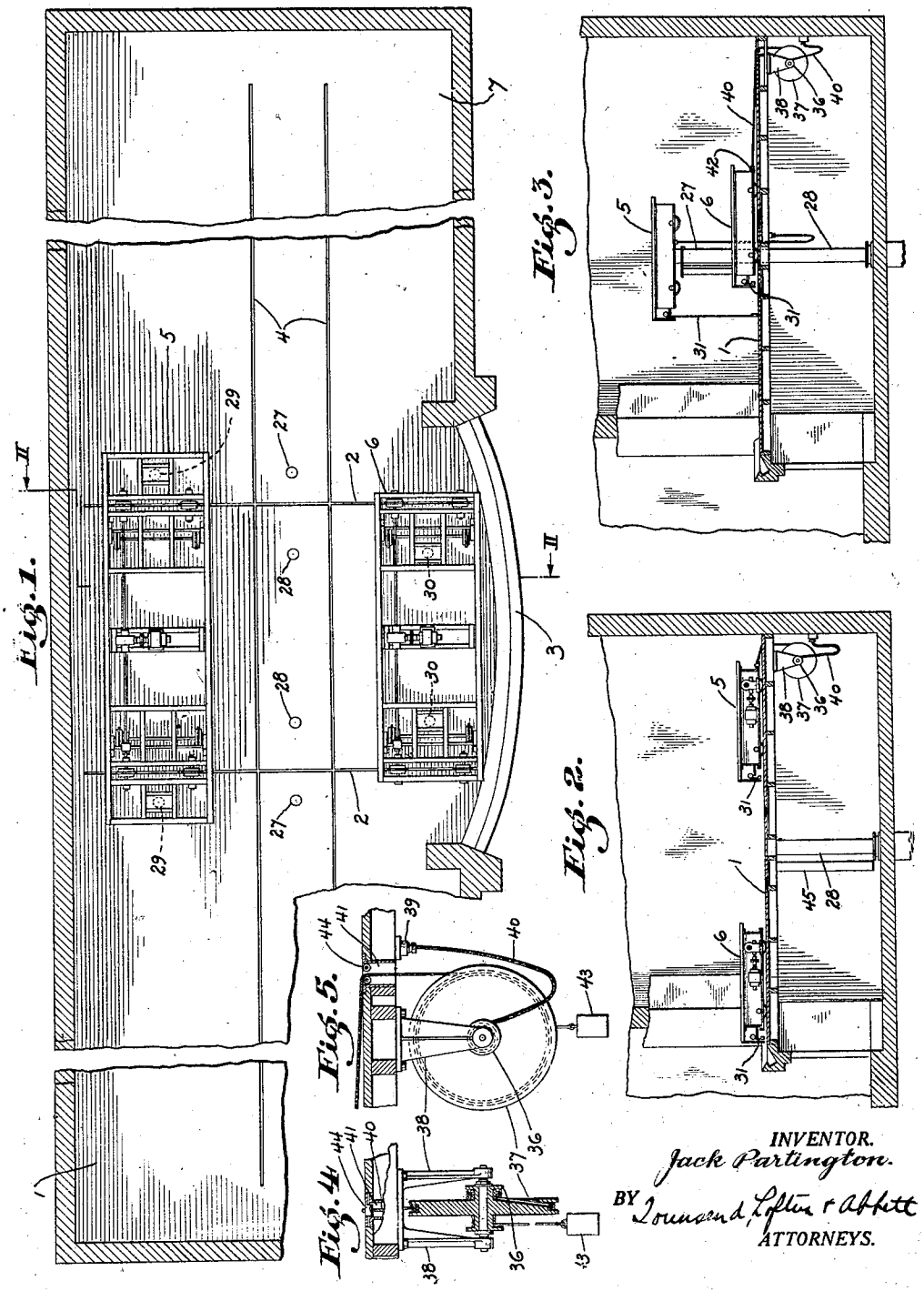
May 22, 1928. 1,670,739

J. A. PARTINGTON

THEATRICAL NOVELTY

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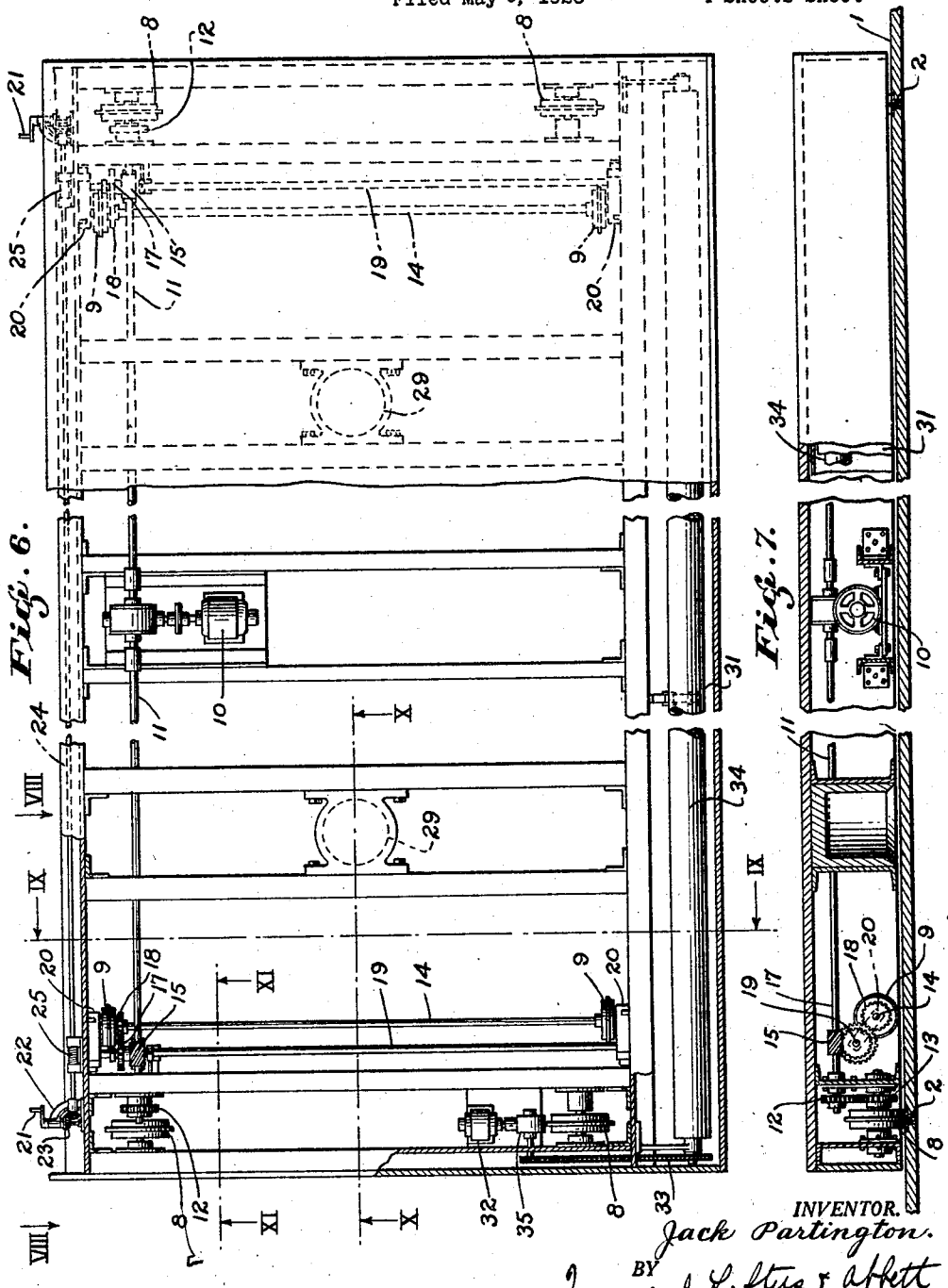


Fig. 6.

Fig. 7.

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THEATRICAL NOVELTY

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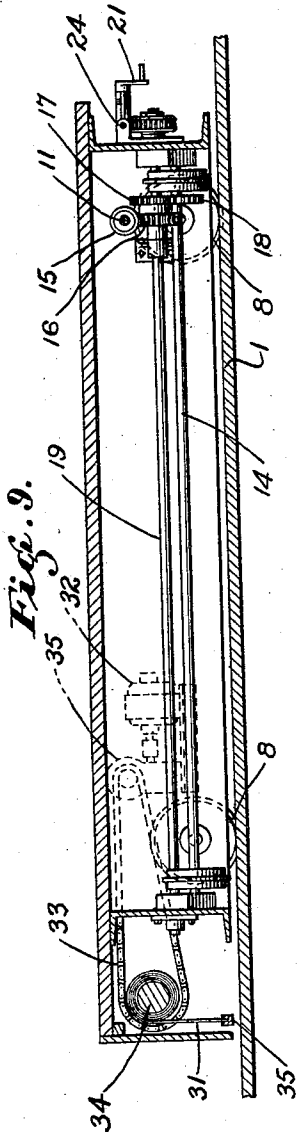


Fig. 9.

