

1935

Puppets in the junior high school

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

PUPPETS IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

by

Alice Joanne Kennedy

(A.B., Boston University, 1918)

submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
June 1935

HER

EFFICIENCY BOND

J. R. & R. CO.



NOTE: Thanks for the unlocking of the door which led the author 2

to the fascinating land of the miniature actors should be expressed to the little boy who six years ago brought to a classroom in the F. A. Day Junior High School in Newton a crudely constructed puppet. Almost immediately, although he was a guest from an unknown land, the uncouth little wooden figure grew in the author's imagination until he seemed to near the perfection that later was learned to exist in connection with Richard Teschner's beautiful puppets, while the rough marionette was visioned as he might walk and work, an idealized figure among settings as artistic as those of Gordon Craig, who is himself an advocate for the cause of the marionette in the theatre.

To Harold Lindergreen of Vesper George Art School, who calls himself a friend to all puppets and their lovers, should be expressed due thanks for much of the technical knowledge which has made it possible for the author to put into working form the slightest suggestion of the possibilities of the puppet stage, so that boys and girls might form for themselves a vision of the field which lies further in the work.

Finally, to Professor Joseph R. Taylor of Boston University the author expresses thanks for the inspiration and appreciation of all the beauty and art of the legitimate stage through knowledge of its historical development and its modern achievement, much of which may be reproduced on a small scale in the miniature theatre which admits only the tiny wooden actors to play the roles. These people have given the author the key to the door which leads to the happy use of many leisure hours, the door which may be closed upon the cares of a problem-ridden world, once one has entered.

PUPPETS IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

I. <u>Introduction</u>	
A. Values in the work.	7
II. <u>Forming the class or club</u>	10
A. Choice of members	10
B. Procedure at first meeting	11
C. Suggestive outline for a year's meetings	14
D. Supplies	17
III. <u>Making the Puppets</u>	20
A. Bodies	20
1. Body proportion)	20
2. Cloth bodies) Illustrated	20
a. legs--21	
b. arms--21	
c. feet--21	
3. Wooden bodies	21
a. arms & legs--22	
b. feet-----22	
c. hands-----22	
4. Weights	23
B. Heads	24
1. Planning Features	24
2. Modelling the head	25
a. Profile	25
b. The nose	25
c. The eyes	25
d. The mouth	27
e. General age and Sex comparison	27

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a. Profile

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c. The eyes

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and sex

concealed

PUPPETS IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

f. Facial expression)	28
g. Facial angles (Illustrated)	29(a)
h. Women's heads	30
i. Men's heads	31
j. Children's Heads)	32
IV. <u>Molding the Head</u>	33
V. <u>Materials used for heads</u>	34
VI. <u>Hair</u>	36
VII. <u>Painting the Puppet</u>	37
A. Materials	37
B. Skin tone	37
C. Rouge	37
D. Eyes and eye shadows	37
E. Brow	38
F. Mouth	39
G. Nostrils	39
VIII. <u>Costume</u>	40
A. Divisions for ease in studying	40
B. Accessories	40
C. Head-dress	40
D. Costume types	40
E. Scale for Puppets	41
F. Suggestions for sewing	41
G. Special pattern suggestions	42
IX. <u>Stringing the Puppet</u>	44
A. Materials used	44

28	1. Facial expression
29	2. Facial angles (illustrated)
30	3. Women's heads (illustrated)
31	4. Men's heads
32	5. Children's heads
33	IV. <u>Molding the Head</u>
34	V. <u>Materials used for heads</u>
35	VI. <u>Hair</u>
37	VII. <u>Painting the Puppet</u>
37	A. Materials
37	B. Skin tone
37	C. Rouge
37	D. Eyes and eye shadows
38	E. Brows
39	F. Mouth
39	G. Nostrils
40	VIII. <u>Costume</u>
40	A. Divisions for ease in studying
40	B. Accessories
40	C. Head-dress
40	D. Costume types
41	E. Scale for puppets
41	F. Suggestions for sewing
42	G. Special pattern suggestions
44	IX. <u>Springing the Puppet</u>
44	A. Materials used

PUPPETS IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

B. Animals	44
C. The Control Stick	44 (a)
X. <u>Suggested Puppet Types</u>	46
XI. <u>The Stage</u>	48
A. Types of Stage	48
B. Construction of stage	48
C. Floor for stage	50
D. Curtains	50
XII. <u>Stage Lighting</u>	51
A. Uses	51
B. Gelatine colors	52
C. Light effects on costume	52
D. Equipment for puppet stage	52
XIII. <u>Scenery for Puppet Stage</u>	54
A. Three types	55
1. Suspended	55
2. Framed	56
3. Plastic	56
B. Painting scenery for puppet stages	56
C. Appliqued Scenery	57
XIV. <u>Stage Furniture</u>	58
XV. <u>Producing a show</u>	60
A. Selecting the play	60
1. The variety show	60
2. Types for dramatizing	61
B. Adapting a play to puppets	62
C. Directing the production	62
XVI. <u>Conclusion</u>	63
XVII. <u>Bibliography</u>	

44	B. Animals
44	C. The Control Stick
46	X. <u>Suggested Puppet Types</u>
48	XI. <u>The Stage</u>
48	A. Types of Stage
48	B. Construction of stage
50	C. Floor for stage
50	D. Curtains
51	XII. <u>Stage Lighting</u>
51	A. Uses
52	B. Gelatine colors
52	C. Light effects on costumes
52	D. Equipment for puppet stage
54	XIII. <u>Scenery for Puppet Stage</u>
55	A. Three types
55	1. Suspended
56	2. Framed
56	3. Plastic
56	B. Painting scenery for puppet stages
57	C. Applied Scenery
58	XIV. <u>Stage Furniture</u>
60	XV. <u>Producing a show</u>
60	A. Selecting the play
60	1. The variety show
61	2. Types for dramatizing
62	B. Adapting a play to puppets
62	C. Directing the production
63	XVI. <u>Conclusion</u>
	XVII. <u>Bibliography</u>

PUPPETS IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Note:

The terms "puppet" and "marionette" are used interchangeably in this thesis. The term "puppet" is universally accepted for any type of moveable doll or figure, whether controlled by a mitten covering the hand, by strings from above, or by rods from below the stage. Webster's New International Dictionary defines the word "marionette" as follows:

"A puppet moved by strings or by hand, as in a puppet show."

Among persons who are familiar with puppets in all their forms, the term "marionette" is commonly reserved for the type of puppet controlled by strings from above. Since this thesis deals with the latter type only, it seems permissible to use either form.

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VALUES IN THE WORK 6

The value in the work for children of junior high school age depends upon many factors.

FIRST: It coördinates with many of the subjects taught in these grades. It is difficult to name one department as more important than any other in its help in perfecting a puppet show. The English department may be called upon to assist in the dramatization of the plays, and to drill in the delivery of the speeches. Research work and reading in the library will be essential. The history department may supply knowledge of the life, customs, and costumes of the people who are represented. The art department may play a part in the making of the puppet heads, the designing of scenery and properties, and in the costume-design. The sewing department may cooperate in the costume and stage hangings, while the wood-working department will be indispensable in making the puppet bodies, frame work for certain scenery, and the stage itself. The music department will be called upon to supply incidental music. In one junior high school, more fortunate than some others, a broadcasting club supplies the equipment which makes speech of the puppeteers audible in every part of a large auditorium without exertion on the part of the puppeteer.

SECOND: In children's play, thought and emotion control the body. Through such a medium as dramatics in all forms, these thoughts and emotions are crystallized into self-expression which is recognized as beneficial. In the puppet, the child



The Three Bears do Morning Exercises

Coöperative Work



VALUES IN THE WORK

7

sees himself acting. The author has noted numerous instances where a child would lay down his puppet and himself carry on the motion he desired in his small actor, when such motion became too complicated for the puppet as the child controlled it. In fact, a desirable method of training the children for producing a puppet play is to have them first reproduce the action they wish in their puppets. Before the Three Bears could coordinate in their morning setting-up exercises, it was necessary for their three young puppeteers to repeat the exercises in rhythm with the music.

THIRD: In the puppet theatre the whole range of theatrical art can be reproduced on a small scale with costs which are within the reach of a very small income. This makes the puppet-play available to all pupils in school, often at no cost to the majority, while similar stage effects, costumes, and lights on the large stage of the auditorium with boys and girls as actors would be prohibitive in price both to the producing group and to many pupils. So, an appreciation of good theatre may be instilled in boys and girls by means of this tiny theatre with its miniature actors.

FOURTH: In a legitimate stage production in a children's theatre, one of the values claimed is socialized activity. If this is true in such a production, it is even more so in a children's puppet play. Upon the perfect harmony and coöperation of the group depends the success of the play--and the child hardest to discipline in a classroom is often found the most coöperative and resourceful in producing a puppet play. This

ness himself acting. The author has noted numerous instances where a child would lay down his puppet and himself carry on the action he desired to see. This is a very common thing. It becomes too complicated for him to act out the action he desired. In fact, a desirable effect of having the action for producing a puppet play is to have the child understand the action they wish to see. When the child understands the action, it is possible to coordinate the action with the action necessary for their three young puppets to repeat the exercises in rhythm with the music.

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FOURTH: In a legitimate stage production in a children's theatre, one of the values offered is not a single activity. It is true in such a production, it is even more so in a children's puppet play. Upon the puppet play, and cooperation of the group depends the success of the play--but the child hardest to discipline in a classroom is often the most cooperative and resourceful in producing a puppet play. This

VALUES IN THE WORK

8

topic will be fully treated later under the heading: "Producing a Show."

FIFTH: In puppets all the elements of the theatre are combined in tragedy, comedy, music, ballet, mimicry, and burlesque. So, versatility is trained, as well as appreciation of the best in the legitimate theatre and movies of later life-experiences.

FINALLY: Today, more than ever before, the use of leisure time is becoming a problem. Educators the world over are coming fast to recognize that their function is not merely a problem of dispensing wholesale facts, but rather one of character training, education for the use of leisure, and the dispensing of knowledge as to how to obtain facts from proper sources when needed. Psychologists urge self-expression and dramatic action as desirable, since it plays upon the child's native desires. *"The educational problem, then, is not the introduction of the dramatic into the schools--for wherever there is a child, there are dramatic doings--but it is, rather, to get hold of the tendency in some vital, well-organized way, to direct it to something ahead, and to make it a source of mental discipline, bodily control, social consciousness, efficiency, and artistic pleasure. Noting the universality of this instinct and observing the widespread love and delight of old and young in histrionic performances, it is evident that this most spontaneous, deeply rooted, usable mode of study and expression cannot be ignored in education, and that to overlook

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a Show"

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contained in tragedy, comedy, music, ballet, mystery, and
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FINALLY: Today, more than ever before, the use of literature

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VALUES IN THE WORK

9

it is a tremendous waste of power." Therefore, when we introduce work with puppets, we are appealing to one of the most fundamental of the child's interests and desires.

With this in mind, what more valuable training could be given the child for use of leisure than the work with puppets? It develops his dramatic expression, his artistic and creative ability, his appreciation of the best in theatrical and stage effects, his coöperation with his fellow pupils, his altruism in the thought of pleasure for others, and his imagination, for without these factors, there could be no puppet show.

So, aside from the sheer pleasure and play, the child who works with puppets is getting valuable training for the future.

From *"Play-Making and Plays" by John Merrill and Martha Fleming
By permission of The MacMillan Company--1930--
First Edition.



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From "Play-Making and Plays" by John Marshall and Martha Fleming
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 First Edition.

58

FORMING THE CLASS OR CLUB

10.

Choice of Members:

If any choice is given in the selection of members of the club, it should be limited to fifteen persons (less would be preferable) each with some particular talent which would make him a useful contributor. The following qualities are useful in club members:

1. the ability to sew, to aid in costumes and stage hangings;
2. the ability to work with tools, to make puppet bodies, scenery, and the stage itself;
3. some knowledge or special aptitude for modelling and painting faces;
4. originality in artistic design to assist in stage setting;
5. voice control for speaking parts;
6. both boys' and girls' singing voices;
7. a practical knowledge of electricity for stage lighting purposes;
8. a business knowledge, for advertising purposes and detailed work of selling tickets and handling club money;
9. special manual dexterity and sense of rhythm for manipulating puppets;
10. dramatic and literary ability for selecting and arranging plays;
11. talent in the use of solo musical instruments, such as piano, violin, harmonica, etc.

Children can be taught by the simple procedure outlined in the following pages to become more or less "Jacks-of-all-trades" but it is well to have each with some outstanding quality which fits him to handle some special phase of the work when

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FORMING THE CLASS OR CLUB

11

it comes time to produce the puppet play. Often talents which have been unrecognized come to light and in such discovery perhaps lies one of the greatest satisfactions to the club leader.

Procedure at First Meeting:

The club should be organized in a business-like way on a basis of parliamentary procedure. The club leader may act as temporary chairman until one from the membership has been elected. Much experience prompts the suggestion that a chairman be elected only temporarily as it is well to leave a path, for use at the club leader's discretion, by which an unsuccessful chairman may be removed after acquaintance with the group proves both to them and to the leader that some other individual is better fitted to conduct club meetings. Again, experience teaches that only under a business-like and efficient chairman does club business go to a successful conclusion, so an inefficient chairman would better be replaced early in the organization of the group.

Few officers are needed, although it would be well at the first meeting to elect also a temporary secretary and a temporary treasurer. The word temporary is emphasized for the same reasons stated above, in the discussion of the chairmanship of the group.

Several names for the group should be suggested by the leader, but actual choice should be left to a later meeting, as many unique and original names may be found for such an organization when various historical treatises on marionettes

FORMING THE CLASS OR CLUB

12

become familiar to the group. An interesting example of this is found in the title chosen for the Tatterman Marionettes, a professional group, who are rapidly becoming as well known in America as Tony Sarg. *The word "Tattermen" is a German word applied to some of the earliest German puppets.

Following this the meeting may be turned over by the chairman to the club leader who may proceed in one of two ways: i.e., either to give an inspirational talk on the field of puppetry, illustrated by demonstrating several actual puppets, or by beginning at once on the problems of making the puppet. If the latter method is chosen, probably as satisfactory a start as possible can be made by outlining briefly rules for modelling the head, then demonstrating with the modelling of some selected subject, or illustrating by plaster-of paris models which can be obtained inexpensively at artists' supply houses.

Before closing the first meeting, the children should be urged to decide before the next meeting the type of puppet which each will make and to come prepared with pictures cut from magazines or newspapers to act as their guide for the actual modelling. (Full suggestions are given in the following pages for suggested puppet types.) If clay is not available as a club property, each child should provide himself before the second meeting with a pound of plasticene, or similar soft soft modelling clay and an orange-wood stick, or ordinary meat-skewer, which may be obtained at no cost from the local

*"Dolls and Puppets"--Max von Boehn--David McKay Co.



"Along came a Spider"

FORMING THE CLASS OR CLUB

13

meat shop.

This method of proceeding with junior high school groups has been found preferable to selecting a play and building the puppets to fit the selection. There are practical reasons for this. The attention-span of children of this age is too short to encompass the boundaries of a performance consisting of one play of three or more acts. The better way seems to be to have each child select and make his own marionette and then build the show around the completed puppets, making it the variety-type of production. This, of course, leaves the club leader free to suggest definite types of puppet which will appeal to the child who has little or no originality and may add something to the final production which the instructor wishes to have demonstrated.

