

ENTERTAINMENTS.

FOUR SHORT PLAYS.

The Brisbane Repertory Theatre Society opened its final session of the 1925 season at the Theatre Royal last night with a quadruple bill. This was certainly a good notion, for, with the large number of acting members which the society possesses, it gave many an opportunity in what might be termed a try-out. This applied especially to the last piece, "30 Minutes in a Street," a play of no literary value but very amusing. To consider this play first, however, is to ignore the real purposes of the repertory movement. This purpose is to produce plays that will interest intelligent people without being sufficiently sensational or sentimental or vulgar to ensure the lengthy run necessary to make them a success on the commercial stage. In the past the dramatist has not been strong enough to ignore the prejudices of the crowd. He could not for instance let a play end unhappily that should by all reason end unhappily. In fact to exist at all he has had to write pot-boilers. Even the dramatic critic when he ventures into creative work finds himself in the same predicament, an example of which was before the Brisbane public only a short while ago, when a play by the doyen of British critics was staged, and was found to be a veritable pot-boiler, though it brought him a fortune. In returning to the consideration of the work of our local society, one may safely preface it by saying that not a more enjoyable evening's entertainment has been offered at the Theatre Royal during recent years. The only fault that could be found with the choice of plays was that the first three all treated of the past, Barrie's "Barbara's Wedding," only lightly it is true, but a similar atmosphere was created in each instance. The opening play, "Followers," by Harold Brighouse, though beautifully played by the Misses Barbara Sisley, Irma Dearden, Beres Corrie, and Mr. Alan Devereux, was the weakest of the

Alan Devereux, was the weakest of the three. One felt that in avoiding a conventional ending by making the old maid refuse an offer of marriage repeated after 25 years, the author had overstepped the limits of probability. The Barrie play was delightful, as is all Barrie's work, the author compelling, the use of this overworked adjective. The action, however, dragged a little at first, and the cast, though a little uneven, was strong enough and thoughtful enough to convey to their hearers the gentle pathos of Barrie's thoughts. Mr. George Eaton did well in the difficult role of the Colonel, as did Miss Roda Felgate as his gentle wife, and Miss Jean Trundle made a bright and tomboyish "Barbara." Messrs. Leo. Guyatt, Kenneth Trotter, and Thomas Stephens adequately filled the less exacting parts. The best vehicle for the players was the third play, "Everybody's Husband" (Gilbert Cannan), for the dialogue was less subtle than that of Barrie, and three of the roles were particularly well sustained—that of "A Girl" by Miss Grizel Gibson, that of her mother by Miss Elizabeth Carew Smythe, and that of her grandmother by Mrs. P. J. Symes. As her great-grandmother (Miss Jeanette Fullarton) also appears it will be understood that this is the dreamer of the dream plays. Mr. R. Cooper, as "a Dominic," spoke his few lines incisively, and Miss Barbara M'Lennan filled the small part of a maid. The climax was spoilt somewhat last night by the hastiness of the applause. But this should be overcome at to-night's repeat performance, especially if there can be a little less delay on the stage. The following was the cast of the final piece, "Thirty Minutes in a Street":—Mr. W. Lang, Mr. D. Henderson, Mrs. R. M. Stokes, Mr. A. Portrate, Mr. T. Barry, Mrs. H. H. Heuchman, Miss Una Bick, Miss Connie Springall, Miss Laura Ludgate, Miss Clair Clarke, Mrs. E. C. Ginn, Miss Gladys Spurgin, Mr. K. Dalglish, Dr. A. T. Nisbet, Dr. J. V. Duhig, Miss Laurie Graham, Miss Irene Williamson, Miss C. O. A. Wilson, Mr. R. Johnstone, Mr. W. A. Blake, Mr. D. Henderson, Miss Lenore Meston, Miss Estelle Dent.

Lenore Meston, Miss Estelle Dent.

To avoid accusations of amateurishness it would be well if performing members of the society were to change out of their stage costumes before taking seats in the auditorium.

The final performance of what can only be described as an excellent programme and delightful entertainment will take place to-night.