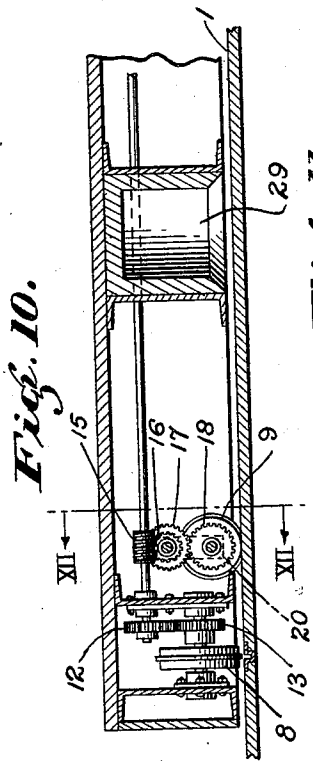


Fig. 10.

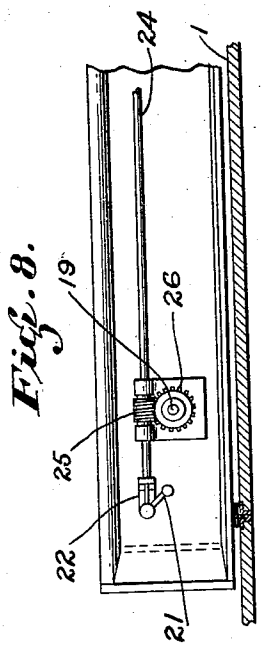


Fig. 8.

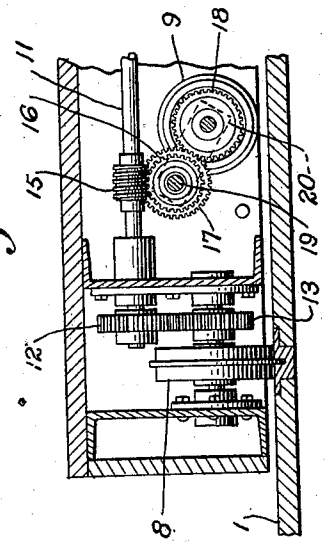


Fig. 11.

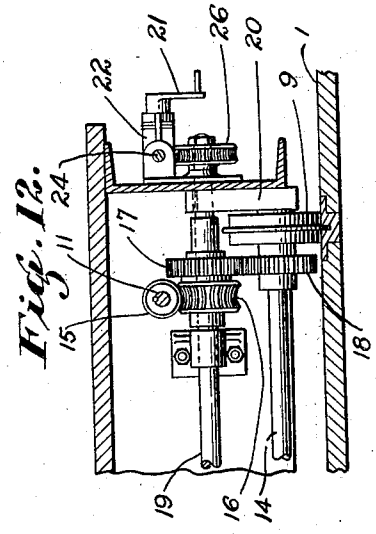


Fig. 12.

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THEATRICAL NOVELTY

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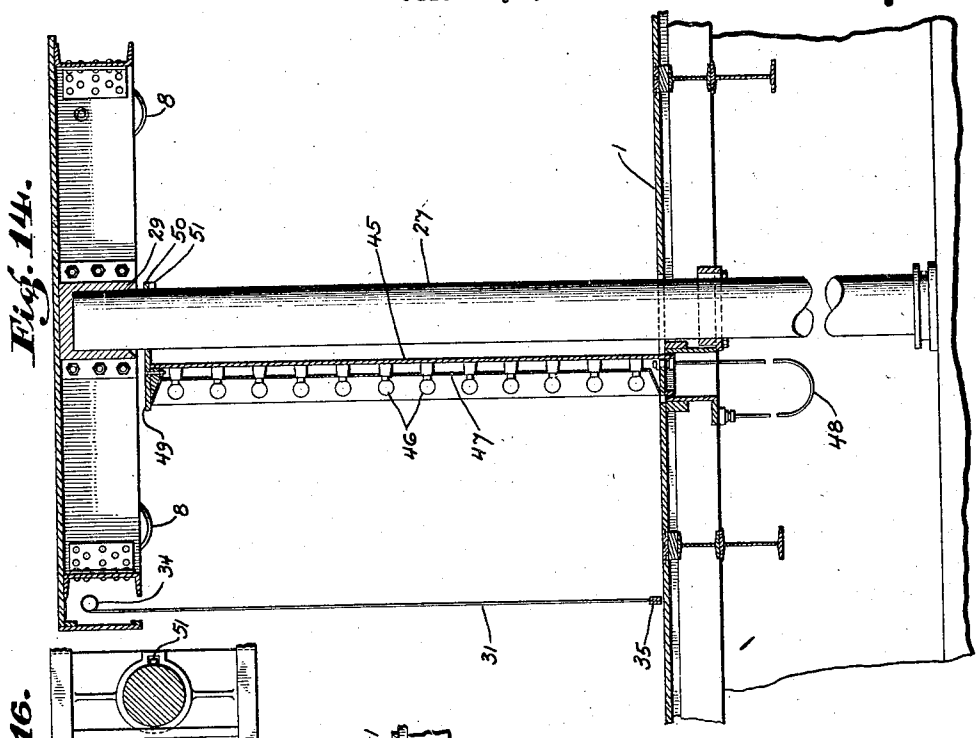