It was from such a suggestion that the pantomime production of Miss Muffet and the Spider originated on the author's own stage. To a child who was showing little or no progress in club work, a sun-bonnet girl who might be Miss Muffet was suggested. This puppet, the simplest type of cloth doll, was completed and became quite the success of the final production when she appeared in a pink gown against a black background, with a silver spider's web suspended from center stage, and ate her curds and whey from a simple white cup with a silver spoon wound with tinfoil. Finally, in time to the lilting dance music, the silver tinsel-spider descended, and after elaborate maneuvering, with his little lead shoes,--
"sat down beside her
and frightened Miss Muffet away",

most stage.

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with a silver spider's web suggested from center stage, and
she ran curds and whey from a simple white cup with a silver
spoon wound with tinsel. Finally, in time to the lifting dance
music, the silver tinsel-spider descended, and after elaborate
maneuvering, with its little lead shoes,--
"sat down beside her"
and whispered "Miss Butler away."

FORMING THE CLASS OR CLUB

14

and then, heartless creature, proceeded with a self-satisfied tap-dance, until the curtains closed upon his glittering self, with his ten-cent diamond eyes winking farewell to the audience.

Similarly, this leaves to the instructor the freedom to suggest scenes from suitable plays. The present production, in preparation at the moment of writing, includes, for example, a scene from "Peter Pan", and the balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet". The latter is to be caricatured, the actors taking the form of the round-faced youngsters in a familiar household soup advertisement. This will lend an opportunity for subtle humor as well as artistic costume and stage setting, while the play will not become over-serious for the enjoyment of children. After all, one must concede that whatever the puppet's field as an educational means, he is first and foremost a source of entertainment and amusement for young and old alike, and when he is to play to an audience of children, he must not become too tragic an actor.

Suggestive Outline for a Year's Meetings:

The following program is suggestive for a year's work with puppet clubs composed of junior high school boys and girls. It has been found that children of this age work very slowly and that a complete show can hardly be staged before the last week in May. It will doubtless be found necessary to work many hours in addition to the regular club period, if this period is only of the regulation fifty-minute extent.

This program is planned for a thirty-eight week year,

and then, heartless creature, proceeded with a self-satisfied
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 with his feet bent diamond eyes looking forward to the audience.
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FORMING THE CLASS OR CLUB

15

which is the average for a junior high school calendar. The resourceful club leader will vary this to suit local situations. This particular program has been revised after six years of experiment to its present form. For the encouragement of any leader who finds the work dragging during the mid-winter term it is well to remember that professional groups of trained adults seldom try to produce a puppet show in less than a year's time, and many groups will not attempt a show with less than two years' of preparation. This involves often full time work. Therefore the leader of a children's group should not hope to see complete results much previous to the third week in May. By keeping the action simple and centered on the character of the individual puppets, and by depending upon the assistance of stage-settings, lights and music more than is done by professionals, the success of the childrens show is assured.

SEPTEMBER:

1. Election of officers; Introductory talk by leader.
2. Lecture on modelling head, with demonstration.
3. Practice modelling. (It is assumed that child has made a choice for a puppet type.)

OCTOBER:

- 1.)
- 2.)) At least three lessons are usually needed for the
- 3.)) completion of the head models.
4. Demonstration molding of head. Molding of heads for any pupils prepared to work at this.

FORMING THE CLASS OF DIBS

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FORMING THE CLASS OR CLUB

16

NOVEMBER:

1. (Lecture on materials for making heads (papier-mâché plastic wood)
- (Demonstration of making a head.
2. Removing head from mold and combining parts.
3. Lecture on make-up.
4. Painting the heads

DECEMBER:

1. Lecture on planning body proportions
2. Planning body proportions. Perhaps some pupils will be ready at this point to start making bodies.
- 3.) Bodies should be completed and weighted
- 4.)

JANUARY:

1. Lecture on costuming puppets
- 2.) Costumes should be completed
- 3.)
4. Making controls

FEBRUARY:

1. Demonstration stringing of puppet
2. All puppets should be strung
3. By use of phonograph records pupils should practice controlling puppets and working in rhythm.
4. Lecture on scenery. Each pupil should report at next meeting his definite plans for one act with scenery.

MARCH:

1. General discussion and completion of plans for show.

FORMING THE CLASS OF CLUB

NOVEMBER:
1. Lecture on materials for making heads (plastic wood)
(passer-wood)
2. Demonstration of making a head.

3. Removing head from mold and combining parts.
4. Lecture on make-up.
5. Painting the heads

DECEMBER:
1. Lecture on planning body proportions
2. Planning body proportions. Perhaps some pupils will be ready at this point to start making bodies.
3. Bodies should be completed and weighted

4. Bodies should be completed and weighted

JANUARY:

1. Lecture on
2. Costumes
3. Making co

FEBRUARY:

1. Demonstration
2. All puppets
3. By use of
control
4. Lecture
at next
With see

MARCH:

1. General



Cloth marionettes

FORMING THE CLASS OR CLUB

17

MARCH (continued):

- 2.) Making scenery, selecting musical numbers, etc.
- 3.)
4. Rehearsal

APRIL:

- 1.) Rehearsals of individual acts. A definite program should be planned by the leader. Sometimes
- 2.) pupils will work in separate groups in different parts of the club room.
- 3.)
4. Complete rehearsal without lights.

MAY:

1. Lecture on stage lighting and demonstration.
2. Rehearsal with lights.
3. Final rehearsal (others doubtless will be needed)
4. The Final Production.

JUNE:

1. Discussion of points for improvement of future club productions.
2. Lecture on history of puppets.
3. Lecture on famous puppets.

Supplies

A children's song says:

"A strip of wood and a lump of clay
Will be a marionette some day."

This may be interpreted almost literally, for puppets with great charm often materialize from the mere scraps from an old rag-bag, with the assistance of a pen and ink for outlining the features. Such puppets are described briefly in the following pages. However, the puppet which taxes the

MARCH (continued):

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ingenuity of the boy or girl of junior high school age is the wooden-bodied puppet with head of papier-mâché or plastic wood. To make these puppets more tools and equipment are required. Much of the materials may be obtained in ten-cent stores and one set of tools will usually serve the whole club for a number of years, if carefully cared for. The following list will be found useful in the puppet work-shop:

Tools

Coping saw
Coping saw blades
Gimlet or drill
Pliers
Vise
Hammer
Scissors
Modelling stick (or orange-wood stick, or meat skewer)
Knife
Basin or pan)
Spoon) for mixing plaster-of-paris

Nails and Screws

Round head iron machine screws, 1-6-32
" " " " " " , 3/8-6-32
Nails 1 1/4 No. 16
" 1" flat head
" 5/8 No. 20
" 1/4 No. 20 (very difficult to obtain but very useful)
1 package carpet tacks
1 package thumb tacks

Paints

1 can (1/2 pint) gloss white enamel
1 can (1/2 pint) dull finish white
1 tube vermilion red
1 tube black
1 tube yellow ochre
1 tube blue
1 tube green
1 tube brown
1 pint turpentine

Paints (continued)

India ink

Assorted brushes (or if one only is available--No. 4
artists brush)

Miscellaneous supplies

3 ft. of 1/2 inch doweling

small block of soft pine wood or a cigar box

sand-paper (assorted)

adhesive tape

gummed paper

lead weights (or sheet lead)

glue

spool of No. 22 copper wire

two lb. plaster-of-paris

library paste

leather pieces (these may be obtained from a pair
of old kid gloves)

vaseline

black linen carpet thread or fine fish-line (Cuttyhunk
No. VI)

plasticene (not less than one pound)

can of plastic wood (optional--papier mâché may be
substituted)

crepe-hair to suit puppet

cotton for stuffing cloth puppets

Body Proportions

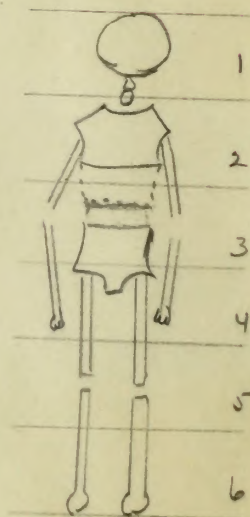
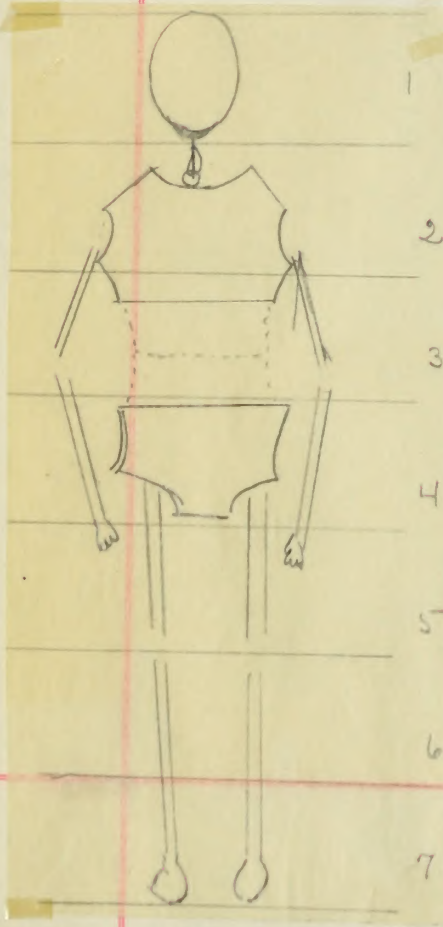
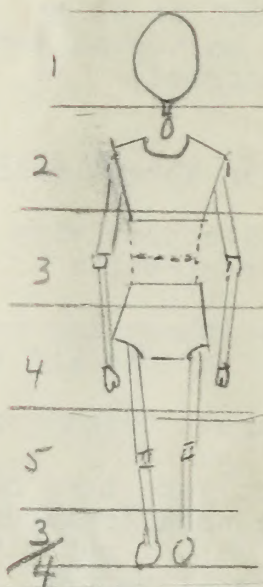
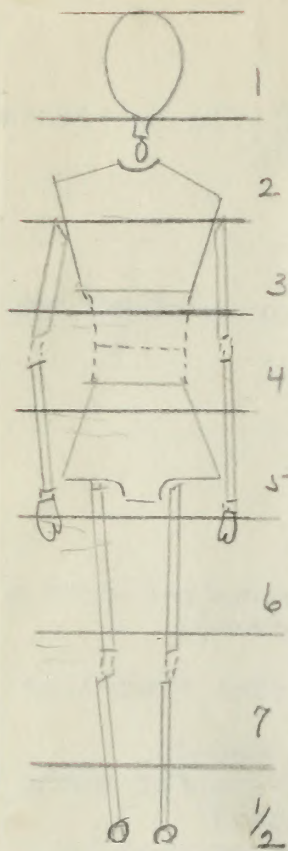
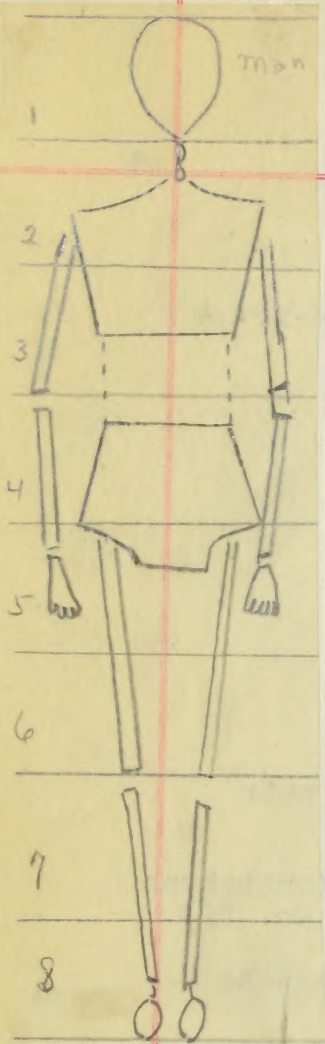
Man

Woman

Child

Alternative Proportions

Woman and Child



MAKING THE PUPPETS

20

With tools at hand and the type of puppet determined, the pupils may either plan the body or make the head. In the author's own work, the pupils usually plan the puppet in general very briefly, and then make the head, leaving details of body planning until the head is completed. However, adult artists whose attention span is not so limited, ordinarily plan the complete puppet before beginning actual work. Since this treatise is prepared with the adult reader in mind, the latter method will be employed in the directions.

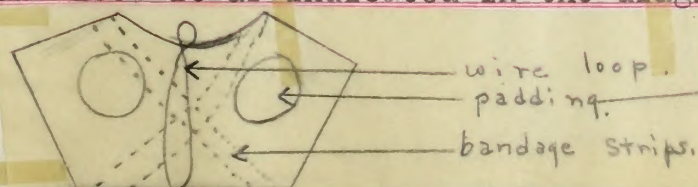
Bodies:Body Proportions

Accurate body proportions would doubtless indicate about eight head-lengths for an adult man, seven and one-half head-lengths for an adult woman, and five and three-quarters head-lengths for a child. The illustration shows this. However, to simplify the matter for children it is easier to make the puppet seven head lengths for an adult man (with head three inches from chin to crown); six head lengths for woman (with head three inches from chin to crown); and child six head lengths (with head not more than two and one-half inches from chin to crown) The illustrations show these proportions.

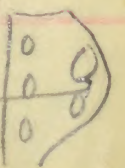
Two types of body may be chosen, either of cloth or of wood.

Cloth Bodies

After body proportions have been established, cut a piece of cardboard the correct size for the chest piece. Take a piece of wire and loop it as indicated in the diagram.



