## STAGE GOSSIP.

The "Court Cards" appear at Palmerston North on the 20th, 21st and 22nd inst.; Feilding follows on the 23rd and 24th, Marton 26th and 27th, and Wanganui for four nights.

The American public wants a play with the big idea, and then a touch of love interest. Remember this: There must be love interest, whether in the most thrilling melodrama or the wildest farce. And the play must be human, and red-blooded. But love interest is the play element that feeds the box-office and pays salaries. The public visualises itself into a play; therefore the playwright should have likable characters. No man wants to sit in the third row and figure it all out to himself that he is a villain kidnapping four sick children. But he does like to believe himself the goodlooking leading man making love to the beautiful leading woman over a bottle of champagne.-George M. Cohan in the "Green Book."

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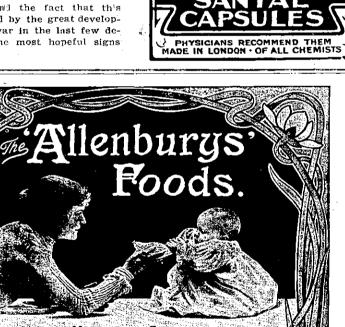
When Fred. Niblo finishes his three years' engagement under the management of J. C. Williamson, Ltd., and returns to America, he will step into the place of George M. Cohan, his brother-in-law, playing the types of parts which Cohan has made the leading feature of the American comedy stage. For the millionaire actor-manager author is giving up the acting side of the business, and intends to restrict himself solely to writing plays. In an interview in a New York paper, dealing with his retirement, George M. Cohan expressed the opinion that there was no one at the present time he would more gladly see in his place than Fred. Niblo, "who," he said, "has justified his selection and the opinion I always had of his ability by making a big success for nearly three years amongst the critical people of Australia. And they tell me," added Mr. Cohan "that the Australian people are 'some" critics."

What Philip Sousa, the "March King" says: "Without the band, war will cease. The band is the most romantic element of war and the fact that this has been eliminated by the great developments in waging war in the last few decades is one of the most hopeful signs for world prace.

Mr Leo D. Chateau of the Branscombe | HIS firm, retails the following story, which came originally from the famous English comedian, Tom Craven. The latter recently negotiated, whilst in Australia, to act as producer and song writer for the Branscombe firm but ill health compelled him to return to England. "My first piece produced when I was a clerk in a London Bank was "All Lost". It has never been found since. However I was as proud as a pouter pigeon at seeing my name on a Sadler's Wells theatre programme as author of the curtain raiser. I was 18 at the time with plenty of self assurance and not altogether unsusceptible to 'Swank.' At the interval I went round at the request of E. N. Hallows to be introduced to the critics. Moy Thomas of the "Daily was there and so were many News'' other leading critics of the day. Last but not least, Clement Scott. Did you write that play out of your own brain, sir? asked Scott. 'Yes I did' I replied. And so you are a son of my old friend, Tom Craven,' he mused. 'Yes' said I, pluming myself in expectation of a com-pliment. 'Well,' he said, 'your father ought to be - well ashamed of you.

Miss Sylvia Bremer, the pretty young actress with the expressive eyes, who made good in New Zealand with "The Argyle Case," is having her big chance in Sydney at present, taking Miss Muriel Starr's place in the strong drama "Bought and Paid Miss Starr had to be operated Fcr." on for appendicitis, and during her incapacitation the management en-gaged Miss Bremer (who was on the point of leaving for America) to fill the breach. Critics say she is filling a difficult part most capably, showing decided emotional powers. While in Auckland some nine months ago, Miss Bremer told a "Review" representa-tive how wonderful she thought Miss Muriel Starr and her work, and how very much she would like to emulate her. She also said her ambition was to make a name for herself in her own country. Two wishes which have been realised.

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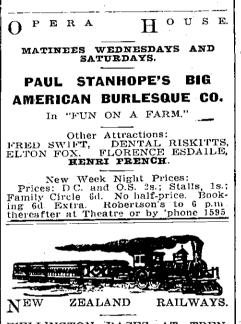
Direction ..... Beaumont Smith. "An Irresistibly Charming Play"—says "Lyttelton Times," Christchurch.

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Box Plan opens at Wildman and Arey's TO-DAY (THURSDAY). Applications from heads of schools for matinee concessions for parties of not less than 20 children will be re-ceived by Beaumont Smith, care Wild-man and Arcy, up till noon, Friday.



WELLINGTON RACES AT TREN-THAM, APRIL 14 AND 17, 1915.

Holiday Excursion Tickets, available for return until 19th April, will be issued from Levin, Pukerua and inter-mediate stations on 13th and 16th April, from Masterton, Greytown, Cross Creek and intermediate stations to Wellington on 13th and 16th and by morning trains on 17th April. Race trains will leave Wellington at 10.10, 10.19, 10.37, and 10.55 a.m., and

Te Aro 10.21 and 10.39 a.m. Return trains will leave Trentham at 5.10, 5.18, 5,26, 5.34 and 5.42 p.m.

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ABRAHAM AND WILLIAMS, LTD.,

in conjunction with Corry and Co., of Blenheim, have received instructions from J. M. Lightfoot, Esq., Executor in the Estate of the late H. Hodge, to offer for sale by Public Auction, at Wellington, on THURS-DAY, APRIL 15 (day after Thomson Handicap, the following highly-bred thoroughbreds, some in training, all in forward condition, and with nominations available for second day of Wellington Autumn Meeting:-

Chillies, 5yrs (Achilles-Bellicent) Borsil, 6yrs (Boris-Chatsil)

Margarita, 4yrs (Achilles-Marga-

ret) Elevate, 3yrs (Elevation-Julie)

Negative, aged (Birkenhead—Film)

Manu, 3yrs (Achilles-Punawai)

Chattis, 4yrs (Chatsworth-Turepo)

The above horses are at present being trained at Otaki, and the train-er, N. Williams, will be pleased to show intending purchasers any of the stock and to give any information. Letters to view may be obtained from the Auctioneers, at Palmerston North, Wellington, or Blenheim, on application.

THE SOUTH BRITISH INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.

An Interim Dividend of Two Shillings and Threepence per share for the half-year ended February 28, 1915, has been declared and will be payable on and after 8th inst. Shareholders can obtain warrants on application at the Company's Offices.

By Order of the Board. P. H. UPTON, General Manager. Head Office,

Queen Street, Auckland, April 1, 1915.

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