Fig. 14.

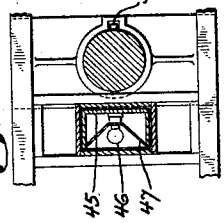


Fig. 16.

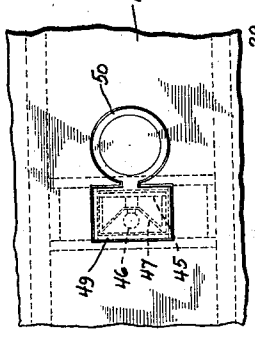


Fig. 15.

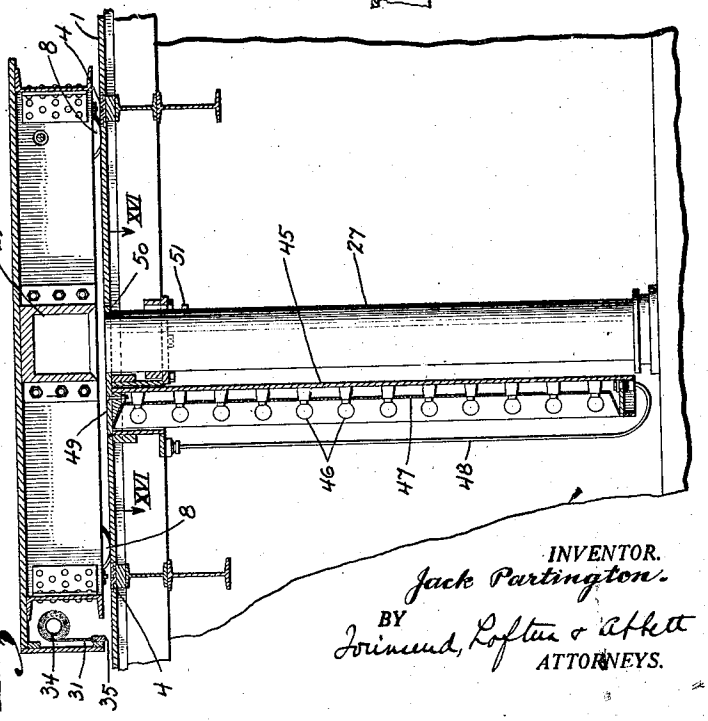


Fig. 13.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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THEATRICAL NOVELTY.

Application filed May 3, 1926. Serial No. 106,359.

This invention relates to theatrical novelties and particularly to one or more movable platforms or carriages which normally rest on the stage of a theatre and mechanism cooperating therewith for moving the same both horizontally and vertically. The invention is useful in many ways, among which may be mentioned the convenient provision of moving floats, additional stage room, quick changes of additional stage settings, the provision of more than one scene simultaneously, the quick arrangement of such settings in a manner wherein the same will be most clearly observed by the audience etc. Such a mechanism is disclosed in my Patent No. 1,563,782, granted Dec. 1, 1925. The primary object of my present invention is to provide such a mechanism having various improvements and novel features not heretofore disclosed.

It is an object of this invention to provide a stage with a forwardly and rearwardly extending track, a track extending transversely thereof across the stage, and one or more carriages having means for driving the same on both tracks and other means for elevating the carriages above the stage as in my said patent. Such a combination has various advantages over my patented mechanism as hereinafter pointed out.