Side view



MAKING THE PUPPETS

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I

A

B

Bodies:

Body Proportions

Accurate body proportions

about eight head-lengths for

head-lengths for an adult woman

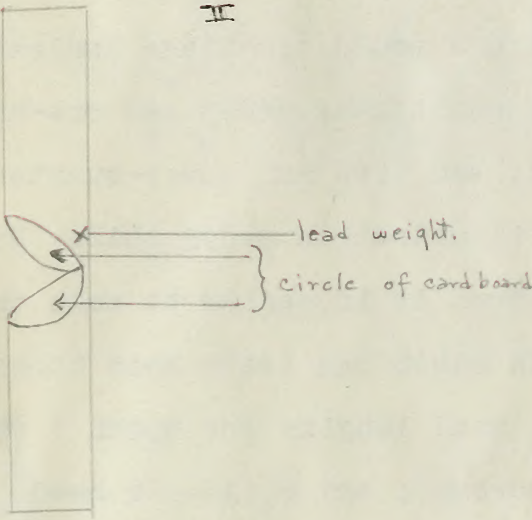
head-lengths for a child. The

to simplify the matter for

puppet seven head lengths for

inches from chin to crown; a

head three inches from chin



II

Pattern for Cloth leg

IV A

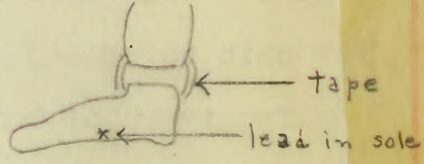
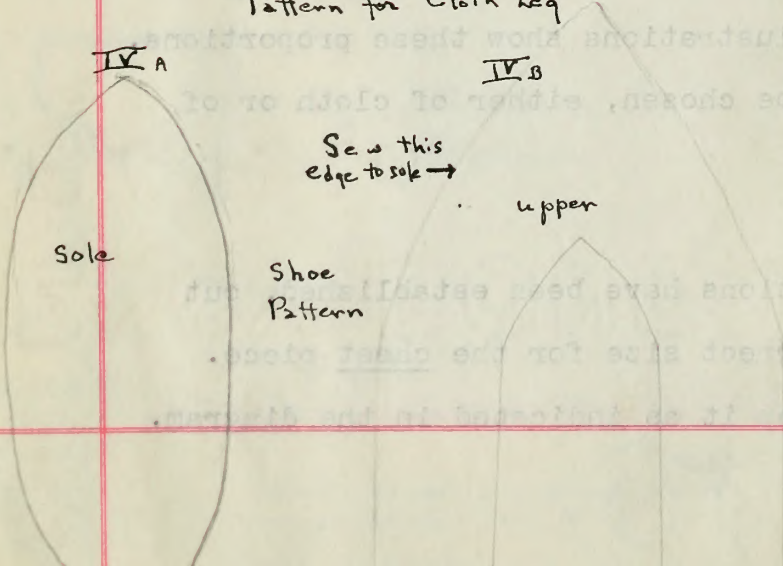
IV B

Sew this
edge to sole →

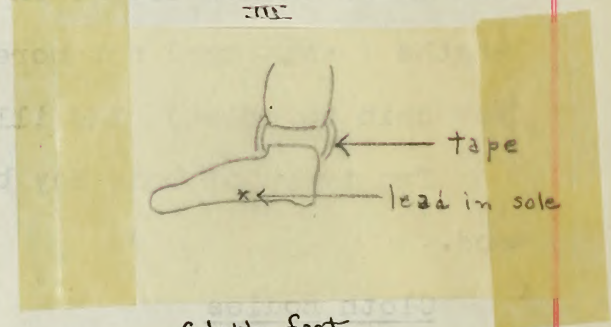
upper

Sole

Shoe
Pattern

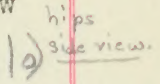


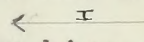
Cloth foot

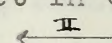


MAKING THE PUPPETS

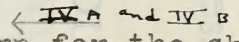
21

Pad this with cloth or cotton and cover with bandage strips or with complete cloth covering. For the hips cut a piece of cardboard the required size. Pad this to give the side view as indicated, for the hips. Weight at O with lead so that the puppet will sit properly and not slide off of his chair. 

Now fasten a band of cloth from chest (A) to hips (B). 

For the legs, cut a piece of cloth about three inches wide and a little longer than the diagram proportions for the legs. Sew this into a tube. Set in circles of cardboard at the knee as indicated in the diagram. This is to prevent the knee from bending forward, thus giving it a natural motion as the puppet walks. Sew a piece of tape at the back also, to add to the natural effect as the puppet walks. (See the diagram ) Add a lead weight at the knee and ankle before stuffing the leg with cotton.

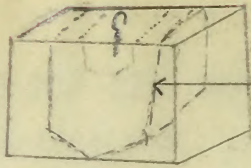
For the arms make a tube of cloth leaving a space of not less than one-half inch at the elbow without stuffing, and weight arm at elbow and wrist with lead shot or a bracelet of sheet lead.

For the foot sew a tape where the foot is bent and put a piece of sheet lead into the soles. The foot should be flexible to seem realistic. The diagram illustrates how this is done. The whole foot may be covered with a stocking or shoe to make it seem natural. A pattern for the shoe is indicated. 

Wooden Bodies

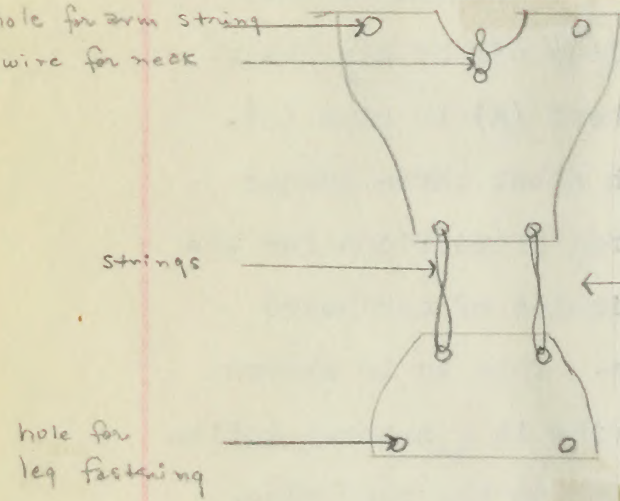
There are several suggestions for wooden bodies.

Soft pine Body



II
outline of plan
for upper section of
wooden body.

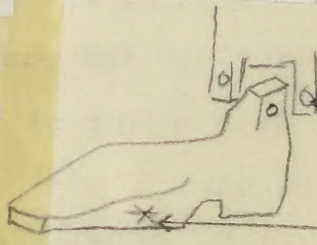
I



Body of wood
from

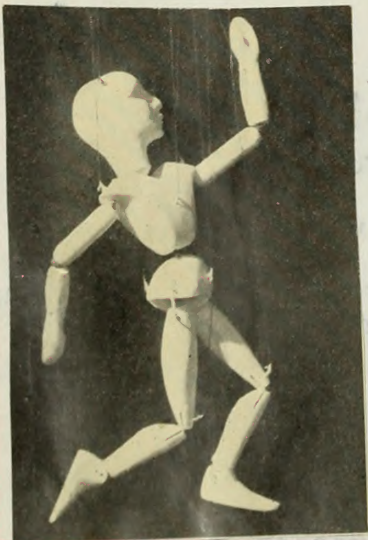
Cigar box

III



fasten with wire
or iron pin.

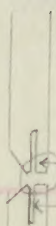
Sheet lead



IV

A Wooden Body
(The Tatterman "Master Marionette")

V



Encircled section should not
be too narrow.
groove for leather joint

MAKING THE PUPPETS

22

If proper saws are not available, cigar-boxes make very satisfactory bodies and are easily worked. If this wood is used it will be well to pad the frame to give the puppet proper chest and hip silhouette. The ^I diagram shows a cigar-box body-frame.

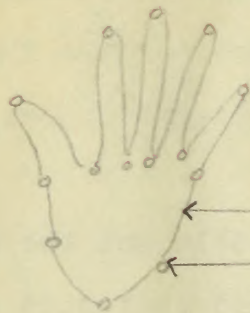
If more elaborate tools are available and the child is able to manipulate them, the ^{II} illustrated body made of soft pine is probably the most satisfactory. (See diagram ^{IV} for completed wooden body.)

For arms and legs, ^V doweling should be used, and cut as indicated. The joints may be made with leather strips set in a groove and nailed with the quarter inch number 20 nails.

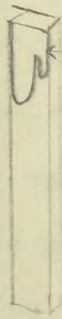
For feet the ^{III} illustrated joint is probably as satisfactory as any. Feet should always have lead soles to add to the realism as the puppet walks.

Hands for either cloth or wooden bodies are probably best when made of wire and crepe paper, and painted with flesh-colored paint. This hand is flexible and realistic and more useful and attractive than carved wooden hands. The hand should measure from base of palm to tip of fingers, the same as from the puppet's chin to the central line of the forehead. If the child measures his own hand holding base of palm to chin, he will recognize this proportion. Small-headed nails are driven into a board in a diagram the required size, and copper wire is twisted from one nail to the next as illustrated to make the frame. This is made firm by reversing the strip of wire and entwining it among the fingers when the frame is completed.

(Illustrated on following page.)



copper wire (no. 20 or 22)
nails



plan for wooden hand

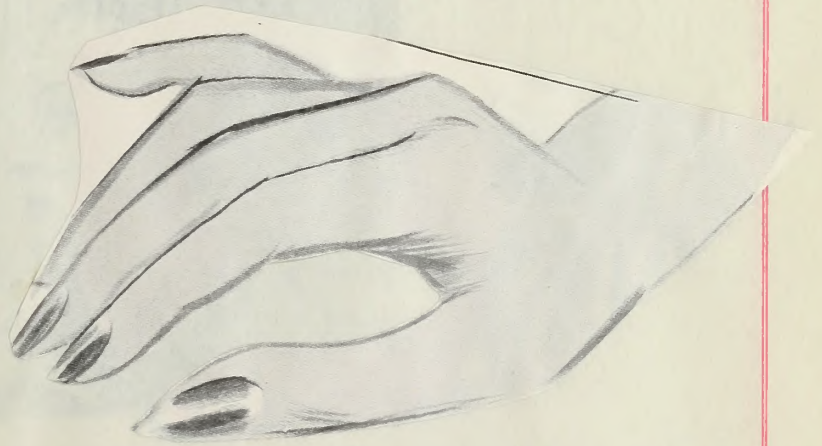
MAKING THE PUPPETS

23

Remove the frame from the nails, and wind with strips of crepe paper one-quarter inch in width. Any color will do, since the whole will be painted with flesh-colored paint, finally. With some practice a very beautiful puppet hand may be produced. The child should be urged to study pictures of hands at all angles and to become thoroughly familiar with the shape of his own hand.

Weights

No puppet will act well unless properly weighted. Unless arms and legs are weighted, the string will raise them easily but they may remain suspended in mid-air in most amusing positions. Weights make both upward and downward movements very realistic. The puppet's seat should be heavily weighted, also. Otherwise, weights in the knees may pull him from any place where he tries to sit and he will become a very helpless fellow.



Remove the frame from the table, and wash with strips of
orange paper one-quarter inch in width. Any color will do,
since the whole will be painted with flesh-colored paint.
Finally, with some practice a very beautiful puppet hand may
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Weights

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Unless arms and legs are weighted, the string will raise them
easily but they may remain suspended in mid-air in most swinging
positions. Weights make both upward and downward movements
very realistic. The puppet's feet should be heavily weighted,
also. Otherwise, weights in the knees may pull him from
any place where he tries to sit and he will become a very
helpless fellow.



MAKING THE PUPPETS

24

Heads:

The modelling clay must first be formed in the general shape of a head. The face may take one of three general shapes: oval, square, or triangular.

In planning the face, it is necessary first to lay out the features.

The eyes should be located half-way between the chin and the top of the head. The total width between the eyes is an eye width.

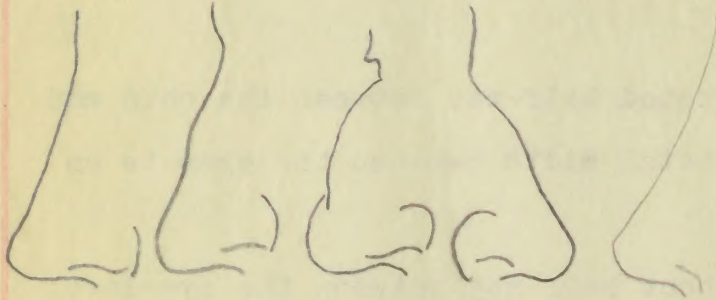
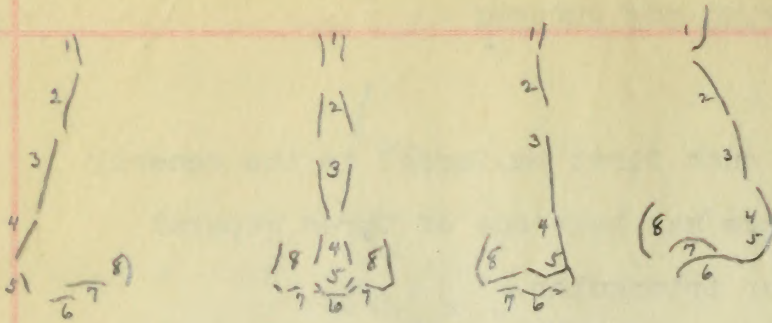
The nose is located about half-way between the eye-level and the chin while

the mouth is slightly higher than half-way between the nose and the chin.

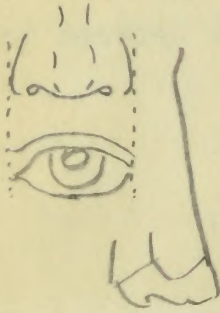


1/2

nose Structure



An eye with between the wings of the nose



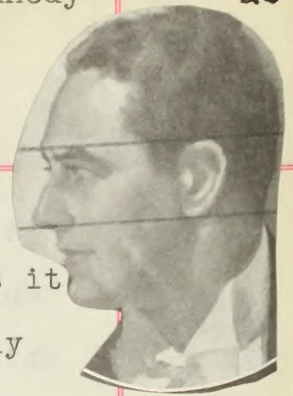
Copied from plates issued by Boston Normal
School

Car Detail



MAKING THE PUPPETS

In judging the lay-out for the profile, the ear is opposite the eyebrow and the nose. In most women's heads it is not necessary to consider the ear since this is usually concealed by the hair. With junior high school pupils, successful results have been obtained by advising them to omit the ear in modelling the clay and add it to the completed head later with plastic wood, if necessary.

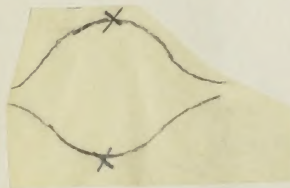


The modelled nose should be narrow at the bridge. There is a depression where the nose starts, which rises in a bridge-work of flesh under the eyes, and extends up over the nose. The illustration will make this point clear. Nose structure is best described by illustrations.

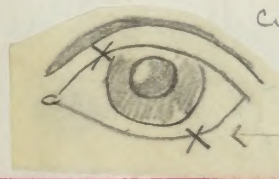


Depression
saddle of flesh

The eye is always difficult for the beginner to model. If sufficient study is made to have him realize that the curves in upper and lower lids do not come directly in a perpendicular line, thus:



but rather at an angle, thus:



Curves in upper and
lower lids

MAKING THE PUPPET

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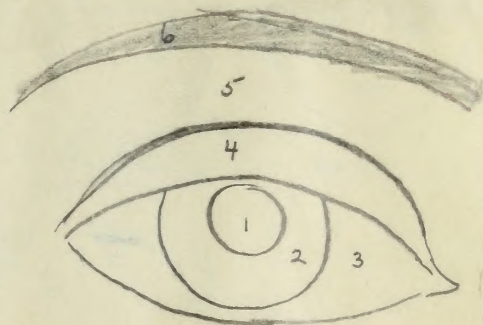
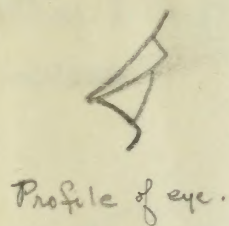
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but rather at an angle, thus:

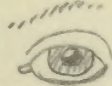
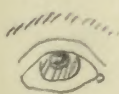
MAKING THE PUPPETS

26

his main difficulty will be eliminated. Simple drawings such as the accompanying, study of the eye structure of his club mates, and study of magazine pictures will help to establish the conception of the eye details.

Eye Structure

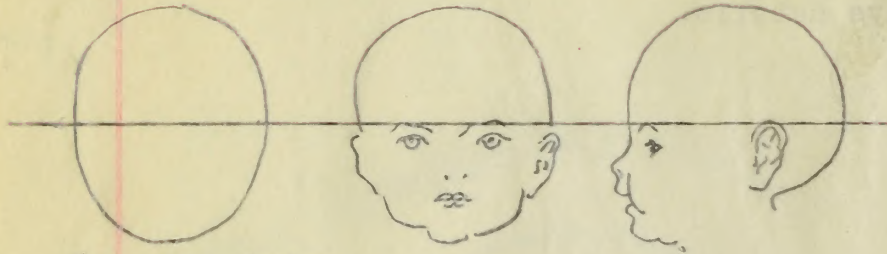
1. Pupil
2. Iris
3. White
4. Upper lid
5. Brow indentation
6. Eye brow.



