

TOY THEATRICAL DEVICE.

1,040,616.

3 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

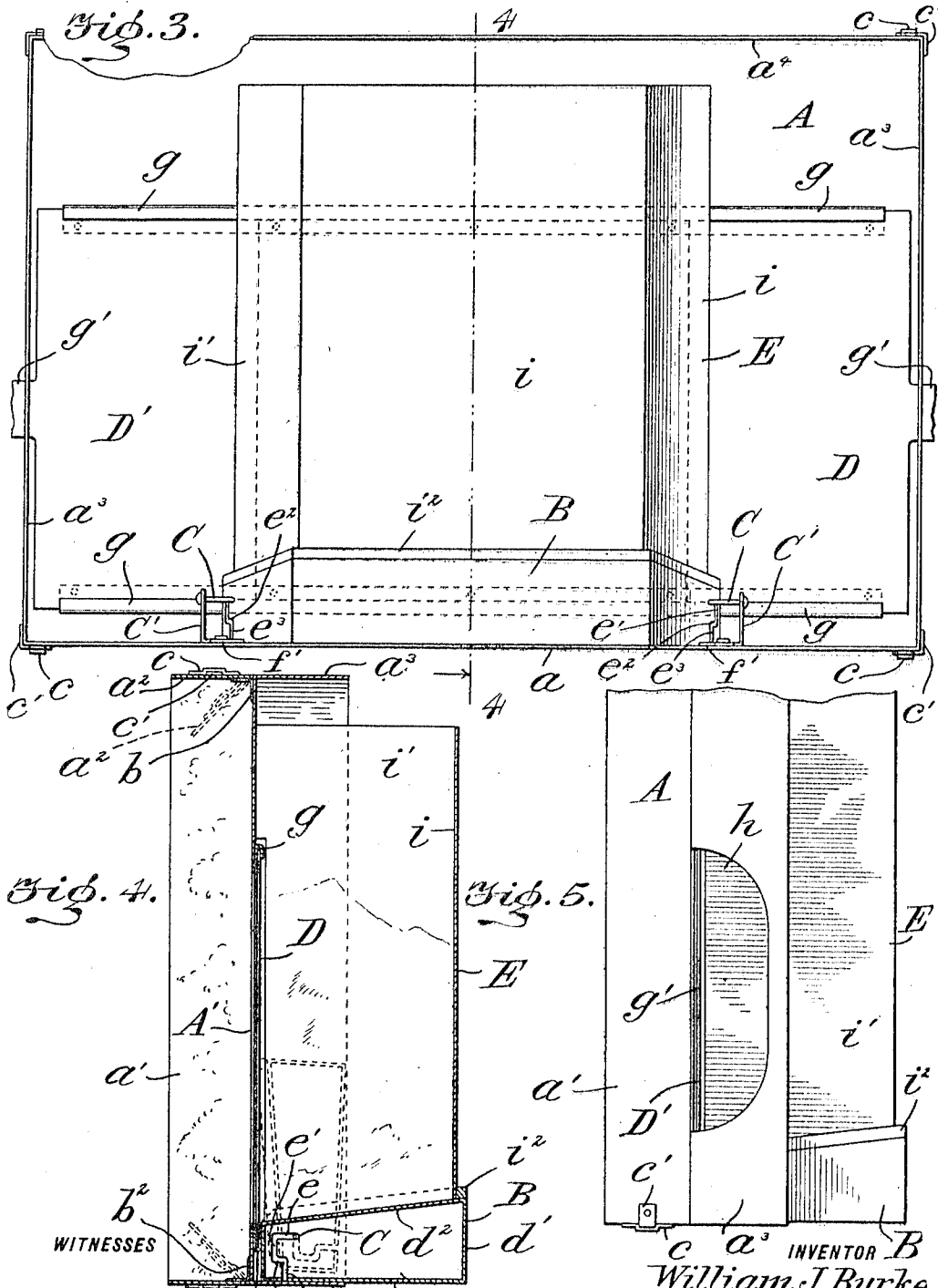


BY *Griffins Bernhard*
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1,040,616.

Patented Oct. 8, 1912.

3 SHEETS—SHEET 2.



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TOY THEATRICAL DEVICE.
APPLICATION FILED SEPT. 16, 1908.

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3 SHEETS—SHEET 3.

Fig. 6.