Another object of the invention is to provide a novel means beneath the stage and in connection with the carriage for conveniently providing the same with electrical energy for lights, power, etc.

Another object of the invention is to provide a novel form of masking for the rams which elevate the carriages, this masking including a series of electric lights arranged forwardly of the rams in such a manner as to blind the audience to the rams when the rams are in the elevated position.

In the accompanying drawings I have illustrated certain embodiments of my invention, but it will be understood that the invention can be otherwise embodied and that the drawings are not to be construed as defining or limiting the scope of the invention, the claims appended to this specification being relied upon for that purpose.

Referring to the figures of the drawing:

Figure 1 is a plan view of a stage provided with my improvements herein described.

Figure 2 is a transverse sectional view thereof taken on line II—II of Fig. 1.

Figure 3 is a view like Fig. 2, but showing the parts in another position.

Figure 4 is a sectional view of a detail.

Figure 5 is a face view thereof.

Figure 6 is a plan view of my improved carriage, partially in section.

Figure 7 is a side elevation thereof, partially in section.

Figure 8 is a fragmentary side elevation taken on line VIII—VIII of Fig. 6.

Figure 9 is a cross section through the carriage on line IX—IX of Fig. 6.

Figure 10 is a sectional view taken on line X—X of Fig. 6.

Figure 11 is an enlarged view of the mechanism shown in Figure 10.

Figure 12 is a detailed sectional view taken on line XII—XII of Figure 10.

Figure 13 is a vertical sectional view through the carriage and stage, and showing a ram and its masking in side elevation.

Figure 14 is a like view but showing the parts in the elevated position.

Figure 15 is a plan view of the stage and ram when the ram in its downward position beneath the stage.

Figure 16 is a sectional view taken on line XVI—XVI of Fig. 13.

In the drawings, 1 indicates the stage of a theatre having a forwardly and rearwardly extending track 2 directly to the rear of the proscenium opening 3. A track 4 extends transversely of the stage and across the track 2. A relatively long carriage or platform 5 and preferably also a shorter carriage 6 are mounted on wheels adapted to ride on these tracks. The track 4 extends far enough into the wings 7 to receive either carriage therein when the same is riding on the track 4.

Each carriage is preferably provided with a set of wheels 8 for riding on the track 2 and with a set of wheels 9 for riding on the track 4. These wheels and their operating mechanism in both carriages are identical and therefore a description of one will suffice. A motor 10 is connected to two of the wheels 8 through a shaft 11 and gears 12 and 13. The shaft 11 is also connected to the axle 14 of the wheels 9 through spiral gears 15 and 16 and gears 17 and 18. The spiral gears 16 and 17 are connected together and are loose on the shaft 19.

As illustrated, the wheels 8 are mounted only for rotation on the carriage, while the wheels 9 are mounted for bodily movement

toward and from the tracks 4. A pair of arms 20 are keyed to each shaft 19 and rotatably support the ends of the axle 14. When these arms are in the downward position, the carriage is supported on the wheels 9 in a manner holding the wheels 8 upwardly free from the tracks 2 (Fig. 10). When the shafts 19 are rotated in a manner pivoting the arms upwardly from the vertical to the position shown in Figs. 7 and 11, the carriage is supported on the wheels 8 in a manner holding the wheels 9 upwardly free from the tracks 4.

The following means is provided for moving the arms 20. A crank 21 supported by a bracket 22 is connected by bevel gears 23 to a shaft 24 extending along the carriage. Two worms 25 on this shaft mesh with wheels 26 keyed to the shaft 19. Rotation of the crank 21 is therefore adapted to pivotally move the arms 20 to the positions illustrated. These arms are of course moved to change the carriage support from one track to the other, while the carriage is elevated on the rams now to be described.

A pair of outer hydraulic rams 27 and a pair of inner rams 28 are provided in the positions illustrated in Fig. 1. These rams are normally beneath the stage floor as illustrated in Fig. 2 and are adapted to elevate the carriages as illustrated in Fig. 3. The carriage 5 is provided with a pair of sockets 29 for receiving its lifting rams 27, and the carriage 6 is provided with a pair of sockets 30 for receiving its lifting rams 28. The rams may be operated in the manner disclosed in my said patent and a description of such operation is therefore unnecessary herein. It will be noted that the carriage 6 is of a length adapted to pass between the rams 27 and beneath the carriage 5 supported thereon (Fig. 3).

