

Sept. 21, 1926.

1,600,554

B. M. MARQUIS

AMUSEMENT DEVICE

Filed Feb. 10, 1926

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1,

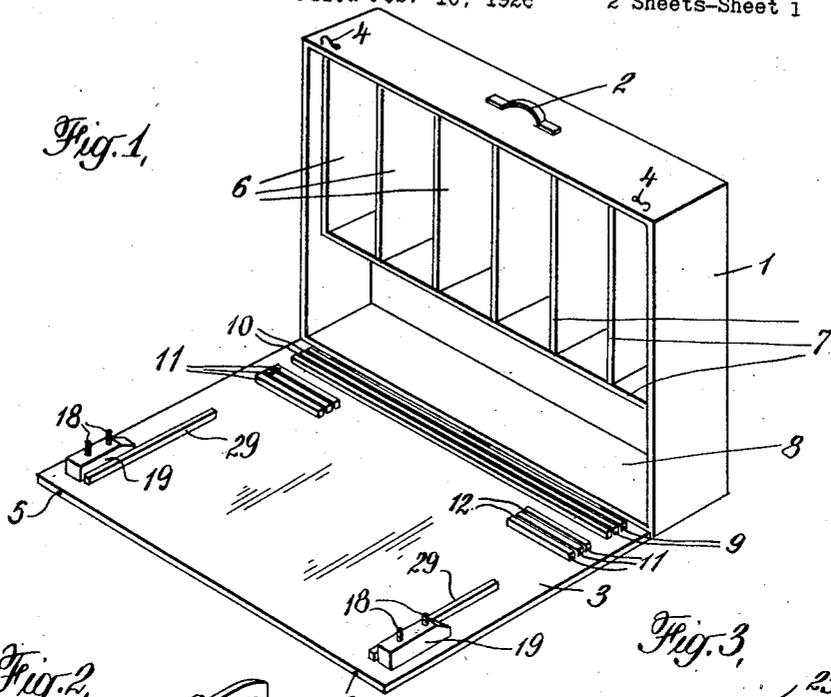


Fig. 2,

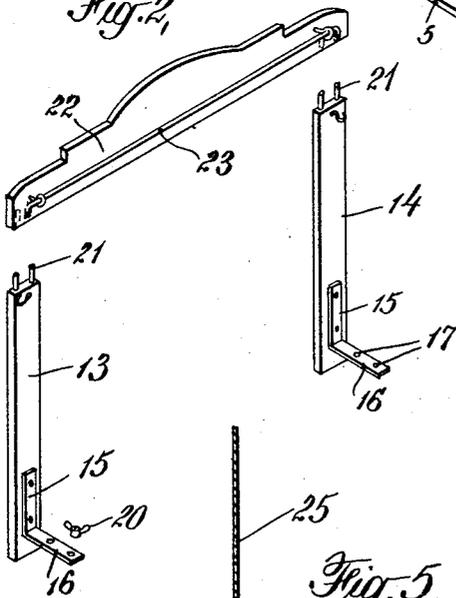


Fig. 3,

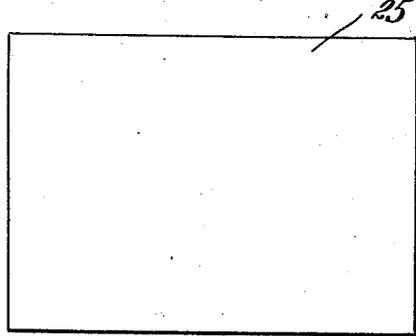


Fig. 4,

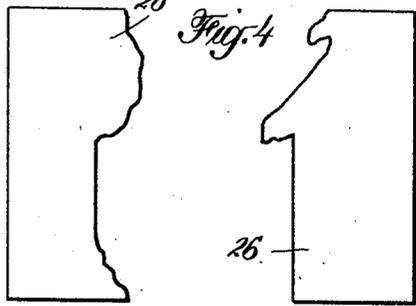
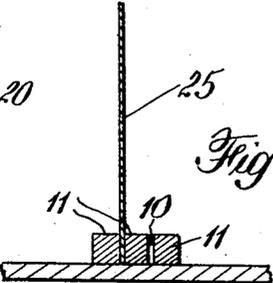