The width of an eye
between the eyes,

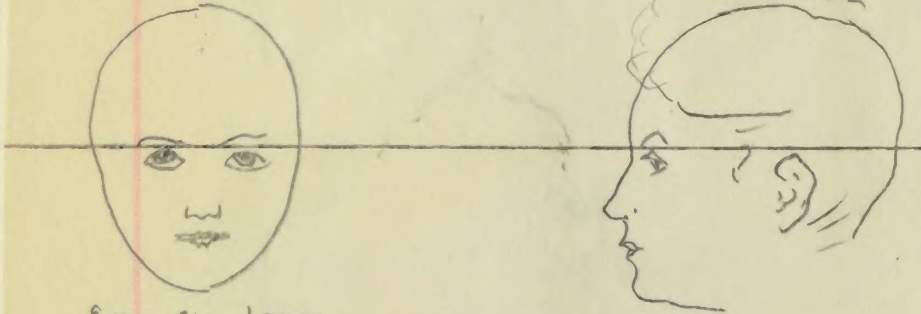


his main difficulty will be eliminated. Simple drawings such as the accompanying study of the eye structure of his club mates, and study of magazine pictures will help to establish the conception of the eye



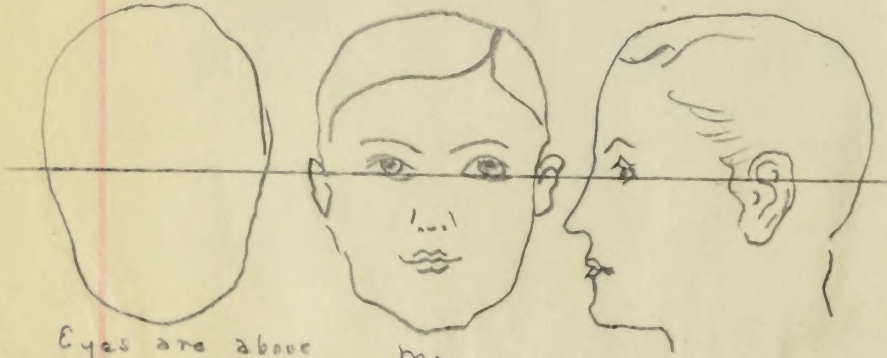
Eyes are below
median line

BABy



Eyes are lower
than median line

woman



Eyes are above
the median line

man



MAKING THE PUPPETS

Mouth modelling will be the child's simplest problem, and usually sufficient study of illustrations and life models are all that he needs.

General age and sex comparisons will help the beginner as the accompanying illustrations show. In an infant the eyes are below the median line, in a woman slightly higher, and in a man above the median.



MAKING THE PUPPETS

Mouth modeling will be the child's simplest problem, and usually sufficient study of illustrations and life models are all that he needs.

General eye and sex comparisons will help the beginner as the accompanying illustrations show. In an infant the eyes are below the median line, in a woman slightly higher, and in a man above the median.

ONE
BOY

THE
HOSPITAL

THE
HOSPITAL

SECTION

THE
HOSPITAL

THE
HOSPITAL

THE
HOSPITAL

THE
HOSPITAL

THE
HOSPITAL

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HOSPITAL

THE
HOSPITAL

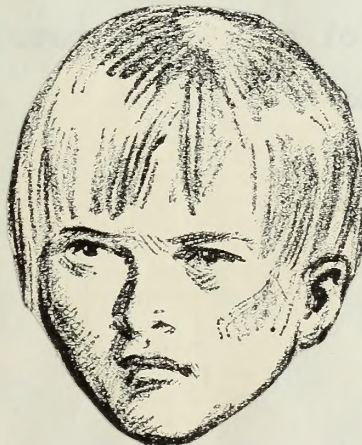
MAKING THE PUPPETS

28

Expressions are in general obtained by emphasizing ^Istraight lines for serenity, ^{II}downward lines for sadness, and ^{III}upward lines for humor or impishness. Wide-open eyes indicate surprise, fear, or horror.



I



II



III

Expressions are in general obtained by emphasizing
straight lines for ^Iserenity, downward lines for sadness, and
upward lines for ^{II}anger or ^{III}insolence. Wide-open eyes indicate
surprise, fear, or horror.



II

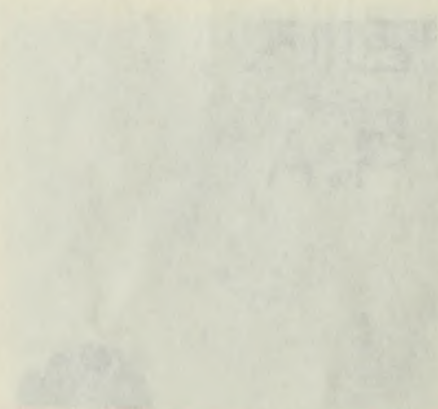
Seeing an Eclipse

For several further val-
ues of an eclipse of the
Moon at the South Pacific
Islands, spectroscopes,
and giant cameras to learn
the new facts, 25,000,000
were hoped to find out more
about the light rays
emitted by the sun.

mo-
del
Pass
able
Fury
I am
happy
Eyes

II

III



MAKING THE PUPPETS

29

Not enough can be said to urge the beginner to collect all kinds of illustrative material from newspapers, magazines, Christmas cards, and advertising matter, so that he may have an endless source of suggestions as to:

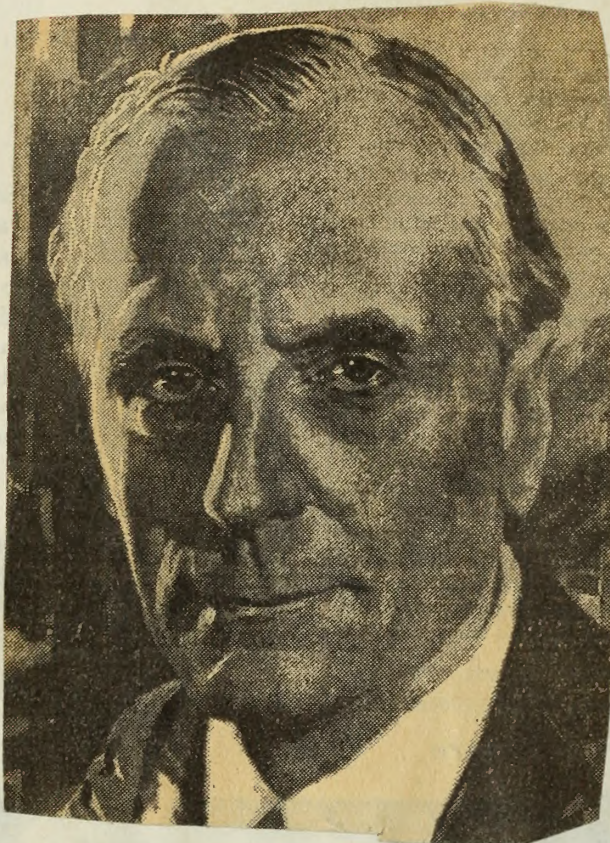
1. facial angles
2. women's heads
3. men's heads
4. infant's heads
5. young children's heads, both
 - A. Girls
 - B. Boys

These are all illustrated in the following pages to show the value which may be derived from pictures.

Facial Angles







...the
...through
...service of
...did not
...want to
...Niederwald.
...were
...British Ex-
...by a
...Wife on May

ERID SUNDR
of Red Cross and









Clay models



The Clay model Prepared for Covering
with Plaster of Paris.



MOLDING THE HEAD

33

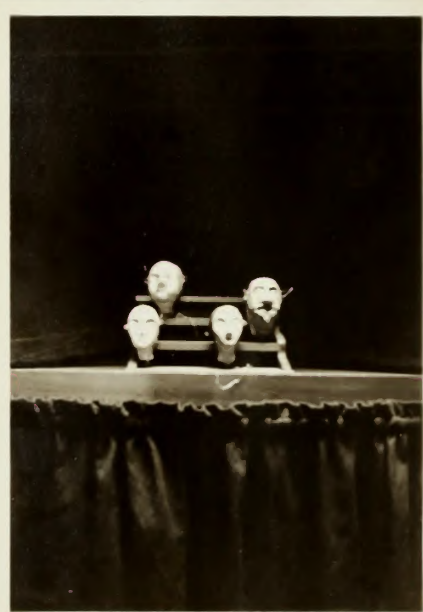
After the head has been modelled from plasticene or other similar material, it should be cut through a line extending from the top of the head through the neck, about half way from front to back. If ears have been included in the model, the line may go just in front or just in back of the ear. This cutting can be best accomplished by using a piece of linen carpet thread or fine wire.

The two parts of the head are then placed, cut side down, on a box cover, old tin pan, or piece of cardboard. Then the head, and surrounding surface of cardboard is thoroughly greased. Liquid vaseline proves excellent for this, but the vaseline paste serves the purpose. If the latter is used, care should be taken that it does not fill in fine openings in the modelled clay so that the plaster-of-paris cannot penetrate.

Finally, plaster-of-paris, mixed to a thin paste, is poured over the head, and allowed to dry for from eighteen to twenty-four hours. Then the plasticene is removed and the mold is ready to be used when it has been thoroughly greased with the vaseline.

After the head has been modeled, the neck is extended
slightly, to show the neck, the neck extending
from the top of the head down to the half way
from front to back. It is extended in the model,
the line goes just in front of the ear. This
outline can be best accomplished by using a piece of linen

Four Completed Heads



The two parts of the
on a box cover, old tin
the head, and surrounding
pressed. Liquid vaseline
vaseline paste covers the
care should be taken that
in the modeled clay so
generate.
Finally, plaster-of-
poured over the head, and
to twenty-four hours. The
is ready to be used when it has been thoroughly pressed
with the vaseline.

MATERIALS USED FOR HEADS

34

The most successful material is plastic wood. This however is somewhat expensive, and if cost is an essential item to be considered by the child, it may be prohibitive. If plastic wood is used, the head will be sufficiently firm if the mold is lined with a layer from one-fourth to one-half inch in thickness. This should be allowed to dry over night. Usually it will be easily removed. Sometimes it is necessary to trim the edge of the mold with a safety-razor blade to successfully remove the head. If the head still clings to the mold, the best way of separating it is to place the mold on a firm surface and hit it one or two sharp blows with a hammer. This will crack the plaster-of-paris so that the head will come out easily. Since two puppets alike are seldom needed or desired, the cracked mold is no loss. If plastic-wood seems too expensive to the child, he may use papier-mâché made in one of two ways:

A. Strips of paper are torn from one to two inches long, and from one-half to one inch in width. Brown paper bags are excellent material for this, and paper towels are satisfactory. These strips may be soaked in a pan of water and then removed to a blotter or other absorbing surface. A mixture of paper-hanger's paste is prepared previously. Then the mold is carefully lined with a layer of paper, one side of which has been covered with paste. Over this is put another layer of paper, and so on, until the mold is lined to the depth of one-half inch with layers of paper and paste. The mold may be placed on a radiator, or in a very slow oven, until the

The most successful material is plastic wood. This however is somewhat expensive, and it must be an essential item to be considered by the architect, it may be prohibitive. If plastic wood is used, the head will be sufficiently firm if the mold is lined with a layer from one-fourth to one-half inch in thickness. This should be allowed to dry over night. Usually it will be easily removed. Sometimes it is necessary to trim the edge of the mold with a sharp razor blade to successfully remove the head. It is not difficult to the mold, the best way of separating it is to place the mold on a fine surface and lift it up on the edge with a hammer. This will break the bond of the head to that the head will come out easily. Since the plastic is so seldom needed or desired, the construction is as follows. If plastic wood seems too expensive to the architect, the paper-bag made in one of two ways:

A. Strips of paper are laid from one to two inches long and from one-half to one inch in width. Brown paper bags are excellent material for this, and paper bags are satisfactory. These strips may be soaked in a pan of water and then removed to a blotter or other absorbing surface. A mixture of paper-bag paste is prepared previously. Then the mold is carefully lined with a layer of paper, one side of which has been covered with paste. Over this is put another layer of paper, and so on, until the mold is lined to the depth of one-half inch with layers of paper and paste. The mold may be placed on a radiator, or in a warm place over, until the

MATERIALS USED FOR HEADS

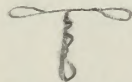
35

Water has completely evaporated from the papier-mâché. The head will usually shrink in this drying process so that it is easily removable.

B..Papier mâché may be mixed also by crumpling and soaking it in water over night. Then it should be torn in fine bits or rubbed to a pulp on a washboard. After it is sufficiently fine, it should be put in an old turkish towel to absorb as much water as possible. A paper-hanger's paste, of the consistency of chocolate-pie filling should be mixed with the paper in the proportion of two parts of pulp to one part of paste. If the mixture falls apart, more paste is needed; if it seems too sticky, more pulp is required. The well-greased mold should then be lined with a layer of the paste-and-pulp mixture to a thickness of one-half inch or more.

This type of papier-mâché is such that heads may be modelled directly from the mixture provided the club leader is satisfied with a more or less caricature type of head, as this mixture does not allow the careful modelling that plasticene permits.

When the two parts of the head have been removed from the mold, the edges are trimmed with a sharp knife or safety-razor blade to make them fit fairly smoothly together. A strip of copper wire, bent as illustrated is then placed between them and the crack cemented with plastic wood or papier-mâché.



When this has been dried, the puppet head may be attached to

Water has completely evaporated from the paper-mache. The head will usually break in this drying process so that it is easily removable.

B. Paper mache may be mixed also by crumpling and soaking it in water over night. Then it should be torn in thin bits or rubbed to a pulp on a washboard. After it is sufficiently fine it should be put in an old turkish towel to a size as much water as possible. A paper-mache's head, of the consistency of chocolate filling should be mixed with the paper in the proportion of two parts of pulp to one part of paste. If the mixture falls apart, more paste is needed; if it seems too sticky, more pulp is required. The well-pressed mold should then be lined with a layer of the paste-and-pulp mixture to a thickness of one-half inch or more.

This type of paper-mache is such that heads may be modelled directly from the mixture provided the mold is rather well saturated with a more or less certain type of head, as this mixture does not allow the careful modelling that plasticine permits.

When the two parts of the head have been removed from the mold, the edges are trimmed with a sharp knife or safety razor blade to make the fit fairly smooth together. A strip of paper wire, bent as illustrated is then placed between them and the cracks cemented with plastic wood or paper-mache.

When this has been tried, the puppet head may be attached to

MATERIALS USED FOR HEADS

36

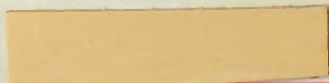
the body, and the costume started; or the face may be painted at once. It is quite possible to protect the puppet's costume by wrapping it in tissue paper so that the paint will not touch it. On the other hand, with children, paint is treacherous, so the author finds make-up best done immediately after the head is completed and before it is attached to the body at all.



Contrasting Skin-tone



From
Saturday
Evening
Post.



Samples of paint mixed for Skin-tone

PAINTING THE PUPPET

37

The materials as listed previously (see page 18) include turpentine, points, and brushes. In addition a piece of window glass may be used for a pallet if one is not available. A smock or large apron is essential.

