

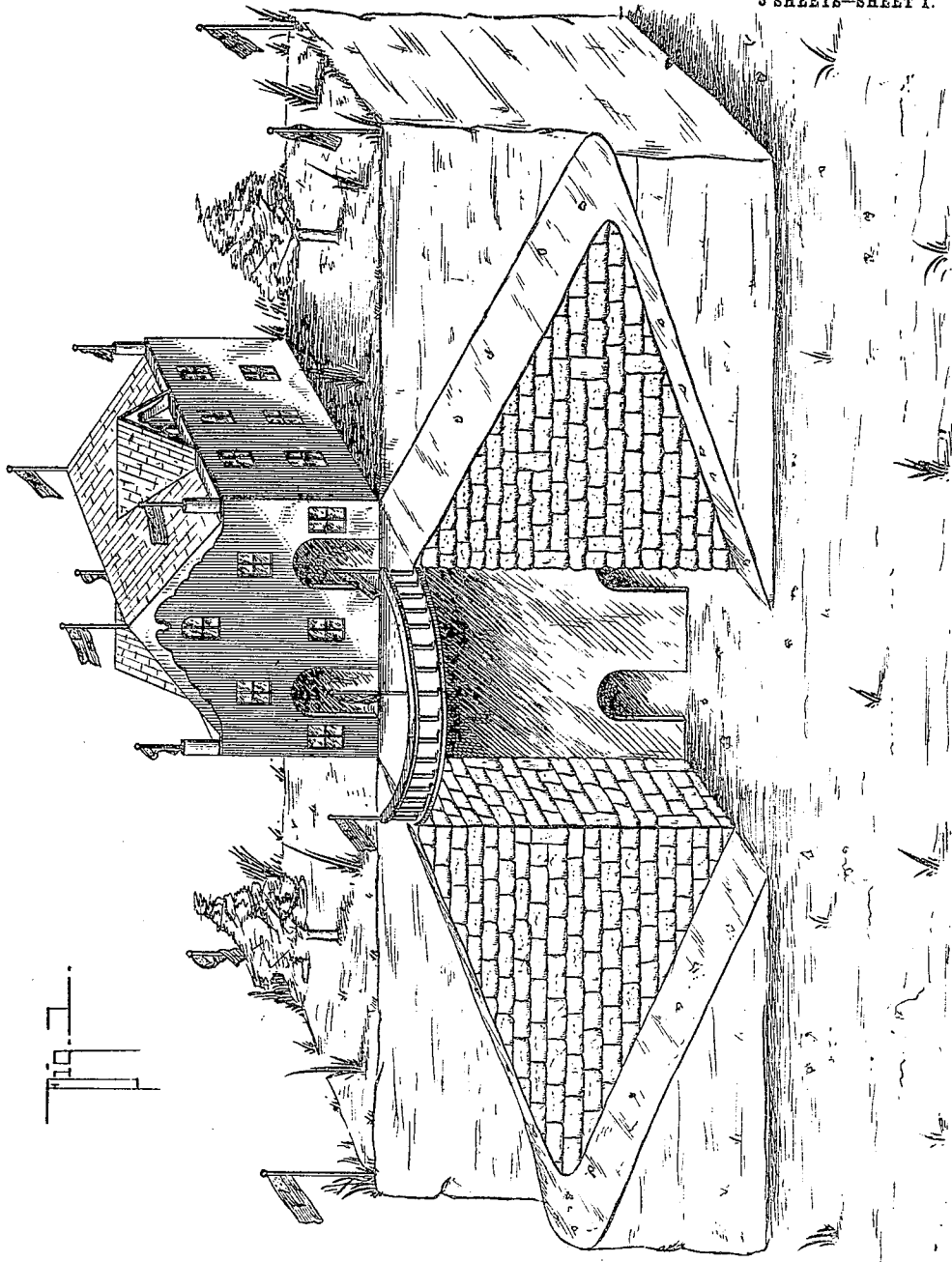
No. 817,577.