Fig. 5,



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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 6,

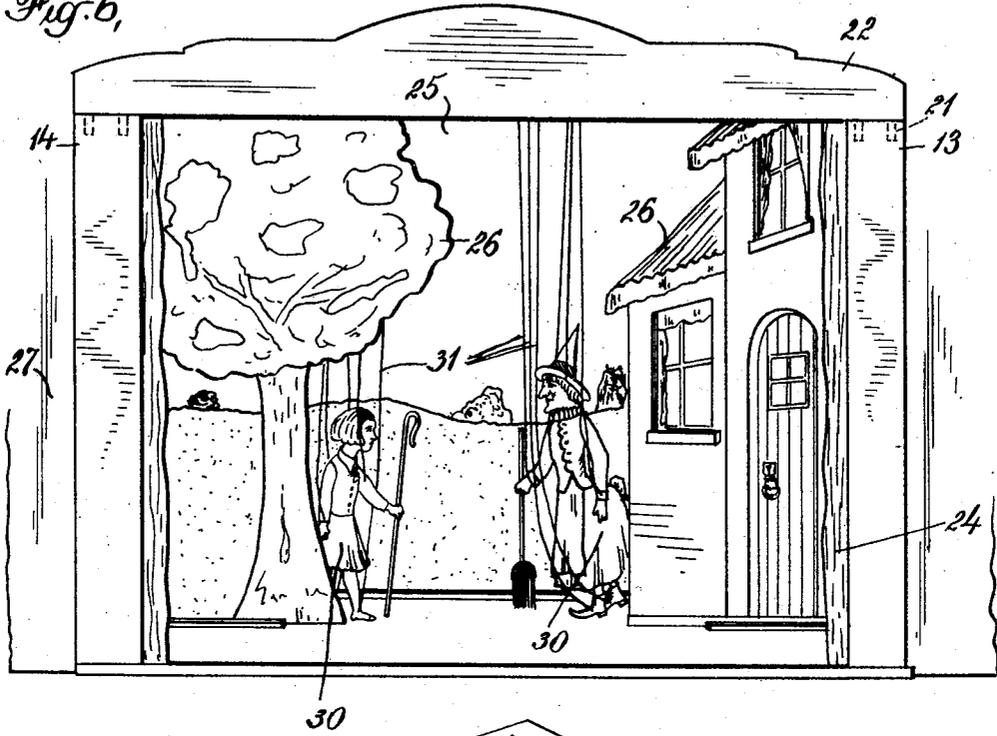
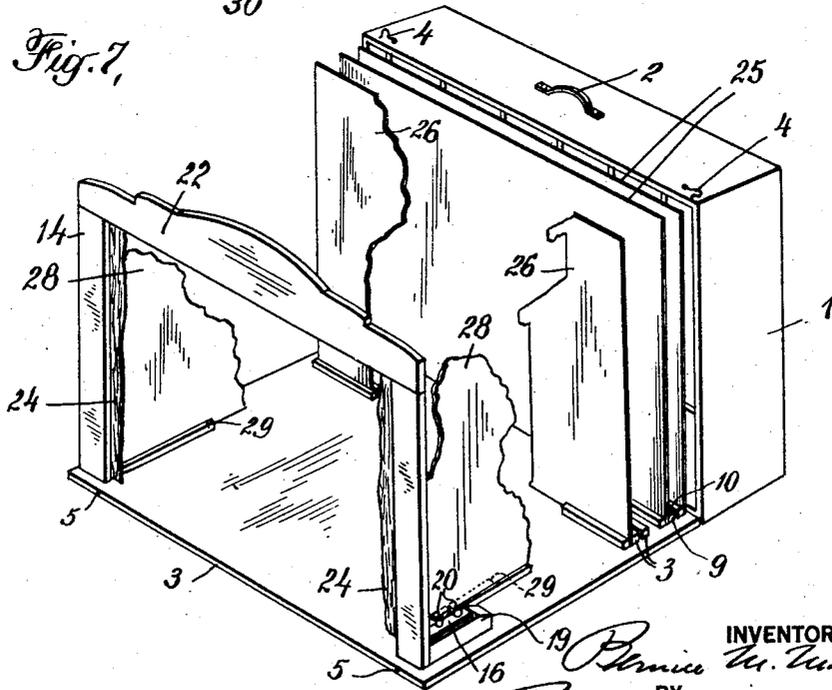


Fig. 7,



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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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## AMUSEMENT DEVICE.