The skin paint should first be mixed. This is made by starting with a base of white paint and mixing into it a little red, a little yellow, and a touch of blue. For women, mix a light skin-tone, for men, a darker one. White enamel house paint is desirable as a base because the gloss catches stage lights and gives animation to the puppet's face. Some puppet-makers prefer a dull paint, and in this case flat white may be chosen.

After the skin-tone has been established, the entire head should be covered with it. Next the rouge should be applied.

A slight addition of blue to the vermilion makes a more natural coloring. A spot of this should be added high on the cheek bone and then blended into the cheek. The little finger is a most useful aid in blending the rouge with the skin-tone. (One cannot be too fastidious about personal appearance in working with puppets.)

In eye make-up, a shadow area should be placed over the upper lid and beneath the brow line. This shadow should be deepest over the eye and should blur off at the edge farthest from the nose. A sharp edge of color should be kept near the nose and may even extend down the side of the nose. For a blonde puppet, blue shadows are best; for a brunette, an olive green; and for a puppet with jet black hair, dark purple or

Make-up



Note Eye-shadow, Rouge, Brow.

I



Note White Spot in Eye

II

PAINTING THE PUPPET

38

brown depending on the costume. Brown may be made by mixing red, yellow, and green.

The brow should be lined with brown or dull grey for a blond, but never with black. A brunette may have a dark brown or nearly black brow, while black is reserved for puppets with jet black hair. The brow should start very dark at the beginning and then be gradually lined off. This may be accomplished either by gradually narrowing the line as it goes away from the nose, or by blending it off into the flesh tone. The lower lid should have a dark line near the nose but this should be tapered and should not go the full eye width.

The iris of the eye may be made blue with a darker blue or black spot at the center. Sometimes the color is outlined with a lighter line. The iris should not be made a complete circle unless the puppet is to show surprise or fright, but should be partly concealed by the lid.

One of the most effective means of giving life to the eye is the addition of a white spot to catch the light.

PAINTING THE PUPPET

39

The mouth make-up should have the upper lip darker than the lower. This can be accomplished by mixing a tone and putting it over the whole mouth, then adding a darker tone to the upper lip. This makes the blending natural.

Nostrils should not be emphasized on a woman. They add severity if added to a man's make-up.

3. The lips: Any lip suspension evolved from this part of the costume. In Egyptian costume this was short and stiff, made of a light material, and held in place by a band. In later times the lips were made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The lips were made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The lips were made of a light material, and held in place by a band.

4. The eyes: Any outer rim, light or dark, was used to define the eyes. The eyes were made of a light material, and held in place by a band.

5. The hair: Any hair was made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The hair was made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The hair was made of a light material, and held in place by a band.

6. The head-dress: Any head-dress was made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The head-dress was made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The head-dress was made of a light material, and held in place by a band.

7. The neck: Any neck was made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The neck was made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The neck was made of a light material, and held in place by a band.

8. The arms: Any arms were made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The arms were made of a light material, and held in place by a band. The arms were made of a light material, and held in place by a band.

- | | | |
|------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. King | 2. Noble Class | 3. Soldier |
| 4. Peasant | 5. Character Type | 6. Example - Every |
| 7. Animals | | |

The mouth make-up should have the regular lip-line, and the
lower. This can be accomplished by using a fine wet brush
it over the whole mouth, then adding a darker tone to the
upper lip. This makes the lips look natural.
Mouths should not be emphasized on a woman. They are
seldom if added to a man's make-up.

COSTUME

40

For ease in studying costume it may be divided into three parts:

A. The tunic: This may include any garment suspended from the shoulders. The Greeks made a complete garment of this. From the tunic evolved the blouse of the Russian, the surplice of the early Byzantine, and the bodice in more recent costume. The tunic usually appears in indoor costume.

B. The Loin Cloth: Any hip suspension evolves from this part of the costume. In Egyptian costume this was short; Indian peoples developed from this a short skirt, while the Hindu tied and knotted a sash in front. In Medieval times the skirt appeared, while in Japan this was modified to wide trousers. The French bagged the trousers at the top, while tights bagged at the top graced early English costume.

C. The Mantle: Any outer garment, cloak or cape may be included in this part of the costume.

Accessories:

Accessories to be considered are such things as shoes, fans, jewelry, snuff-boxes, etc.

Head-Dress:

Head-dress includes wigs, hennins, and hats.

Costume Types:

Costume types may be grouped under

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|--|
| 1. King | 3. Middle Class | 5. Soldierly |
| 2. Nobility | 4. Peasant | 6. Character Types
(Example--faery) |
| | 7. Animals | |

EFFICIENCY BOND

A. S. R. CO.

Y BOND

EFFICIE

R. CO.

A. S. R. CO.

COSTUME

41

Scale for Puppets:

The scale for puppets must be small enough to fit them. All buttons, jewelry and patterns in cloth must be planned in proportion to the little actor who is to wear them. No accessory or toy should be selected merely because it is perfect in shape and attractive to look at. If a puppet uses the most perfect toy telephone, it is useless provided it does not correspond to his own scale of being. Thus costume accessories must be suitable in size.

Any cloth is coarse for puppets. Therefore one would not select burlap, but rather linen for a peasant's costume. One would not choose rajah silk, but more delicate silk for the queen, for heavy silk gives heavy folds all out of proportion to the puppet who wears the costume. Folds should be tacked to make them smaller. Wrinkles should be sewed in a sleeve. In a head-dress a veil should fall in miniature folds. A costume may be dyed or wet to dry in correct lines.

To make cloth designs small enough for the puppet, a design may be planned to scale, then cut out with manicure scissors and pinned to the cloth to be used. This should all be pinned to a newspaper. Then, with a tooth-brush or an atomizer the dye may be sprayed over the stencil.

Suggestions for sewing:

No part should be hemmed which can be left unhemmed as all hems tend to become stiff when done on scales to fit the puppets. The edge of the costume may be cut by a drawn thread and then fringed a little. If a hem is used, a toy chain may

Scale for Puppets:

The scale for puppets must be small enough to fit them. All buttons, jewelry and patterns in cloth must be planned in proportion to the little actor who is to wear them. No accessory or toy should be selected merely because it is perfect in shape and attractive to look at. If a puppet uses the most perfect toy telephone, it is useless provided it does not correspond to his size. The same rule applies to all accessories must be small.



Any cloth is chosen for the puppet, but the designer must not select anything that would not choose for heavy silk. The puppet who wears the costume must be able to move. To make the smaller, bottom must turn easily. In a head-dress a veil should fall in miniature folds. A costume may be dyed or wet to dry in correct lines. To make cloth designs small enough for the puppet, a designer may be planned to scale, then cut out with miniature scissors and pinned to the cloth to be used. This should all be planned to a newspaper. Then, with a foot-brush or an atomizer the dye may be sprayed over the stencil.

Suggestions for Sewing:

No part should be hemmed which can be left unhemmed as all have tend to become stiff when done on scales to fit the puppets. The edge of the costume may be cut by a drawn thread and then fringed a little. If a tie is used, a toy chain may

COSTUME

42

be sewn in to add weight and suppleness to the edge so that it will fall in natural-looking folds, and not stick out in ugly lines.

Pieces of paper or cloth should be cut to try size and fit of costume before the actual material is cut. If the marionette has a cloth body, sleeves may be sewn directly to the body and not fastened to the armhole to allow free motion of the arm. If the puppet body is of wood, of course the sleeve must be put in the arm-hole. This should be large enough to permit the arm to move freely. Sometimes it is necessary to sew the shoulder seams after the costume is on the puppet, to insure perfect fit. The sleeve must allow ample room for the arm to bend. The most common error made by persons inexperienced in puppetry is to make costumes so tight that motion is hampered. Only a freely-moving puppet can act. M O T I O N, in capital letters, must be emphasized.

A special trousers pattern for puppets is illustrated as trousers seem the most difficult part of a costume to make.



$AB = \frac{1}{2}$ puppet waist.

$AC =$ waist to lower join.

$BD =$ longer than AC and sloping.
Length of waist to crotch.

$E - F = \frac{1}{2}$ width of trousers.

Sew A to C first.

Sew B to D second.

Then start at bottom of left leg and sew right around.

Costume Ideas.



COSTUME

43

To summarize costumes:

They must be made to scale in material, design, accessories, and fit; and must be made very loose to permit perfect freedom of movement for the tiny characters who wear them. Studying the costume and planning it adds much to the child's historical knowledge, idea of color, and sense of proportion. Boys have been successful to a marked degree in planning and making their own puppet costumes, but the author does not insist that this part of the work be done by boys, since some have little or no talent and others find excellent and efficient cooperation at home.



STRINGING THE PUPPET

44

The completed puppet should be stretched out at full length on a long table or on the floor. Strings should then be attached to each leg at the knee, to the puppet's wrists, to the puppet's shoulders (so that they clear the outside edges of the head) and to the wires in the head. Finally, a thread should be inserted in the back just above the waist. Carpet thread is satisfactory if the puppet is not too heavy. If it is an unusually heavy puppet, fish-line may be used; Guttyhunk, No. 6 is satisfactory. If thread is used, it is well to choose a color harmonizing with the background against which the puppet is to appear. Black is generally satisfactory, although against a light background, a grey or white thread is preferable.

If the puppet is to engage in unusual action, such as fanning, or using a feather duster, extra strings are needed. A bead or metal ring attached to special strings will make it easier for the amateur to control "trick" action. The strings from the head wires should be at least 25 inches above the puppet's head and the others should be stretched to this limit. A taller child may use longer strings on his puppet.

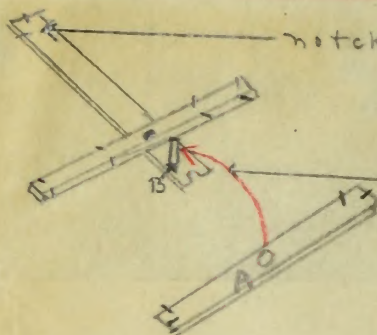
Animals should have two strings in the back and others where needed. These may extend to ears, to tail, or to legs. For young children, animals with stationery legs are more easily controlled than animals with moveable legs; so dogs and cows must jump and hop onto the stage if they are to create amusing ear, head, and tail motion later, because the child's whole attention must be centered on the latter when it occurs

The Simple Type of Control

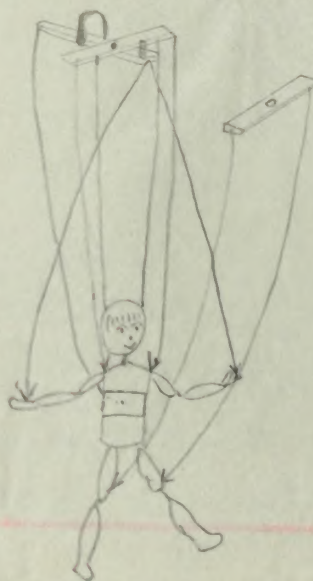
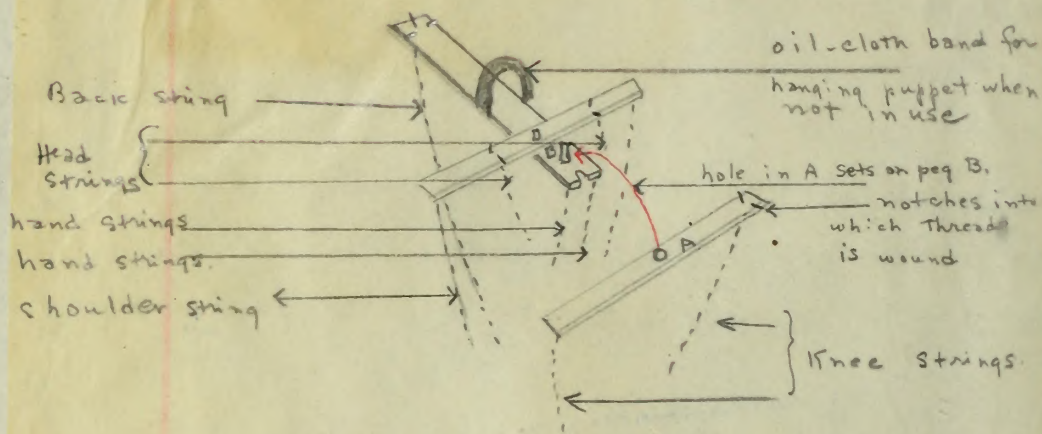
See page 45

I

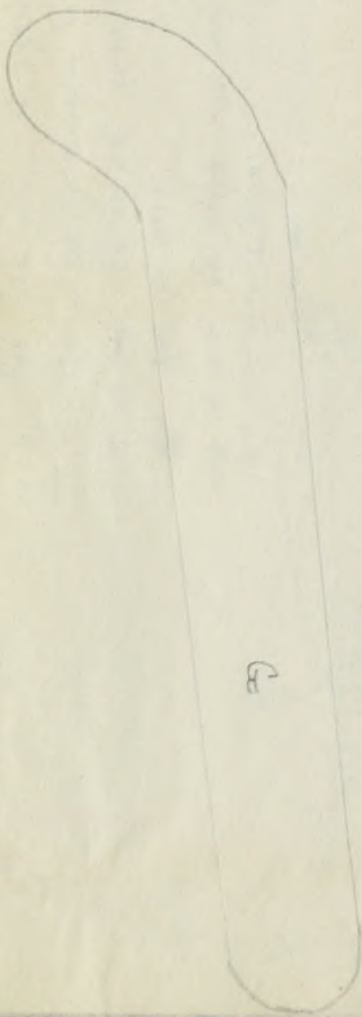
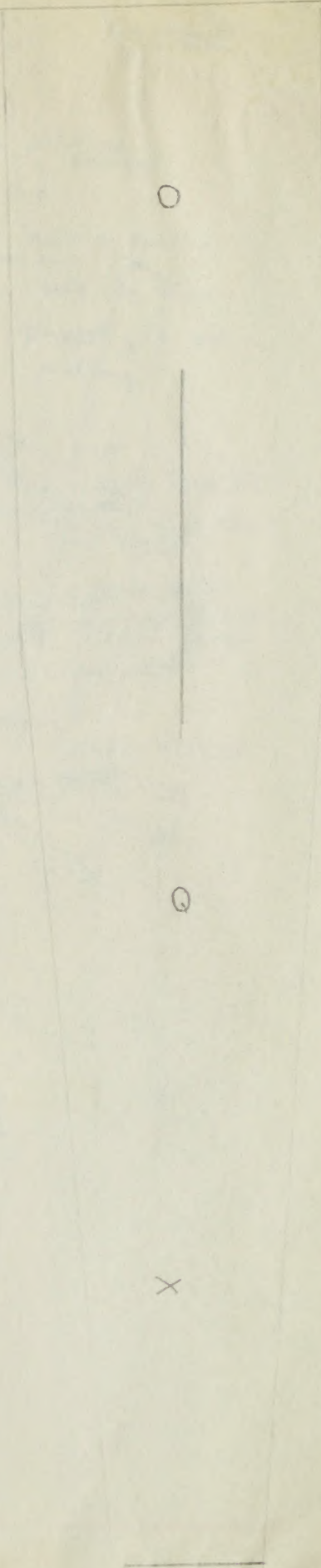
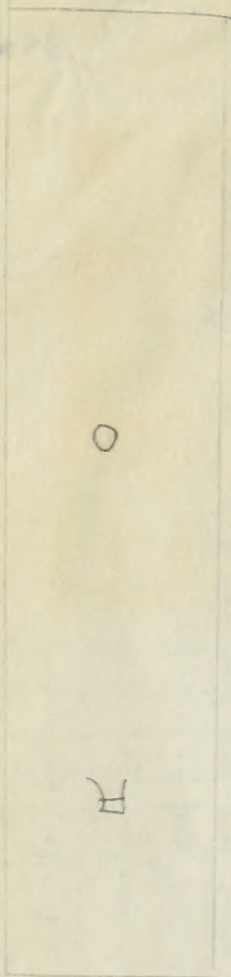
notches for holding strings.



hole A sets on
peg B when
puppet is not
walking.