PATENTED APR. 10, 1906.

G. A. MILLER,
THEATRICAL SCENIC APPARATUS.

APPLICATION FILED JUNE 24, 1905.

3 SHEETS—SHEET 1.



WITNESSES:

O. W. Holmes
John J. Schrott,

INVENTOR

Gustav A. Miller,

BY

Fred G. Dietrich & Co.
ATTORNEYS

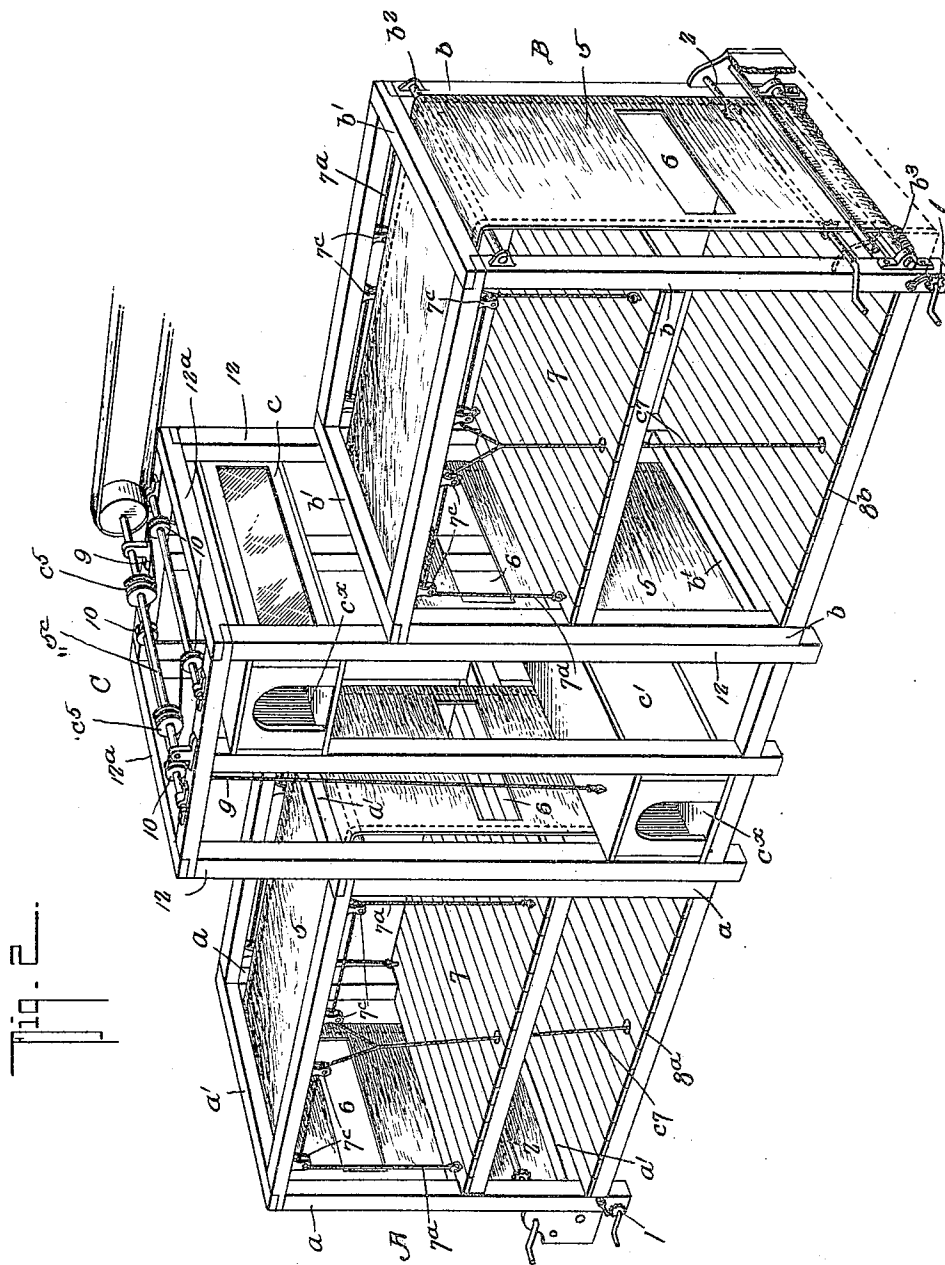
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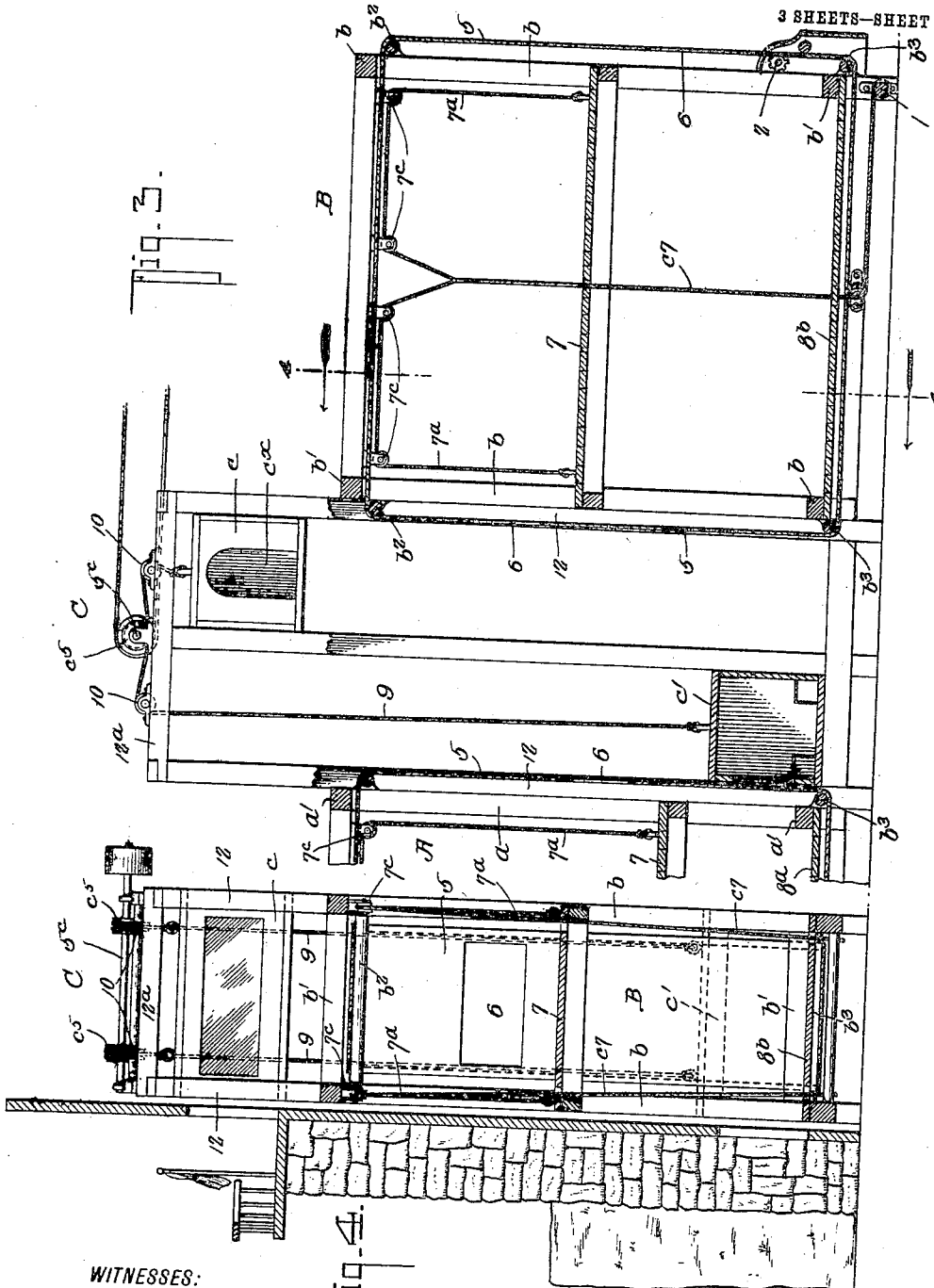
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

GUSTAV A. MILLER, OF WICHITA, KANSAS.