Application filed February 10, 1926. Serial No. 87,203.

This invention relates to amusement devices and more particularly to toy theatres in which the performing characters are of the marionette type.

Heretofore entertainment by the use of marionettes has been offered only by professionals or by persons who have interested themselves particularly in creating that kind of amusement. This is mainly due to the fact that the marionette figures have been difficult to obtain and expensive to produce and elaborate settings have been necessary to produce the proper effect. For such reasons as these the marionette form of amusement has not been readily available to the general public and has not been provided in such form that it was adapted for home use.

The principal object of the invention is to make the marionette form of amusement readily available to the general public and readily available for use and entertainment in the home.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved toy theatre of the knock-down type in which the performing characters or figures and all of the parts necessary for the construction of a complete stage setting are furnished in the form of a self-contained portable package.

A further object of the invention is to provide a toy theatre of the knock-down type in the form of a portable container adapted to contain the performing characters or figures and all of the necessary parts from which a stage setting may be constructed, parts of the container itself being employed in the construction of the stage setting.

Various other objects of the invention will appear hereinafter.

One form of the invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the container for housing the figures and all parts from which the toy theatre may be constructed, and which itself constitutes a part of the assembled theatre;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view illustrating the manner in which the proscenium arch for the stage is assembled;

Figs. 3 and 4 are front elevations showing the configuration of certain types of scenery which may be employed;

Fig. 5 is a detail sectional view illustrating the manner in which the scenery is supported on the stage;

Fig. 6 is a front elevation of the assembled theatre; and

Fig. 7 is a perspective view of the assembled theatre.

Referring first to Figs. 1 to 5 inclusive the toy theatre includes a box or container shown at 1 made of any suitable material such as wood, stiff cardboard or the like. The container 1 is preferably provided with a handle 2 or any other suitable means of carrying it from one place to another. One side of the container is in the form of a hinged cover 3 which normally may be held closed by any suitable type of fastening means such as the hooks 4 on the body portion of the container adapted to engage with pins 5 on the cover. One part of the interior of the container 1 is divided into a plurality of compartments 6 by means of suitable partitions 7. These compartments are adapted to receive the marionette figures or characters. The partitions 7 are so arranged in the container 1 as to provide an additional compartment 8 adapted to receive various parts employed in setting up the device, such as the structural parts of the proscenium arch and any nuts, bolts and the like which are required to secure it in place.

As shown in Fig. 1 the cover 3 is adapted to move down to a substantial horizontal position and in this position it constitutes the floor of the stage. Near its rear edge it is provided with a plurality of projections 9 of wood or the like which extend across substantially the entire face of the cover. These projections form between them a series of grooves 10 which may receive one or more pieces of scenery adapted to constitute the background of the stage setting as hereinafter described. In front of the projections 9 there may be several additional sets of projections 11 forming between them grooves 12 adapted to support additional scenery in the form of side wings which do not extend entirely across the stage.

The parts from which the proscenium arch may be constructed are shown in Fig. 2. These parts preferably comprise two upright side members 13 and 14 each of which

carries near its lower end a bracket 15. Each bracket 15 has a horizontally disposed leg 16 provided with openings 17. These openings are adapted to slip over the projecting ends of bolts 18 secured in blocks 19 mounted near the forward corners of the cover 3 as shown in Fig. 1. Wing nuts 20 may be employed to clamp the brackets in place. The upper end of each of the uprights 13 and 14 is provided with one or more pins 21 adapted to slip in corresponding openings in the ends of the top cross piece 22 of the arch. The rear face of the cross piece 22 may be provided with a rod 23 on which one or more curtains 24 (Fig. 7) may be suspended.

When not in use all parts necessary for constructing the toy theatre are contained in and housed by the box 1, the marionettes being positioned in the compartments 6 and certain other parts, such as the parts of the proscenium arch, are contained in the compartment 8. The scenery which may be in the form of one or more background pieces 25 (Fig. 3) and any desired number of wing pieces 26 (Fig. 4) may be laid down flat over the compartments 6 and 8, there being a special clearance provided between the edges of the partitions 7 and the inner face of the cover 3 to receive the scenery when the cover 3 is closed. If desired, several different sets of scenery may be furnished from which different stage settings may be produced.