Pattern for Control II



CONTROL

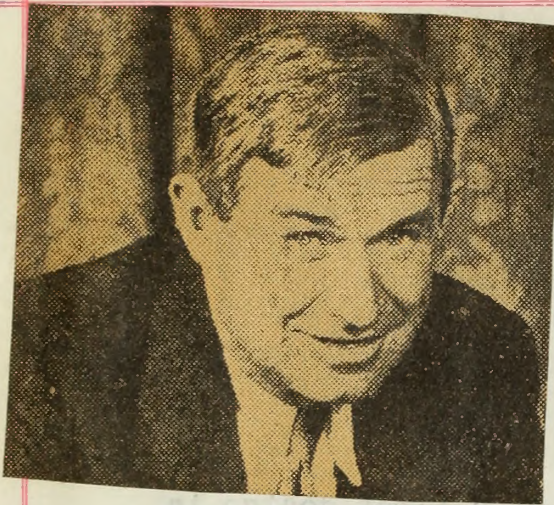
45

and if the puppet's legs are jointed the animal may find himself stretched flat on the stage before he can wag his tail!

The Control Stick may be a very simple one as illustrated in I or the more complicated design in II which allows free head motion.

For children of the age in question, the first design is entirely satisfactory and much easier to make. The strings should be wound in and out of narrow slits in the wood and should not be knotted into holes or screw eyes as is often advocated. The latter method often demands stopping the show if a puppet becomes tangled, while with the former method a few minutes will straighten out a badly-tangled puppet in the hands of an experienced club leader.

One summer's day, when Stevie-boy
And little Betsy Ann
Were romping in the meadow green



Type B



← Type II

Type E →



Type E

SUGGESTED PUPPET TYPES

46

Junior high school children are not always original, but they are excellent imitators. It will be necessary, therefore, for the club leader to have at hand numerous suggestions for the type of puppet which will be interesting or amusing to make. The club leader will need a number of pictures to suggest ideas to the child.

The following list, when illustrated as they may easily be by newspaper and magazine clippings, make splendid thought topics:

A. Well-known persons from history:

Examples: Washington
Lincoln
Joanne of Arc

B. Well-known persons in the present day:

Examples: Will Rogers
Ed Wynne
Greta Garbo

C. Characters from literature:

Examples:	Ichabod Crane	Peter Rabbit
	Three Bears	Lady Macbeth
	Evangeline	Alice in Wonderland
	Peter Pan	

D. Mother Goose Characters:

Examples: Humpty Dumpty
Little Miss Muffet

E. Pictures from Newspapers and Magazines:

Examples: Any pictures which are of typical puppet types.

F. Cartoon Characters:

Examples: Mickey Mouse
Mutt & Jeff
Buster Brown Uncle Sam





SUGGESTED PUPPET TYPES

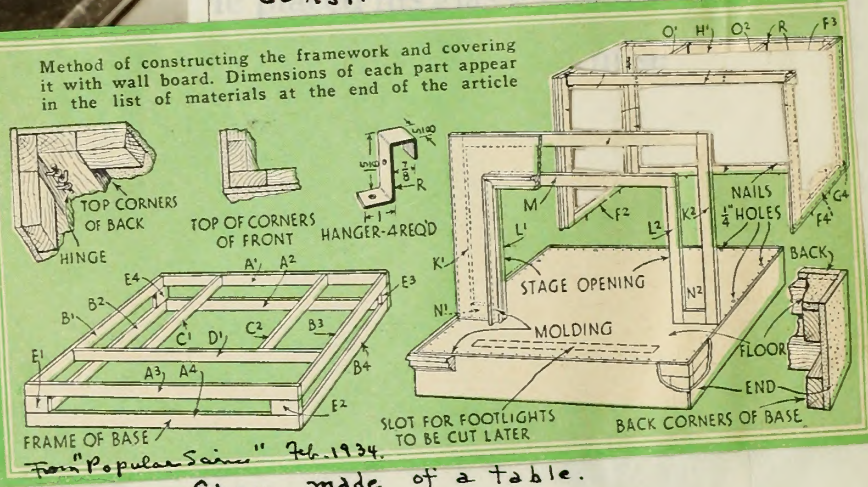
47

G. Animal Puppets:

Examples: Hen
Cat
Dog
Monkey
Elephant
Alligator



Method of constructing the framework and covering it with wall board. Dimensions of each part appear in the list of materials at the end of the article



Stage made of a table.

(Note:
Diagram changed to suit
needs of Puppets)

THE STAGE

48

Types of Stage:

The simplest stage may be made in the doorway between two rooms. A drapery may be hung from the top of the door to within two feet of the floor. About two feet back of the door a soap box with two poles may be placed. Across the poles hangs a light drapery. The actors stand on the box.

If no box is available, two chairs may be turned back to the audience and a drapery hung across the backs.

A hat rack is needed to suspend puppets when not in use. A simple rack for hanging puppets which may be suspended from two hooks is illustrated.

A satisfactory stage may be devised by two tables and a folding screen. One table must be strong enough to hold the puppeteers, the other may be a card table and the folding screen may be placed between them. The card table may be placed in a door way and some light drapery suspended from the top of the door-way well below the top of the screen. A piano bench may be substituted for the card table and two chairs may be backed up to it to hold the puppeteers. If this is done, a curtain must be suspended from the backs of the chairs to the floor to hide the puppeteers from the audience.

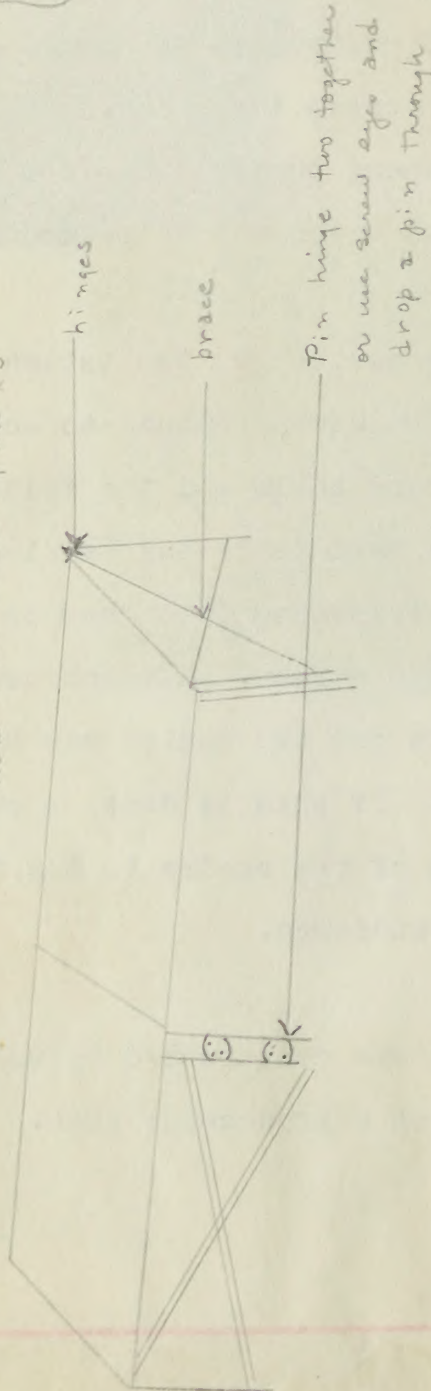
Construction of Moveable Stage:

The stage in the photograph was constructed by using the frame of an old black-board as a proscenium arch.

Platform construction

Wood 2 in. wide, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick. Hinged on inside
make in two sections 4' X 2' X 3'

{ make top of 2 series
of boards. Use wooden cleats to which
to nail boards. This will keep
platform rigid.




THE STAGE

49

Over this was placed beaver board which was painted a neutral beige. A rope was used for proscenium decoration and painted with gilt paint to give a festive, theatrical appearance. The hemp absorbs sufficient paint to dull the gilt color so it is not glaring. The proscenium curtains were wine-colored outing-flannel which gives warm, rich tones to the stage, while a black back-drop serves as a neutral background against which stage settings and puppets showed clearly.

A beaver-board floor with wire frame to hang the back drop was fitted with hinges to the proscenium opening. Iron gas-pipe was screwed into the stage floor to act as support. The puppeteers used a strong table to stand upon, and hung the puppets to a rack made of another discarded black-board frame. This stage is light, portable, and stands wear and tear well. It is entirely original with the author in conjunction with the manual training teacher, and is here described to show the reader that a simple, inexpensive, and portable stage may be constructed with very little effort, using materials that come to hand.

For a more substantial portable stage, three fourths, or one-half inch gas-pipe may be used for a frame. This is joined by this type of gas fitting 

The joint known as the U-bolt joint makes a very firm stage also.

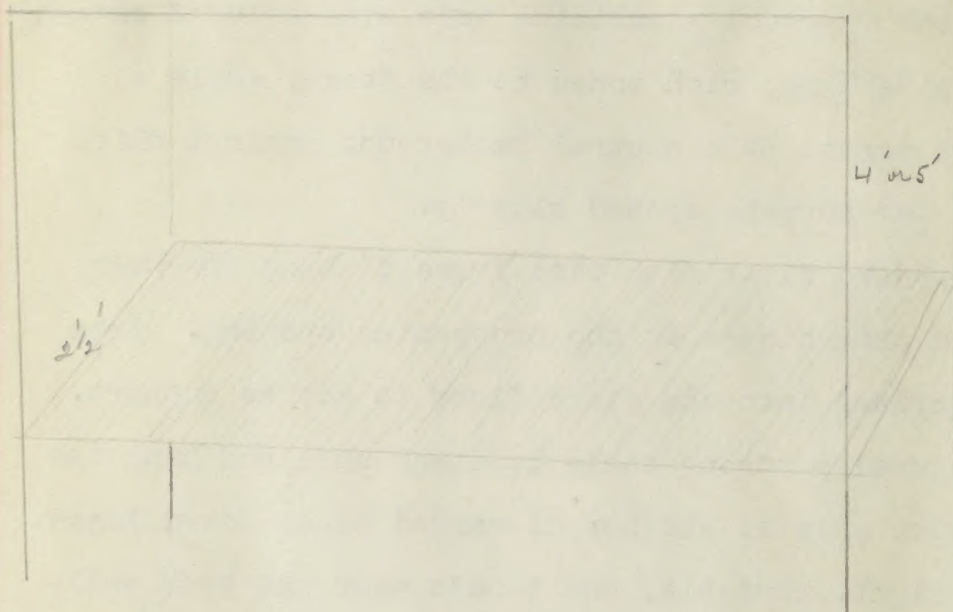
If wood is preferred for the frame, flat white pine sticks, flat rather than square, and wider than they are thick should be used. One-half by one and one-half inches is suggested for

49A

Stage

2'

8'

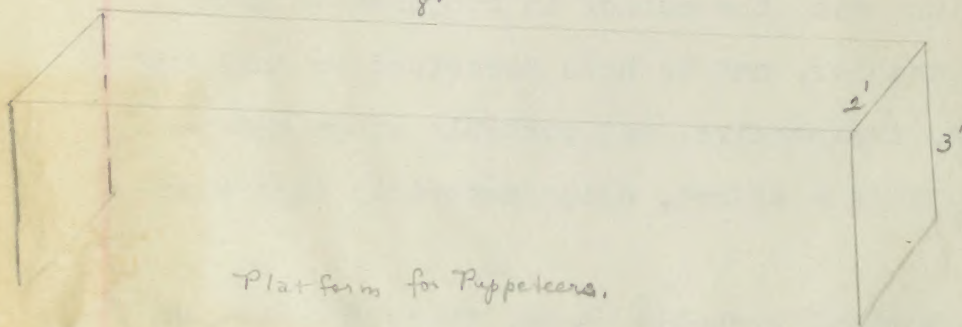


6' to 9'

4' or 5'

A

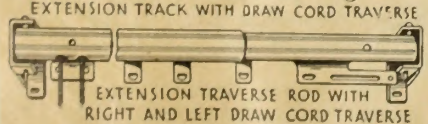
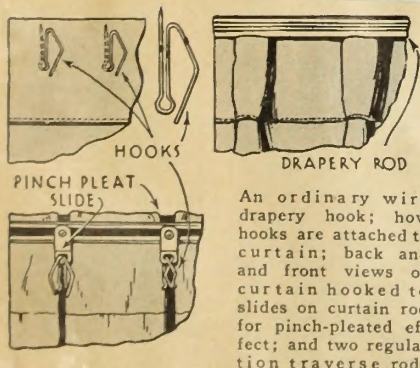
8'



3'


B

Platform for Puppeteers.



Stage with its front taken off to show how the curtains are hung by means of wire hooks

from
"Popular Science"
March, 1934

the frame work. Wing  nuts should be used to fasten the wood together.

The structure of either type of frame is best illustrated by diagram, which shows dimensions. Part A is for the puppets to stand upon; Part B is for the puppeteers. Detailed platform construction is also best illustrated by diagrams. These are included to assure a rigid structure of the platform to prevent buckling.

Floor for Stage:

For the stage described in the first paragraph of the section on construction, beaver board is successful for the floor, but for the heavier stage described in the next section beaver board of the size required will curl. Canvas sags. Plywood, of thin veneer is satisfactory if made in three sections. It should be covered with cloth to absorb noises. (Puppets' bodies and feet rattle at times.) Suede cloth or monk's-cloth makes satisfactory covering. If expense is an item to be considered, old portieres dyed grey, green, or black are satisfactory covering for the floor.

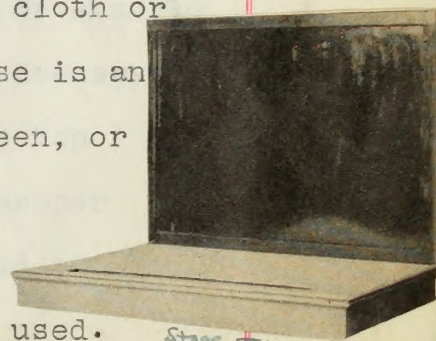
The Curtains:

Suede cloth, outing-flannel, or sateen may be used. Sateen may need to be lined. Figured material is less desirable than plain colors. Neutral shades are preferable. Dark red, beige, brown, or grey are suggested. A narrow chain inserted at the bottom of a wide hem will make the curtains hang in definite folds.

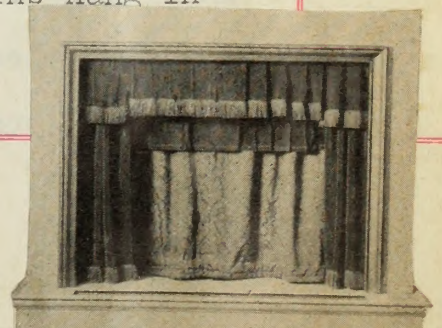
A small section of the valance showing how cloth is pleated and held between two light battens. The bottom is finished with a fringe



(See note, page 49A)



Stage Floor





An inexpensive flood-light may be made from a cracker can. An electric light socket is fastened to the bottom of the can, and a wooden frame, fitted over the top of the can, admits gelatin slides. The can is fastened by wire pins to moveable wooden frames.