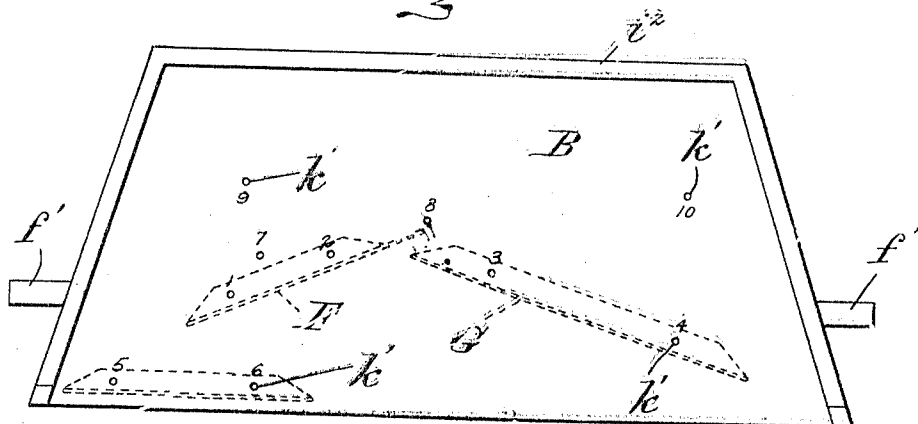


Fig. 7.

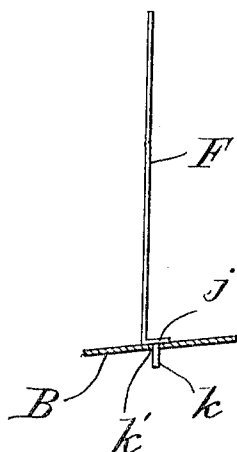


Fig. 8.

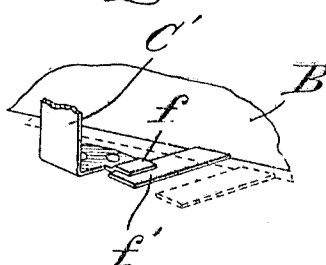
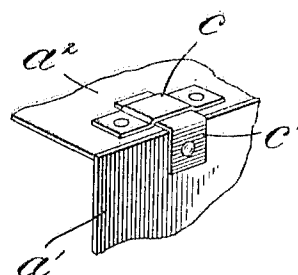


Fig. 9.



WITNESSES

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TOY THEATRICAL DEVICE.

1,040,616.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Oct. 8, 1912.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM J. BURKE, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city of New York, borough of Manhattan, county and State of New York, have invented a certain new and useful Toy Theatrical Device, of which the following is a specification.

This invention is a toy theatrical device of that class embodying a stage with scenery, properties, stage characters, and other equipment, together with means for properly manipulating the several movable parts or members.

The main object of the device is to enable various scenes and acts to be depicted on a miniature stage through the medium of toy figures and characters, the said scenes and acts being accompanied by lectures, talks or explanations appropriate to the particular scene or act.

With the foregoing, and other objects in view, the present invention embodies a device of the character specified which is readily mounted and placed in position for operation and yet may be compactly folded for storage and shipment.

In the accompanying drawings I have illustrated one practical embodiment of the invention, but the construction shown therein is to be understood as illustrative, only, and not as defining the limits of the invention.

Figure 1 is a front view of a toy theatrical device embodying this invention. Fig. 2 is a plan view thereof with a part of the proscenium in horizontal section for the purpose of illustrating the guides for the sliding doors adapted to shut off the view of the stage. Fig. 3 is a rear elevation of the theatrical device. Fig. 4 is a vertical cross section on the line 4-4 of Fig. 3. Fig. 5 is a side elevation of the complete toy illustrating an opening in a side member of the proscenium whereby one of the sliding doors may be operated. Fig. 6 is a plan view of the stage independent of the proscenium and other parts of the apparatus, showing means whereby the position of different figures may be determined on said stage. Fig. 7 is a detail view illustrating means for locking one of the movable figures on the stage, and Figs. 8 and 9 are detail views of parts of the device which will be hereinafter described.