When the carriage 5 is elevated, it is ordinarily desired to hide the space therebeneath. A curtain 31 is provided for this purpose. A motor 32 with driving connections 33 to the curtain roll 34 is preferably provided for rolling the curtain. A weight 35 is hung to the curtain bottom to hold the same taut and to aid in unrolling the same.

Electric energy for lamps and power must of course be supplied to the carriage and I provide a novel means for supporting the electric cord in a manner permitting free movement of the carriage. A wheel having two diameters 36 and 37 is mounted on a bracket 38 beneath the stage floor adjacent a socket 39. The cord 40 is connected to the socket and extends about the small diameter 36, thence to and about the large diameter 37 and from thence upwardly through an opening 41 in the floor to the carriage at 42. A weight 43 normally rotates the wheel in a direction to wind the cord onto the large diameter. This arrangement permits a free long movement of the cord above the floor, while requiring only a short cord connection below the floor. Guide rolls 44 at the hole 41 permits free movement of the cord in either direction.

When the carriage 5 is elevated on the rams 27 and the carriage 6 is to pass therebeneath, with the curtain 31 raised, it is of course desirable that the rams 27 shall not be in view of the audience. I have disclosed novel masking means herein which cooperates with the rams to hide the same at this time.

A vertical trough-like member 45 is mounted to slide vertically through an opening in the stage floor forwardly of each ram 27. Several electric lights 46 are mounted in this member forwardly of a reflector 47 therein. The electric current to the lamps is provided through a cord 48 beneath the floor. The member 45 is supported by a flat plate 49 at its upper end, which plate is flush with the floor when the member is down beneath the floor as in Fig. 13. A ring 50 projecting from the rear of each plate 49 extends about its ram 27 and is adapted to be engaged by a lug 51 on the ram and lifted thereby upon upward movement of the ram. It will be understood that the lights 46 will blind the audience from seeing the rams 27, it appearing that the carriage is supported on the two columns of lights.

It is believed that the construction, operation, and advantages of my invention will be clear from the above description taken in connection with the drawings. The two tracks and the cooperating means for running the carriages on the same, provides means for making various kinds of scenes, wherein the carriage may be moved toward and from the audience, or in a direction across the stage. As an example of the latter, it may be suggested that the carriage might be decorated as a boat and moved very slowly across the stage with a very realistic effect. The other novel features of the invention cooperating with the carriages and their operating means will, it is believed, be obvious.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim is:

1. A theatrical novelty comprising the combination of a stage, a forwardly and rearwardly extending track thereon, a track extending transversely of and across the first track, a platform, wheels for supporting the platform on the tracks, means for elevating the platform at the intersection of the tracks, and means for arranging the wheels while the platform is elevated so that the platform will rest on either of the said tracks when lowered.

2. A theatrical novelty comprising the combination of a stage, a forwardly and

rearwardly extending track thereon, a track extending transversely of and across the first track, a platform, a set of wheels for supporting the platform on one track, a set of wheels for supporting the platform on the other track, means for elevating the platform at the intersection of the tracks, and means for so adjusting one of said wheel sets vertically while the platform is elevated that the platform will rest on either set of wheels when lowered.

3. A theatrical novelty comprising the combination of a stage, a forwardly and rearwardly extending track thereon, a track extending transversely of and across the first track, a platform, a set of wheels for supporting the platform on one track, a set of wheels for supporting the platform on the other track, arms pivoted to the platform and carrying the second named set of wheels, means for elevating the platform at the intersection of the tracks, and means for pivotally moving the arms downwardly to a vertical position while the platform is elevated, whereby the platform will rest on the second named set of wheels when lowered, or to a position elevated from the vertical whereby the platform will rest on the first named set of wheels when lowered.

4. A theatrical novelty comprising the combination of a stage, a forwardly and rearwardly extending track thereon, a track extending transversely of and across the first track, a platform, a set of wheels for supporting the platform on one track, a set of wheels for supporting the platform on the other track, means for elevating the platform at the intersection of the tracks, means for so adjusting one of said wheel sets vertically while the platform is elevated that the platform will rest on either set of wheels when lowered, and power means on the platform for driving both sets of wheels.

5. A theatrical novelty comprising the combination of a stage, a forwardly and rearwardly extending track thereon, a track extending transversely of and across the first track, a relatively long carriage having wheels for supporting the same on either track, a pair of spaced rams at the track intersection adapted to lift the carriage, a second carriage having wheels for supporting the same on either track and being of a length to pass between the rams beneath the first carriage when the same is elevated by the rams, and power means on the first carriage for driving the same.

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