STAGE LIGHTING

51

There are three uses for lights:

1. To illuminate the actor: This first became necessary when the theatre moved indoors. The original Greek theatre was out of doors--therefore, lights were not needed. The puppet stage is merely a small edition of the regulation stage. Therefore, many of the same rules apply to lighting the puppet stage that apply to full-size stages. It is not best to use foot-lights on a puppet stage. Strange effects are produced on the faces and costumes of the tiny actors when foots are used. More natural effects are obtained by keeping to border lights, side-floods, and cyclorama lights. Side lights upon a puppet are most effective when used from below rather than from above.

2. To illuminate scenery: This is seldom necessary in the puppet show. Now and then it becomes effective in giving some symbolic realism to the situation, as for example, in showing the time of day, or clouds in the sky. Scenery illumination may indicate the mood of the play. In the sleep-walking scene, in Macbeth, blue lights with proper shadows and rays of white light may give the desired emotional setting for this moving scene.

Sometimes scenery is lighted to give plastic depth. In lighting steps, a light from one angle only brings out lights and shadows and makes for depth and realism in the stage effect.

In general, however, lights should be on the puppet and not on the scenery, since all devices must be used to emphasize the tiny wooden actor--a thing which is not always necessary

STAGE LIGHTING

52

with the flesh and blood actor.

3. Colored lights give desired effects. The effect of light upon costume must always be considered. Amateurs, in their enthusiasm to use many and varied colors, must often curb their enthusiasm when they see the results upon scenery and costume. No puppet play should be produced without a full light-rehearsal after action, costume, and scenery have been completed. In general, upon blues, amber gelatin gives green,
 blue " " blue,
 purple " " blue,
 orange " " unsatisfactory colors;

while upon red, green gelatin gives black,
 purple " " brown,
 magenta " " a satisfactory color,

Magenta (a mixture of red and blue, which results in almost an orchid) is very good on many scenes and costumes.

Three, or possibly four, gelatin color slides are all that the amateur needs to supply. These may be combined to obtain many effects.

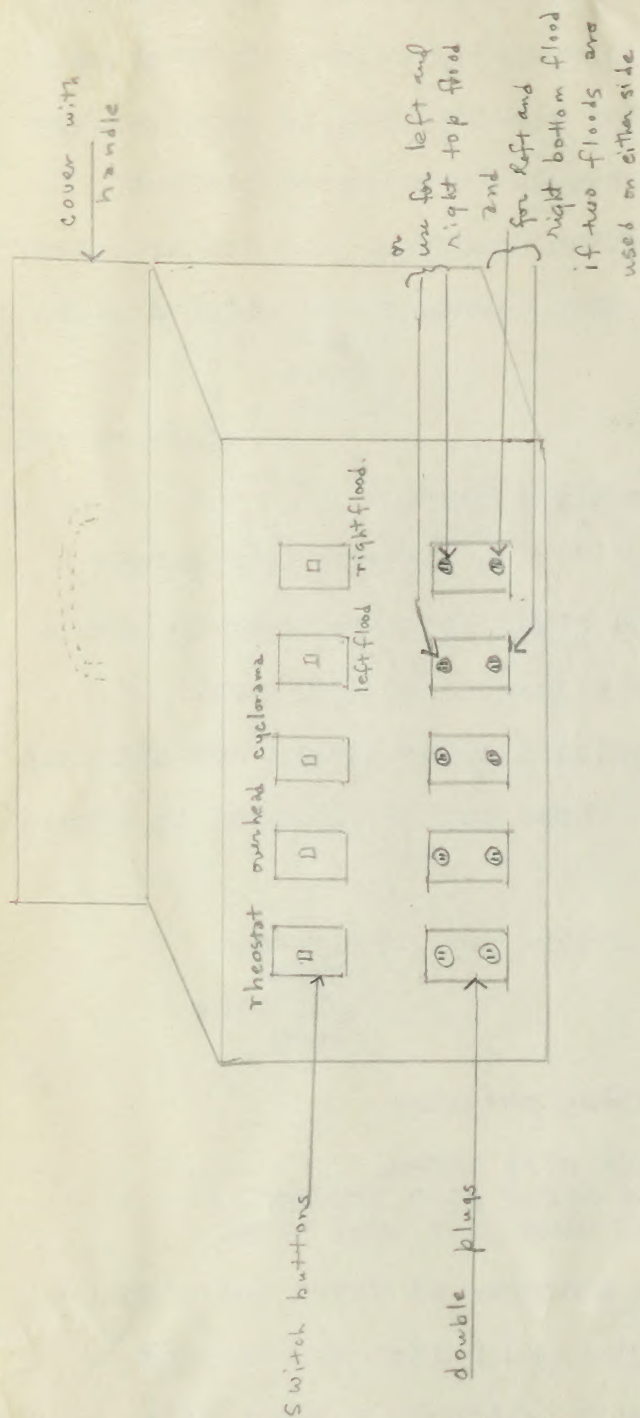
The most useful gelatin colors are : magenta
 straw
 cyne blue
 green

These combined give the following results:

Straw & blue give green,
 Magenta and straw give orange.
 Magenta and blue give deep blue.

In planning stage lights a source of light and a control are essential. A box with plugs and switch buttons may be made and fitted with a cover upon which is a substantial handle for convenient transportation. Lights, gelatin, etc. may be

Box for Light-Control on Marionette Stage. (Pages 52, 53)



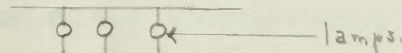
STAGE LIGHTING

53

stored in the box when it is not in use. If a rheostat, which is rather expensive, is not available, a night-dimmer on a regulation electric light socket makes a satisfactory substitute for the small stage. Cardboard slipped slowly over the bulb makes a fairly satisfactory dimmer. A shutter made of tracing paper over cardboard is also effective. If this ^{paper} is placed in increasing layers over frame sections, it becomes increasingly efficient.

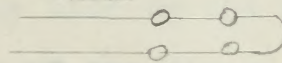


Fuses prevent too much current passing through the wires. If a fuse blows, one of two things may be wrong: either there are too many lamps on the circuit, or there is a short circuit in the wiring. A 10-ampere fuse is satisfactory. Wires in parallel →



If a puppet entrance is have the advantage that if one goes out the others will continue to function. Wires may be put in series, but parallel is recommended.

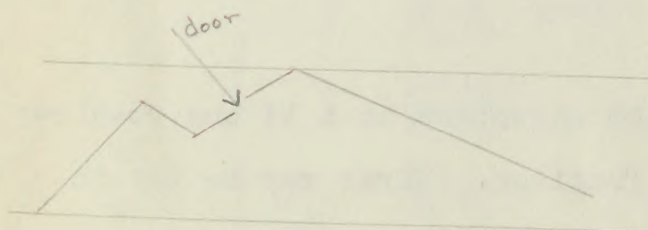
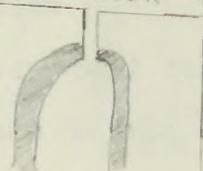
Series



A puppet entrance should be planned. Wires may be put in series, but parallel is recommended. Wires should be put in series, but parallel is recommended. Wires should be put in series, but parallel is recommended.

stored in the box when it is not in use. If a rheostat, which is rather expensive, is not available, a night-dimmer on a regulation electric light socket makes a satisfactory substitute for the small stage. Carboard placed slowly over the bulb makes a fairly satisfactory dimmer. A shutter made of black paper over carboard is also effective. If this is placed in increasing layers over frame sections, it becomes increasingly efficient.

Arrangement of ARCH or DOOR for puppet entrance



Passes given
If a fuse blows,
are too many fuses
in the wiring.
parallel
the others will continue
series, but parallel is

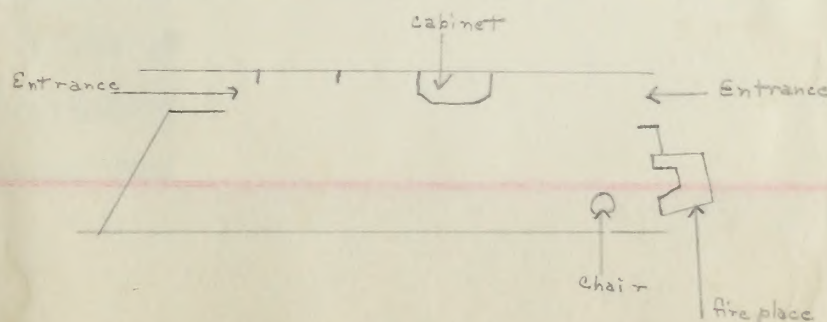
SCENERY FOR PUPPET STAGE

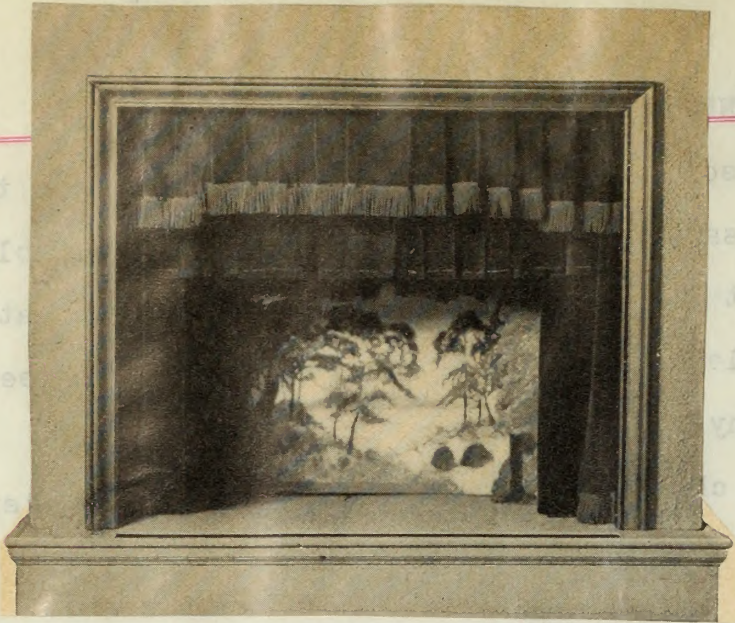
54

Completing the scenery for the puppet show is one of the greatest sources of satisfaction for the junior high school child. It brings with it a definite thrill caused by creative work carried to completion, which is not exceeded in degree of satisfaction by any other achievement which the author has experienced with children of this age. Even the completed puppet does not surpass the scenery in its popularity with the group.

Puppet scenery has a few points of technique which must be considered, due to the type of actor with which it is used. The strings which control the puppet must be kept constantly in mind in planning the scenery. There must be as few juttings to catch the strings as can be arranged. Trees and bushes, for example, must not have realistic twigs and boughs, for some actor would surely become hung up before the play had progressed far. Puppets usually enter from the side. If a back entrance is called for, the entrance must be at an angle and never directly at the back, since the scenery must be parted to allow the strings to pass.

A floor plan should be made on the stage floor by using wrapping paper cut to size of the floor. Not less than six inches should be allowed for a space where a puppet enters. Preferably a wider entrance should be planned, particularly when children are working the strings.





SCENERY FOR PUPPET STAGE

55

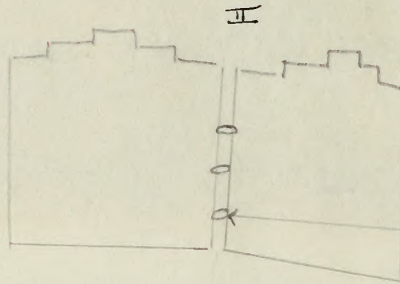
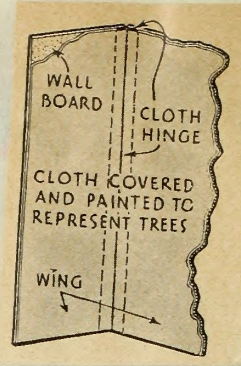
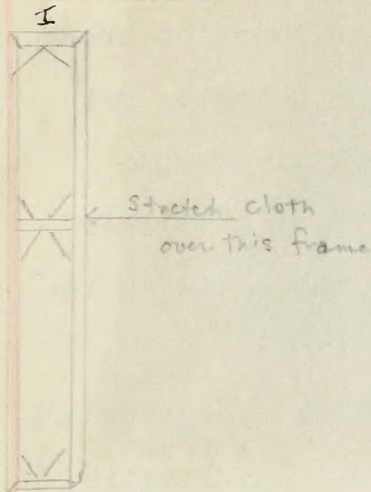
The elevation of scenery should be planned by using brown paper. Then the puppet should be placed on the stage to get the relation of windows, balconies, doorways, etc., to the height of the marionette. The paper may then be placed over card-board or beaver-board and windows cut as indicated on the paper plan.

Three types of scenery are to be considered:

1. Suspended
2. Framed
3. Plastic

Suspended scenery is the most useful of the three for the tiny stage. This consists of a flat piece of cloth, or cardboard with a design, which is suspended from the rod which holds the back-drop of the stage. If cloth is used it should be hung by rings which fit over a rod or by a frame which hangs by hooks over the permanent back-drop. If cardboard is used it may be framed in a light wooden frame and slid onto the stage, resting against the frame work of the back-drop, or it may be hung by hooks over the rod which supports the permanent back curtain. This scenery, since it is flat, does not offer the danger of catching strings which the other types do. With a permanent back-drop of black, many interesting scenic effects may be obtained easily and inexpensively with variations of the suspended scenery just described. A panel of bright cloth in oriental coloring may be the only scenery necessary for an oriental dance. A window suspended may suggest a room, as in the living-room of the three Bears, or a suspended silver web will make an effective setting for Little Miss Muffet and the Spider. (See page 12)

55A



Framed Scenery III



Plastic Scenery IV



SCENERY FOR PUPPET STAGE

56

Framed Scenery (called "flats" on the full size stage) may be made according to the illustrated diagram and be covered with beaver board or cloth. An easy way to hinge it for the puppet stage is to sew (or nail) rings to the sections and ^{II} slide a rod through the rings. Small door hinges are also useful. This scenery is useful but must be properly supported and weighted so that a string inadvertently hooked across it may not cause the collapse of the whole puppet world.

Plastic Scenery is particularly useful as it makes inexpensive and effective stage setting against a contrasting background. This is three dimensional scenery such as steps, urns, and columns. This, also, must be heavily weighted.

In painting scenery several facts should be observed. The cloth should be sized, with a thin glue solution before painting. Cloth should be left slightly sagged over framed scenery as the sizing shrinks it a bit. It will be quite taut when the glue has dried. If taut before painting, the scenery may buckle from the strain.

Beaver board may be painted without sizing, but a wet sponge should be rubbed over the back of the beaver board to prevent its warping from the wet paint applied to the front. Show card colors are best for scenery painting. Scenery should be painted in a flat color.

For a sky scene, a complete coat of light blue should be spread over the beaver board. After this dries, a sponge dipped in coral pink may be dabbed over the whole. This gives a glowing, attractive sky effect.



This would make a Satisfactory Set.



Combination of Three types of Setting (See pages 55, 56)

SCENERY FOR PUPPET STAGE

57

Wrought iron doorways and casements may be effectively shown by cutting a design in black oil cloth and pasting it on to a cardboard background.