THEATRICAL SCENIC APPARATUS.

No. 817,577.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented April 10, 1906.

Application filed June 24, 1905. Serial No. 266,903.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, GUSTAV A. MILLER, residing at Wichita, in the county of Sedgwick and State of Kansas, have invented a new and Improved Theatrical Scenic Apparatus, of which the following is a specification.

My invention is in the nature of an improved theatrical scenic apparatus or peep-show of that character in which one or more scenic effects or plays can be viewed while the patron is carried along in such a manner that a number of different shows or scenic effects can be readily viewed during one complete trip of the patrons or audience; and my invention seeks to provide an improvement of the character stated which can be economically put up and which will be found especially desirable at seaside or other summer resorts or as a permanent exhibit.

In its general nature my invention comprehends an improved arrangement of a plurality of scenic effects or stages arranged one above the other, an endless curtain that incloses the stages and which has designed thereon scenic representations and is at intervals provided with sight-openings through which scenic effects or performances on the several stages may be readily observed, combined with a means for seating the audience and elevating them, so that they can be brought into position to view the scenic effects or performances in the several stages, and which also serves to lower them to a point of exit.

My invention also embodies novel arrangement of scenic representation, including two entrances to a double elevator in which the audiences seat themselves to view the scene and their shows, so arranged that as one set of patrons passes down to the point of exit, reviewing the scenic effects or shows disposed before them, another set is passing up, viewing another set of stage and scenic effects; and in its more subordinate features my invention consists in certain details of construction and peculiar combination of parts, all of which will be hereinafter fully described, and pointed out in the appended claims, and illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view which illustrates the external appearance of my invention. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the double set of stage and scenic mechanisms combined with the audience-holding elevators and the operating mechanisms for the several

parts. Fig. 3 is a longitudinal section of the parts shown in Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a transverse section on the line 4 4 on Fig. 3.

In the practical application of my invention I provide a scenic effect in the nature of a building having a theater appearance mounted upon a rocky or rugged bluff, to which access is had by rustic paths that lead to two doorways in the front of the theater and below which are two doorways, indicating underground-passages and which in my arrangement form the exits to the scenic or show house, while the upper doors form the entrance, and in practice the said building, the rustic scenery, the paths, &c., may be gotten up in the manner of ordinary scenic forms or structures, or when the exhibit is to be of a permanent nature may be constructed as a solid or completed structure.

The scenic displays or shows in my invention are in duplicate, so that two sets of patrons can be viewing each one set of scenic and stage effects as they move upwardly in the elevator-holding compartment, while the other set of patrons descend, and for such purposes the audience-holding means is located between the two sets of scenic and stage shows and the elevators suspended to counterbalance. In its details of structure the two scenic or stage shows each consists of a rectangular framing comprising the end uprights $a a b b$, the cross-timbers $a' a' b' b'$, and the stationary or bottom stages or platforms $8^a 8^b$. Since the construction of the two sets of stage and scenic shows (designated A and B) are precisely alike and operate the same, I shall describe only one set of such device in detail.

At the upper and the lower ends of the frame B are mounted the transversely-disposed curtain-rollers $b^2 b^3$, over which passes an endless curtain 5 5, on which is painted or otherwise delineated scenic representations, and this curtain passes under the bottom platform 8^b and over the movable stage 7, and it has a number of horizontal sight-openings 6, through which the scenic or other displays in the stationary platform or stage 8^b and the vertically-movable stage can be seen.

