

THE DRAMA.

THE NEW THEATRE REPUBLIC.

A new place of amusement was made accessible last night in the opening of the Theatre Republic. It is the seventh theatre built in Manhattan by Oscar Hammerstein. It is a small and prettily arranged house, and in its form and decoration it is much more tasteful and dignified than any of Mr. Hammerstein's previous ones. The colors are rich and harmonious, with less inclination to garishness than the colors of theatres are wont to display, and there is also originality of design.

The opening play is James A. Herne's "Sag Harbor," which was presented in other cities last season, but has not before been seen in New-York. It is a work of the same general character as the most of Mr. Herne's previous plays. Mr. Herne is a sharp observer of whatever phases of life he chooses to study, and he has the faculty of putting them on the stage with an absolute exactness which is in itself sometimes amusing and sometimes distressing. He still maintains his belief that the wiping of noses gives the last refinement of realism—or the last unrefinement—to a drama.

When he applies his methods to the illustration of the humor which lies in the unconscious simplicity of certain types of country character the result is not seldom diverting, and his passion for the actual does not restrain him from some judicious selection. His treatment of his characters again and again suggests that of Edward Harrigan, though he draws his types from different walks of life. Every actor who steps on the stage is a photograph of some actual person who might have posed for the picture, and very likely did, consciously or unconsciously.

Mr. Herne has been remarkably successful in gathering and training a company to represent his characters in the same spirit in which he has conceived them. In this respect the most conspicuous were Lionel Barrymore, as a sailor; W. T. Hodge, as a clumsy and drolly self-important villager; Mrs. Sol Smith, as an elderly widow, who dwelt much on the memory of her whaler husband; Miss Marlon Abbott and the Misses Chrystal and Julie Herne. What is to be said of any one of these is to be said of all—that they were to the life what they represented. It is needless to say that Mr. Herne was so himself.