A designates a proscenium provided with

a base, *a*, forwardly extending members, *a'*, *a''*, and rearwardly extending members, *a'''*, *a''''*, the base, *a*, extending across the forwardly and rearwardly extending members substantially as shown in Figs. 2 and 4. The rearwardly extending members, *a'''*, *a''''*, and the rear part of the base, *a*, occupy a rigid or permanent relation to the proscenium, A, and it is preferred to make the forwardly extending members, *a'*, *a''*, and the front part of the base, *a*, foldable into compact order relative to said proscenium. For this purpose the forwardly extending top member, *a''*, is connected flexibly with the proscenium as at *b*, the side members, *a'*, are likewise connected flexibly with the proscenium at *b'* and the front part of the base, *a*, is connected flexibly with the proscenium at *b''*, see Fig. 4, whereby the side members, *a'*, may be folded inwardly upon the proscenium, the top member, *a''*, may be folded downwardly upon said side members or the proscenium, and the front part of the base, *a*, may be folded upwardly against the side members or said proscenium.

The flexible connections, *b*, *b'*, *b''*, may be of any suitable character, but some of them are shown in Fig. 4 as fabric strips united to the several parts.

Suitable means are provided for retaining the foldable members in rigid relation to the proscenium when said members are extended for the purpose of using the device. One form of retaining or locking means is shown in Figs. 2, 4 and 9 wherein a keeper, *c*, is adapted to be secured to one of the members and a latch, *c'*, is attached to the other member, said latch being adapted for engagement with said keeper, *c*, when the members are unfolded to their extended positions.

B designates a stage adapted to rest upon the rear part of base, *a*, and to normally lie close to the rear side of proscenium, A, said stage being normally at right angles to said proscenium, although it may have a slightly inclined relation thereto for the purpose of bringing the stage into view of the audience. As shown, stage, B, comprises a bottom, *d*, vertical walls, *d'*, and a platform, *d''*, the latter being shown in Fig. 4 as inclined upwardly and rearwardly from bottom, *d*. The detailed construction of the stage may be modified or varied, however, so that it is not desired to limit the invention to the particular form shown in the drawings. The

side walls, *d'*, of the stage are provided near their front ends with slots, *e*, with which co-operates a locking member, *C*, shown in the form of a horizontal rod adapted to extend across stage, *B*, below platform, *d*. Locking member, *C*, is adapted to be fixedly supported on base, *a*, by brackets, *C'*, see Figs. 2, 3 and 8. The brackets are secured firmly to the base and extend upwardly therefrom in rear of proscenium, *A*. The locking rod is secured firmly in said brackets, and it passes through slots, *e*, in the sides, *d'*, of said stage.

In view of the fact that stage, *B*, rests upon base, *a*, and abuts against proscenium, *A*, it has been found desirable to construct the locking means, *e*, *C*, in a way which permits stage, *B*, to be adjusted horizontally and vertically prior to folding said stage into parallel relation with proscenium, *A*, whereby stage, *B*, may be withdrawn from engagement with proscenium, *A*, and base, *a*, in order to easily and quickly fold it. The slots in the side walls of stage, *B*, consist of horizontal members, *e*, vertical members *e'*, depending from the horizontal members, an off set, *e''*, and another vertical member, *e'''*, the latter extending from the off set, *e''*, and opening through the bottom, *d*, of the stage, all as clearly shown in Fig. 4. When it is desired to fold stage, *B*, upwardly to the dotted line position of Fig. 4, the operator moves stage, *B*, backwardly so that rod, *C*, will slide in the horizontal members, *e*, of the slots, thus withdrawing the front end of the stage from the proscenium; the stage may now be lifted whereupon the rod, *C*, will slide in the vertical members, *e'*, of the slots, thereby withdrawing bottom, *d*, of the stage from engagement with base, *a*, and enabling the front corners of the stage to clear the base and the proscenium, and finally the stage may be adjusted for the rod, *C*, to enter off sets, *e''*, of the slots, whereby said stage may be turned on rod, *C*, in order that may assume the folded position shown in dotted lines wherein stage, *B*, is parallel to, and in rear of, the proscenium. In order to adjust stage, *B*, to its normal position the operations just described should be reversed. Should it be desired to disconnect stage, *B*, from the device, it is turned or adjusted in the manner described in order that rod, *C*, may pass through the depending members, *e'''*, of the slots, whereupon the stage may be withdrawn from engagement with rod, *C*.

