers a chair, only to leave him sprawling on the floor. Then the pair take to somersaulting over one another in the most extraordinary fashion and with bewildering rapidity one eccentricity succeeds another, the grace and ease with which the balancing and posturing is accomplished being particularly noticeable. The younger brother seems to bounce up and around the elder like a ball and to go all over him, and the elder brother in turn keeps the fun going.

Then, standing back to back, the elder Kremka places his hands over his shoulder, grasps his brother's hands in his, and draws him upwards to his shoulders, upon which the younger

with his body bent well forward, crouches upon the lowered end of the board and the elder brother advances upon the raised end. As he does so the younger springs upwards and

that provided by Florence and Lillian, two lady musicians of exceptional talent. Trumpet, cornet, bugle, violin and piano are alike handled with rare skill and musical ability. The lady who plays the violin has a perfect mastery over the instrument. She handles difficult and simple themes with equal skill, and plays with rare feeling and sympathy. She was recalled again and again. Her vocal efforts were almost equally well appreciated. The pianist also plays well, and her little song, "Now isn't That Like a Man?" is not the least enjoyable item of the "turn," which is exceptionally bright and musical.

Old friends in the persons of Mr. Fred. Graham and Miss Nellie Dent are being cordially re-welcomed. They have a very exciting little sketch—"The 100 to 1 chance—a piquant well-conceived comedy, which has a racy flavour of its own that keeps everyone interested and amused. If anything, the performance is too brief, for the audience would fain see more of these old stage favourites. Mr. Graham laughingly assured the writer on Tuesday that that was his loss more than the public's. "Why," he said, "I must have won fully £80,000 in that little scene by now, and the curtain always falls before I can go and collect the money."

Another capital turn is that of Walker and Sturm, who give a clever juggling act, in which tennis racquets spin around and are smartly caught and kept spinning by both performers, and finally two ladders are placed in position in the centre of the stage, the man climbing up between them, and hanging from the top head downwards. Then he takes a light trapeze between his teeth and so raises the girl who appears with him from the stage. They are watched with the keenest interest throughout, and are repeatedly applauded.

There are several other "turns" of minor importance. Vocally, Mr. Harry Hart (tenor) and Mr. Harry Rochfort (bass) distinguish themselves. They sing well together, and were both encored on Monday. The two Donnelly's with their clever little daughter Kitty, sing and dance well together, and the Marlow Sisters, whose chief point seems to be their dancing, with Mr. J. V. Gibson, patter comedian, eke out the remainder of the programme. A matinee is announced for Saturday.

THE OPERA HOUSE.

FULLER'S WIDE-WORLD PICTURES.

The cinematograph pictures shown at the Opera House under the Fullerian management are being kept up to their high standard of merit, and this week's programme meets with the general appreciation of patrons. The film of the Henley Regatta shows this world-famed aquatic carnival in full swing, the exciting boat races, together with the thousands of holiday-makers who line the banks, are seen in all manner of craft, forming a most picturesque sight. "Their Majesties the King and Queen at Knowsley," is the title of a splendid film depicting the review of 16,000 West Lancashire Territorial troops, the march past of the different columns presenting a fine military spectacle. One of the most beautiful pictures seen in Auckland is that entitled "Yachting off Cowes," in which the race for the King's Cup is illustrated in a magnificent fashion. The twelve competing vessels are seen with all sails set cutting through the water, passing and repassing one another in a thrilling manner, the sea and cloud effect affording an artistic background. "Cowboy Exploits" is an exceptionally fine film, giving an excellent idea of the pluck and daring nature of the American cowboy. First of all a cowboy is shown handling the lasso, the ease with which he lassoes a man galloping past on his horse, binding his hands and arms, and then secur-



MR. FRED. GRAHAM.



MISS NELLIE DENT.

takes his stand without moving out of the perpendicular. Finally, after a lot of excellent work comes a surprising finish. A spring-board is placed in position. The younger brother,

lands standing upon his brother's head. The performance was thrice repeated. On Monday, the applause being simply tremendous.

A remarkably fine entertainment's