When it is desired to use the toy theatre the container 1 is placed on the floor or on a table and the cover 3 is opened. The proscenium arch is then assembled in the manner described above. In its assembled condition it will appear as shown in Figs. 6 and 7. The necessary background pieces 25 are then positioned in the grooves 10 of the projections 9, as shown in Figs. 5 and 7, and the appropriate wing pieces 26 are positioned in the grooves 12 of the projections 11. A curtain 27 (Fig. 6) may be placed in front of the entire device to conceal everything but the proscenium arch and the stage setting and this curtain may be used to conceal the person manipulating the marionettes. If it be desired to interrupt a part of the oblique vision through the proscenium arch, side pieces 28 of suitable scenery (Fig. 7) may be positioned as indicated in this figure and for this purpose projections 29 may be provided on the cover 3 adjacent to the blocks 19 as shown in Fig. 1, so as to form between each block 19 and the corresponding projection 29 a groove for receiving the lower edge of one of the side pieces 28.

Fig. 6 shows a complete stage setting with two marionette figures represented at 30. They may be manipulated in the usual manner by means of cords or strings 31.

It will now be seen that the entire device is portable and self-contained. The box 1 con-

tains all the parts necessary for the erection of a toy theatre and one or more complete stage settings and also contains a set of marionettes. It will also be noted that the container 1 also forms a structural part of the theatre itself, the cover 3 being used for the floor of the stage and being provided with various parts for supporting the proscenium arch and the scenery. The marionettes may be designed to represent certain characters and if desired a book or pamphlet may be provided in the container 1 setting forth instructions for erecting the toy theatre and for manipulating the marionettes, and containing a story to be reproduced by the marionettes. The marionettes, for instance, may be Mother Goose characters and the book may contain a Mother Goose story to be reproduced by the marionettes. The entire device is in the form of an article of manufacture which may be sold as a complete unit. In this way a complete amusement device of the marionette type becomes available to the general public for home use because it may be conveniently purchased at a reasonable price and it is so designed as to be capable of use in the home either by children or adults.

I claim:—

1. A toy theatre comprising a container, a cover therefor adapted to constitute the floor of the stage, scenic pieces adapted to be housed by said container, a knock-down arch adapted to be housed by said container, means on said cover for supporting said scenic pieces and means associated with said cover for supporting the arch when assembled.

2. A toy theatre comprising a container, a plurality of compartments therein adapted to contain and house marionettes, a knock-down arch, said container having a compartment adapted to receive and house the parts of said arch, a plurality of scenic pieces, said container having a space to receive and house said scenic pieces, a cover associated with said container adapted when opened to constitute the floor of the stage, means on said cover for supporting said scenic pieces and means on the cover for supporting said arch when assembled.

3. A toy theatre comprising a container, a plurality of compartments therein adapted to receive and house marionettes, pieces of scenery and an arch from which a stage setting may be constructed, said container having compartments adapted to receive said pieces of scenery and said arch, a part of said container being designed to constitute the floor of the stage, and means on said part of the container for supporting said pieces of scenery and said arch.

4. A toy theatre comprising a container having a hinged cover adapted when opened to constitute the floor of the stage, a knock-

down arch comprising detachable side and top members, a compartment in said container for receiving the members of said arch, scenic pieces for use in constructing a stage setting, said container having a compartment for containing and housing said scenic pieces, means on said hinged cover for supporting said scenic pieces, and means on said cover for detachably supporting said arch when assembled.

5. A toy theatre comprising a container having a hinged cover adapted when opened to constitute the floor of the stage, a knock-down arch comprising detachable side and

top members, a compartment in said container for receiving the members of said arch, scenic pieces for use in constructing a stage setting, said container having a compartment for containing and housing said scenic pieces, means on said hinged cover for supporting said scenic pieces, and means on said cover for detachably supporting said arch when assembled, said container having a plurality of compartments adapted to receive and house a plurality of marionettes.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

BERNICE MAUD MARQUIS.