In Fig. 3, there is shown one embodiment of means for locking stage, *B*, in its adjusted position. Each bracket, *C'*, is provided with a locking shoulder, *f*, which shoulder is raised somewhat above the base, *a*, to which said bracket, *C'*, is fastened. Stage, *B*, is provided with a tongue, *f'*, which extends laterally therefrom, and this

tongue is adapted for movement into engagement with locking shoulder, *f*. When the stage is turned on rod, *C*, and shoved forward against the proscenium, the tongues, *f'*, are thrust below and into engagement with shoulders, *f*, of brackets, *C'*, whereby the tongues and shoulders coöperate in locking stage, *B*, in a fixed position relative to base, *a*, and proscenium, *A*.

The proscenium has the usual stage opening, *A'*, through which the scenes and acts on the stage may be viewed by the audience. During the operations of changing the stage settings, properties and other objects following the different acts and scenes, the view of the stage is cut off by suitable closures which may be embodied as curtains, doors and other mechanical equivalents. It is preferred, however, to employ doors, *D*, *D'*, which are slidable in horizontal paths within suitable guides, *g*, which guides are fastened to the rear of the proscenium above and below the stage opening, *A'*, see Figs. 2, 3 and 4. Doors, *D*, *D'*, are slidable horizontally within guides, *g*, so as to be withdrawn from stage opening, *A'*, thus fully exposing the stage and its accessories. Any suitable means may be provided for operating said sliding doors, but, as shown, they are provided with the hand-operated members, *g'*, which extend outwardly from the doors and are adapted to pass through openings, *h*, which are provided in side members, *a''*, extending rearwardly from proscenium, *A*, see Fig. 5. Openings, *h*, are large enough to admit the hand of the operator when grasping member, *g'*, in the operation of sliding the doors inwardly and outwardly.

Coöperating with stage, *B*, and the proscenium is background, *E*. This background is shown as consisting of a member, *i*, and side members, *i'*, see Figs. 2 and 3. Said background is adapted to rest upon stage, *B*, so as to substantially inclose it. The background is retained in position on said stage by a strip, *j*, which embraces the lower edge of the background, said strip being secured to stage, *B*, and extending around the upper edges thereof. Background, *E*, is higher and wider than stage opening, *A'*, in the proscenium, and when the doors, *D*, *D'*, are opened the stage and background are exposed to view substantially as shown in Fig. 1.

From the foregoing description, it will be noted that doors, *D*, *D'*, are connected firmly to the proscenium, whereas background, *E*, is fitted removably to the stage and said proscenium, whereby background, *E*, may be dismantled and stage, *B*, may be folded into compact relation to the frame work surrounding proscenium, *A*.

In conjunction with the stage certain movable objects are employed with a view of de-

5 picting different scenes. These objects may be of any character to represent any form of stage setting, as, for example, the mounted figures indicated at F, G in Fig. 1. As shown, each figure, F or G, is provided with a base, *j*, and from said base is adapted to extend a locking element, *k*, shown in Fig. 7 as a pin or stud which is adapted to fit into any one of a series of openings, *k'*, the latter being provided in stage, B, substantially as shown in full and dotted lines in Figs. 2 and 6.

10 It is preferred to employ a number of openings, *k'*, which occupy different positions in the stage, substantially as indicated by the numerals 1 to 10 inclusive, in Fig. 6, said numbers being provided on the stage and close to the apertures, *k'*, in order to assist the operator in determining the positions which the movable figures, F and G, should occupy on the stage in depicting the different scenes and acts, it being understood that said figures, F and G, or their equivalents, are numbered correspondingly to the apertures, *k'*, in the stage.

15 The operation of the device is manifest from the preceding description taken in connection with the drawings, but it may be described as follows:—In setting the apparatus up for use, the forwardly extending members, *a'*, *a''*, are unfolded and locked in position; stage, B, is unfolded and adjusted on rod, C, so that the stage will rest on base, *a*, and engage with proscenium, A, the tongues, *f'*, being moved into engagement with shoulders, *f*, for locking said stage in position, and background, E, is adjusted to engage with proscenium and rest upon the stage. Prior to delivering the lecture, talk or other explanation, the operator closes doors, D, D', and places the required figures, F and G, in position on stage, B, to depict the scene or act. Preferably, the apparatus is used in a room or apartment which should be darkened during the setting of the stage scenery. When the apartment is illuminated by a proper display of lights, the operator should open doors, D, D', and proceed with the lecture, talk or explanation, thereby exposing the scenery to the view of the audience. The room may be darkened again, the doors closed, and other movable objects placed on the stage, the background being changed to correspond with the new scene or act.