The supporting-frame for the elevators (designated C) is located between the two sets of scenic and stage-framings A and B, and it consists of the front and rear uprights 12 12, which extend above the show-frames A and B and are braced at the top by the cross-timbers $12^a 12^a$, upon which two sets of elevator-

pulleys 10 10 are journaled, over which pass the cables 9 9, which are connected at their ends to the two elevator-cages C C and which are relatively so mounted and the cables are of such length that as the cage C ascends the cage C' descends, and vice versa. Any suitable means may be provided for elevating the cages C and C'—for example, by passing the cables one or more laps about the centrally-disposed drive-sheaves c^5 , mounted on a drive-shaft 5^c, as shown. The cages C C at their front end have doors c^x c^x , which when the cages reach the uppermost position are in alinement with the entrance to the theater and when at their lowermost position are in alinement with the underground exits. The seats in the elevator-cages run lengthwise thereof and face outwardly toward the shows A and B, and for such purpose that side of the cages next the shows are open and preferably glazed. The movable stages 7 7 are suspended on cables 7^a 7^a, that pass up and over pulleys 7^c 7^c, connected with a single cable c^7 , that passes down through openings in the stages 7 and 8^b and then outwardly under the stage 8^b, over guide-pulleys, to a winding-shaft 1, having a crank or other means for turning it. The endless curtains 5 are driven by roller-shafts 2, mounted on the outer end of the show-frames A and B, and is also provided with a crank or other means for turning it.

So far as described the general arrangement, the manner of operation, and the advantages of my invention, it is believed, will be apparent.

It will be noticed that by having the endless curtains with scenic effect the audience in the cages, which can be sustained at any desired height, can view the scenic effects in the curtain 5 as it travels past the open side of the cage when the cage is lowered in line with one of the openings 6. Assuming such opening to be in line above the top stage 7 a performance in miniature or in reality can be viewed on the stage 7, and after this performance is complete a further drop of the cage and shifting of the curtain 5 to bring its opening 6 to a point above the stage 8 another performance or scenic pantomime, marionettes or real, on stage 8 can be viewed, after which the cage can be lowered and the occupants leave through the underground exits.

My invention while simple and capable of being economically constructed can be put up either in a knockdown or permanent shape. When of the knockdown type, the house, mountain, and path effects may be readily made by painting on a curtain or other flexible material or paper that can be either folded or shaped over the internal

mechanism, and since the elevator portion of the mechanism is the only part that has to sustain weight the two side show-frames when utilized for marionette, mimic, or simple scenic effects can be made up of very light framework, it being understood that when live performers are to appear on the stages the structure is built accordingly.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. As an improvement in scenic theaters, the following elements in combination: a permanent stage, a vertically-adjustable stage, located above the permanent stage, means for raising or lowering the adjustable stage, an endless curtain that passes over the fronts of said stages and covers them, said curtains having scenic displays thereon and formed with horizontally-extended openings, means for actuating the endless curtains, an elevator-cage, said cage having an end entrance and one side open, means for sustaining said elevator-cage in front of the endless curtain and moving it vertically over the said curtain and an external body that covers the actuating parts having the representation of a house provided with an ingress-door located at the highest point of movement of the cage, and an outlet-door located at the lowest point of the cage, all being arranged substantially as shown and for the purposes described.

2. The hereinbefore-described improvement in scenic theaters, comprising the following elements in combination, a plurality of permanent stages, a plurality of vertically-adjustable stages, over the permanent stages, means for adjusting the movable stages, an endless curtain that passes over the fronts of the said stages and covers them, said curtains having scenic displays thereon and having horizontally-extended openings and means for actuating the curtains, a plurality of elevator-cages, one for each set of stages, said elevator-cages having an end entrance and having one side open, means for sustaining each cage in front of its adjacent endless curtain, and moving it vertically over said curtain, said means including devices for lowering one cage as the other is being raised, and an external body that covers the actuating parts, having the representation of a house provided with ingress-doors, located at the highest point of movement of the cages and also having doors at the lowest point of movement of the cages, as set forth.

GUSTAV A. MILLER.

Witnesses:

GEO. W. ADAMS,
S. S. HAWKS.