Appliqued scenery may be made with tarlatan upon which sateen is basted. This is effective for forest scenes. The tarlatan may be used several times. Usually a rod (perhaps of light doweling) is basted into the lower edge of the tarlatan to hold it firm and straight. Tarlatan scenery may give a fairy-like effect. This scenery is usually suspended on a bar higher than the puppet control. A towel-rack of the bar type may be attached to either side inside the proscenium arch. Such a rack makes useful suspension for scenery near the front of the stage, and may even be used for supporting a resting puppet while the puppeteer is engaged with another actor.

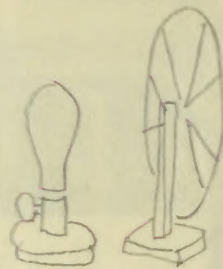
Note towel bars for suspending scenery.



Wrought iron doorways and casements may be effectively shown by cutting a design in black oil cloth and pasting it on to a cardboard background.

Applied scenery may be made with tulle upon which scenes is pasted. This is effective for forest scenes. The tulle may be used several times. Usually a red background of light bawling is pasted into the lower edge of the tulle to hold it from the bottom. Tulle scenes may give a fairy-like effect. This is better than usually seen on a bar higher than the support. With a bar of the bar type may be attached to the support. The support is a bar. Such a rock may be used on the support. The front of the stage, and may be used for supports a

Device for making fire flicker in fireplace



From (Jordan Marsh Company)
"Handy Book for Boys"

STAGE FURNITURE

58

First, all furniture should be weighted so it will not fall over or it should be tacked directly to a thin floor and the whole set may then be easily placed and removed.

Stage furniture must always be made to fit the puppet. Toys from ten-cent stores may be most attractive and true to form, yet may be altogether wrong for a puppet stage because they are out of proportion to the size of the puppets.

Chairs should be made with the seat slightly short of the height at which the puppet's knee bends.

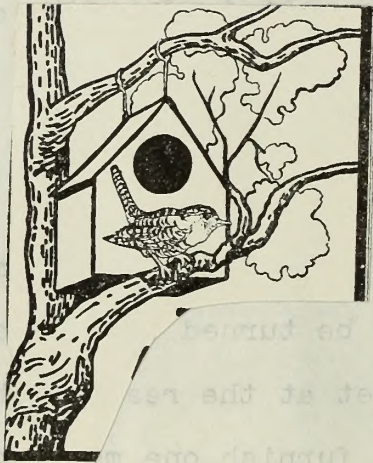
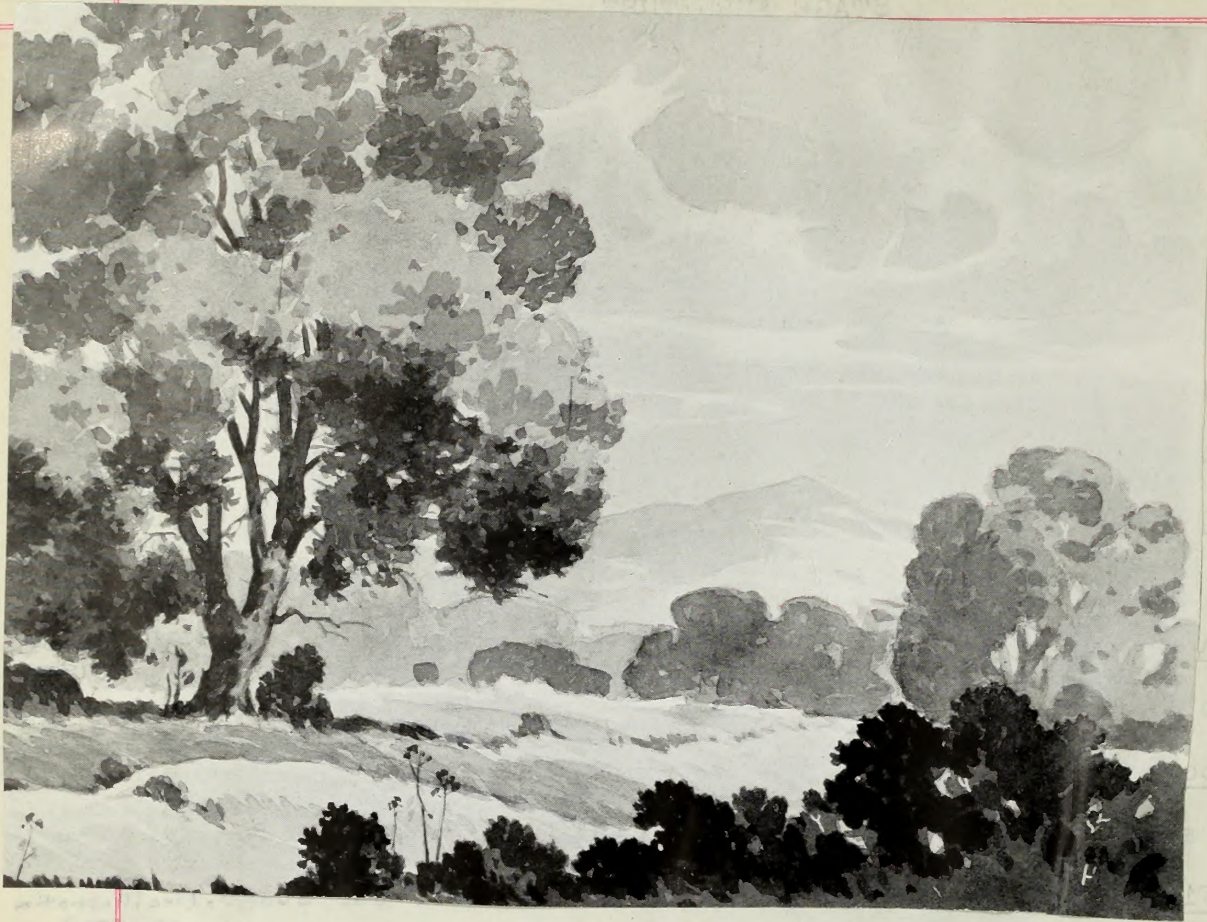
Tables must be in proportionate height. The table should be below the waist and above the knee of the puppet.

Doors must allow puppet strings to pass through. This may be accomplished by setting one piece behind another. (See illustration page 53A)

Fire-places should always be at the side of the stage, (See illustration page 55A.) never at the back. Have logs glued to a piece of cardboard for ease in transportation and accuracy in stage setting.

(The fire, by the way, should always be more orange than red.)

←
A clever device for making fire seem to flicker is to build a rotating wheel with slots over which magenta and amber gelatin alternate. This may be turned slowly before an electric lamp in a stationary socket at the rear of the fire-place. Incidentally, such devices as this furnish one more occupation to be divided among club members. Here it is well to say that the club leader must always see that each child has some responsibility about a show, no matter how small the part may be. Sometimes upon the slightest-seeming effort and cooperation depends a great part of the success of the show. In Jack-and-the-Bean-Stalk,



STAGE FURNITURE

59

for example, the boy who snored for the giant probably scored as much of a hit as any one member of the cast; although he was never seen by the audience, the enthusiasm with which he worked was charming.

Candlesticks may be made of sealing wax and matches, or of modelling clay. They should be fastened to the shelf of the fireplace or to the table.

If couches with pillows appear, the pillows should be securely fastened so that they may not fall when the little wooden lady chooses to recline.

Variation may be made so that the same piece of furniture will serve several purposes. A bench, for example, might have a different design on each side; it might serve later as a platform by throwing a piece of cloth over it.

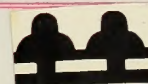
A collection of pictures from magazines, Christmas cards, and advertising material will be invaluable to club members to suggest stage setting and furniture. Files of such illustrations, under the following headings, might be made:

A. SCENERY

1. Back-drops
2. Model stage sets
3. Lighting Effects
4. Castles & Turrets
5. Churches
6. Christmas
7. Houses
8. House-tops
9. Landscapes
10. Sign-posts
11. Street Scenes
12. Winter Scenes
13. Other Countries

B. FURNITURE

1. Beds
2. Candles
3. Chairs
4. Doors & Gates
5. Fireplaces
6. Flowers
7. Tables
8. Small properties
9. Ships
10. Trees
11. Webs



PRODUCING A SHOW

60

Selecting the Play

For children, a series of short acts seems the best program. This has been previously mentioned in discussing the making of the puppets. The program should be adjusted so that it includes both comedy and spectacle. The order in which the acts should appear will be most successful if the following arrangement is followed as nearly as possible:

Act I should be an act of much motion, with little demand upon the mentality of the audience. This should not be the best act of the program.

Act II should be a contrast to Act I, perhaps an act outstanding for its colorful setting.

Acts III and IV should be easy acts. A short slap-stick act such as Mutt and Jeff might be placed in this position.

Act V should be the best number. This might be an act from Peter Pan or one from Romeo & Juliet.

Act VI might be a pantomime such as little Miss Muffet.

The finale should be a colorful spectacle.

A good general rule to follow in planning the production is: place first a light amusing act, and finally one of the most impressive. This puts the audience into a receptive frame of mind at the beginning and sends them away pleased at the end of the performance. Then, psychologically, they will be inclined to forgive and to forget minor errors and omissions in the middle. This rule should not be interpreted to indicate that slipshod, careless work should be accepted from children in planning their show, but it does give the club leader an

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Act II should be outstanding for its Acts III and IV act such as must be Act V should be from Peter Pan or Act VI might be

The Final Considerations

A good general rule to follow in planning the production is: place first a light amusing act, and finally one of the most impressive. This puts the audience into a receptive frame of mind at the beginning and sends them away pleased at the end of the performance. Then, psychologically, they will be inclined to forgive and to forget minor errors and omissions in the middle. This rule should not be interpreted to indicate that alighted, careless work should be accepted from children in planning their show, but it does give the show faster an

PRODUCING A SHOW

61

opportunity to shade the effect of acts which are not so well done as some of the others may be. If the leader insists on high standards in his show and makes it quite clear to the children that work carelessly done will not be included in the final production, remarkably fine acts will result.

Always use a puppet announcer. The more amusing he is, the better. A clown makes a splendid announcer.

If the club members are in their second year in the work, a one-act or a three-act play may be attempted. There are many excellent puppet plays already prepared for puppets (cf. bibliography). Nevertheless, part of the fun with puppets comes from using one's own ideas and originality in preparing the plays. The Three Bears in their conventional story are always acceptable to an audience, but how much more enthusiastic the audience becomes when the curtain rises on the Three Bears in bed, with the Baby wide-awake, and Father snoring heavily, early one morning in Spring. When Father finally rises and turns on the radio, and all Three Bears begin to do their setting-up exercises, the audience fairly shouts with laughter.

Types for dramatizing

Nursery stories are always good material for puppet plays. Well-known selections from literature dramatize well. Children seem to enjoy things with which they are familiar. A suggestive list is:

	(Beauty and the Beast
	(Rumplestiltskin
Fairy Stories	(Sleeping Beauty
	(Snow White
	(Jack and the Bean Stalk

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- (Sleeping Beauty)
- (Snow White)
- (Jack and the Beanstalk)

PRODUCING A SHOW

62

Literature (Peter Pan
 (Evangeline
 (Hiawatha
 (Scenes from Romeo & Juliet

Adapting Plays to Puppets:

1. The characters must first be introduced to the audience. This may be done either by direct introduction before the curtain, or by careful introduction in the course of the play, in the manner of the legitimate play-writer.

2. The story must be told quickly. Puppet action must be rapid and energetic. Too much talk, with little or no action, may be successful with flesh-and-blood actors, but never with puppets. In motion lies the puppet's secret of success

3. The audience must feel satisfied at the close of the play. "Try your play on a fellow student before it is tried with your puppets," is a good motto. If he expresses satisfaction with the plot, doubtless the ground has been covered.

4. Animals should be introduced for humor. They always add to the pleasure of the audience.

Directing the production: After the play has been selected

1. The action must be decided upon first. This should be carried on by the children in pantomime at first, while the play is read to them. Successful puppet shows with children are often produced when one set of children read the play while another set work the puppets. This helps in cooperative experience for the child. Sometimes one child alone may be the reader.

2. Exits and entrances should be varied to avoid monotony.

Literature
 (Peter Pan)
 (Everett)
 (H. V. Brown)
 (Scenes from Romeo & Juliet)

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PRODUCING A SHOW

63

If one puppet enters from the left, the next entrance had best be at the right, if it can be so planned.

3. The major puppets should be kept in the center of the stage, while subordinate puppets are kept at the rear.

4. A type of action for each puppet should be determined which is decidedly his own. For example, a certain Aladdin never failed to complain of his tight shoes.

5. The speaking puppet is always the moving puppet. The others must be kept still so that the audience may be sure who is doing the speaking. This is probably one of the hardest things to impress upon children.

6. Puppets must always over act. Small gestures are not seen. Strings must be really pulled, not merely touched.

7. One voice must always be heard for the same puppet. It becomes necessary, sometimes, for actors to exchange puppets. Actor A may take the puppet from Actor B, but Actor B continues to speak for his own puppet while A may be controlling the action.

8. Before any play is put to rehearsal it is well to line the children up, each with his own puppet, and give simple directions which are followed by all puppets in unison. This teaches the child control of his puppet and coördination. Finally, several puppets together may take part in a pantomime, following simple directions spoken by the club leader, for practice in controlling puppet action.

9. Several children may well help in directing a play. Here, as in many other things, "two heads are better than one", and the suggestions of the children themselves are often priceless contributions to the show.



Happy Leisure

CONCLUSION

64

The foregoing paragraphs have clung closely to the mechanics of making and dressing the tiny people, and finally putting them into action and colorful settings. All of this leads to the delightful finale which permits excursion into the realm of the fantastical. Much connection is constantly noticed between the productions of the miniature stage and those of the legitimate stage. Each may learn from the other. In realities are the two connected. They part when the tiny actors go gaily dancing away into the land of giants, dwarfs, and angels, and cause these to appear in amazingly life-like embodiment.

The puppet-enthusiast finds himself surrounded with a charming host of tiny companions, each one as individual as any flesh-and-blood actor, and each one as temperamental as the most highly endowed theatrical star. In dealing with these tiny wooden people comes a wealth of satisfaction in creative work, a sense of pleasure in the joy given to others, a feeling of responsibility in the standards of theatrical judgment which may be instilled into children. Finally, there is a definite reward in hours of happy leisure far removed from a world of threatening political and economic struggle, in a world of imagination which becomes truly an atmosphere where art becomes creative both in form and in expression.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Books and magazine articles marked with one star have been consulted by the writer.

Titles marked with two stars seem to the writer particularly valuable for the beginner.

The miscellaneous group (pages 76 to 77) are very brief articles, unsigned articles, or articles difficult for the average reader to obtain (cf. The Journal edited by Gordon Craig in 1918.)

The Bibliography with Boston Public Library numbers (p.78) is added for the convenience of persons who wish to look up material available locally without too much effort or time. It is interesting to note how limited the reference list is in so large a library on a subject so fascinating to children.

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Titles marked with two stars are of the writer particularly valuable for the beginner.

The miscellaneous group (pages 76 to 77) are very brief articles, unsigned articles, or articles difficult for the average reader to obtain (cf. The Journal edited by Gordon Craig in 1914).

The Bibliography with Boston Public Library numbers (p. 78) is added for the convenience of persons who wish to look up material available locally without too much effort or time. It is interesting to note how limited the reference list is in so large a library on a subject so fascinating to children.

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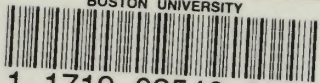
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