20 The proscenium, its forwardly extending members, doors and the background should all be ornamented or decorated in any suitable style to represent scenery. Interchangeable objects and backgrounds are provided as parts of the apparatus for depicting the different scenes and acts, but these matters may be modified and varied within wide limits as will be readily understood.

25 Having thus fully described the invention,

what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. In a toy theatrical device, a proscenium, a boxlike stage, and means cooperating with said boxlike stage and with the proscenium for retaining said stage in operative relation to the proscenium, said means operating to permit the stage to be moved bodily in a horizontal direction relative to the proscenium, whereby the front edge of said stage is adapted to have abutting engagement with the proscenium.

2. In a toy theatrical device, a proscenium, a boxlike stage, and retaining devices operatively connecting said boxlike stage with the proscenium, said retaining devices operating to permit a relative movement between the stage and the proscenium, whereby the front of the stage is adapted to be positioned into abutting engagement with the proscenium.

3. In a toy theatrical device, a proscenium, a boxlike stage, and retaining devices for connecting said stage and the proscenium, said devices retaining the stage in detachable relation to the proscenium, said devices operating to permit both a foldable movement of the stage relative to the proscenium and bodily movement of the stage in a horizontal direction relative to the proscenium, whereby the front edge of the stage is adapted to be positioned into abutting engagement with the proscenium.

4. A toy theatrical device embodying a proscenium, a boxlike stage separate from said proscenium, retaining devices operatively connecting the stage and the proscenium, said retaining devices permitting the stage to be folded relative to the proscenium, and members extending forwardly of, and foldable relative to, said stage and the proscenium.

5. A toy theatrical device embodying a proscenium, a boxlike stage separate from said proscenium, retaining devices operatively connecting the stage and the proscenium, said retaining devices permitting the stage to be folded relative to the proscenium, foldable members extending forwardly with reference to said proscenium, and means for retaining said foldable members in their extended positions.

6. In a toy theatrical device, a proscenium, a boxlike stage separate from said proscenium, retaining devices connecting the stage and the platform, said retaining devices operating to permit a relative movement of said stage to the proscenium, whereby said stage may be positioned at right angles to the plane of the proscenium, or it may be folded into a position substantially parallel to the plane of said proscenium, and slidable doors guided on said proscenium.

7. In a toy theatrical device, a proscenium, a boxlike stage separate from said proscenium, retaining devices connecting the stage and the platform, said retaining devices operating to permit a relative movement of said stage to the proscenium, whereby said stage may be positioned at right angles to the plane of the proscenium, or it may be folded into a position substantially parallel to the plane of said proscenium, and slidable doors guided on said proscenium.

nium, side members extending rearwardly of said proscenium, said side members being provided with openings, a boxlike stage separate from, and foldable relative to, the
5 proscenium, means for retaining said stage in operative position substantially at a right angle to the proscenium, and slidable doors for closing the opening in the proscenium, said doors being provided with operating
10 means which extend through the openings in said side members.

8. A toy theatrical device embodying a proscenium, a boxlike stage separate from the proscenium, retaining devices on said
15 stage and the proscenium, respectively, for retaining the stage in operative position relative to the proscenium, said retaining devices operating to permit the stage to be folded into a position substantially parallel
20 to the plane of the proscenium, a background positioned upon the stage, and wings extending in a forward direction and from the respective sides of the background.

9. A toy theatrical device embodying a
25 proscenium, a boxlike stage separate from

the proscenium, retaining devices on the stage and the proscenium whereby said stage is foldable bodily with relation to the proscenium, and is adapted to be detached therefrom, a background removably supported on the stage, and means positioned
30 intermediate the proscenium and the background for retaining figures upon the stage.

10. A toy theatrical device embodying a proscenium, a boxlike stage separate from
35 the proscenium, retaining devices on the stage and the proscenium whereby the stage is connected to the proscenium so as to be foldable into a position parallel thereto, sliding doors cooperating with the stage,
40 and a background positioned upon the stage and detachable therefrom.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

WILLIAM J. BURKE.

Witnesses:

JAS. H. GRIFFIN,
H. I. BERNHERD.