

# LIVING MARIONETTES.

## A GOOD "ONE MAN" SHOW.



Figure 1

ance of the weird creature, half human and half doll, makes the spectators laugh, and this laugh will scarcely subside until the curtain has been finally rung down on the entertainment.

The mysterious combination shown in Fig. 1 needs but little explanation, since it is very clear that the head is human whilst the body is wooden. This makes so comical a figure that anything but pure humour would seem singularly out of place issuing from those lips; it must, therefore, be clearly understood that the living Marionette is comic from beginning to end.

The stage must be about 3 feet wide, and of the same height, thus allowing room for the head and false body. The stage front may be made in the same manner adopted for the Marionettes proper, though so much space will not be required at the top, as can be seen from Fig. 2. The stage itself should be about

**A**LIVING Marionette entertainment is well adapted for a "One Man Show," and sure to prove a success. The very appearance

12 inches deep, and arranged at such a height that when standing behind, your chin will be about 11 inches above the stage. The whole construction will then be somewhat like the box and stage of an old-fashioned Punch and Judy Show.

A strip of perfectly black cloth is next stretched from side to side along the inner edge of the stage, i.e. the part farthest removed from the audience. This cloth should be 11 inches wide, and when in place will occupy the position shown in Fig. 3. Between this edge of the stage and the actual back of the box should be a space of 15 inches. The actual back must also be covered with black cloth. The sectional appearance of the stage will therefore be as in Fig. 4. An arrangement of curtains, as described in connection with the Marionette stage, must be fitted with the strings below the stage, in order that you may pull them unseen by the audience.

The wooden bodies should be 10 inches high, and headless. A collar must be sewn to the costume where the neck should be, in

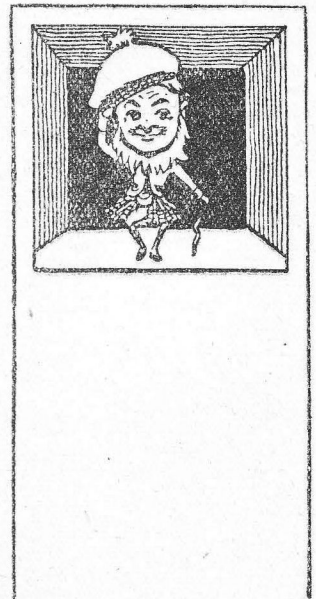


Figure 3

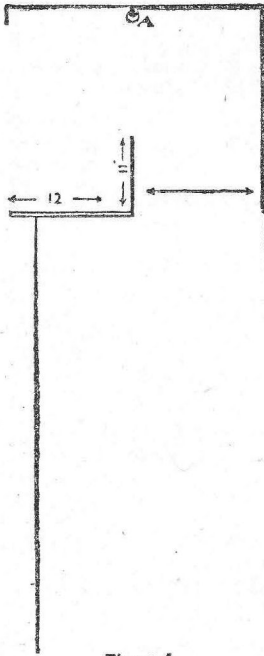


Figure 4

order to conceal the spot where the living head is thrust over the false body:

The most satisfactory way of working the limbs of the puppet is as follows: Above the stage, in the flies, a rod, upon which are strung several brass rings, extends from side to side (A, Fig. 4). Now the strings attached to the arms and legs pass up and through these rings, whence they descend behind the cloth screen, and are moved invisibly by the

operator. As there is only one figure to work, you can hold the arm threads in one hand, the leg threads in the other, whilst the supporting body thread passes in a loop around your neck. In this way the body is forced to move with the living head, as though really a part of it (Fig. 5)

You should now make up your face to suit the character. Suppose the body represents an ordinary Jack Tar, with bell-bottomed trousers, blue collar, and so forth. The comic sailor's beard must be so adjusted that its bushiness will conceal what may be called the junction between your head and his false body. The straw hat or round cap can be put on at a nautical tilt.

Having fixed the body-thread around your throat and fastened the beard, crane your own neck forward, and place the Marionette body upon the stage, having the strip of black cloth between it and your shoulders.

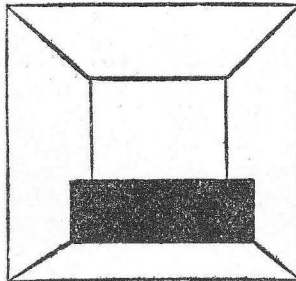


Figure 3

Arrange the arm and leg strings through the rings, and keep the ends in your hands ready for action. When everything is completed draw the curtain and commence.

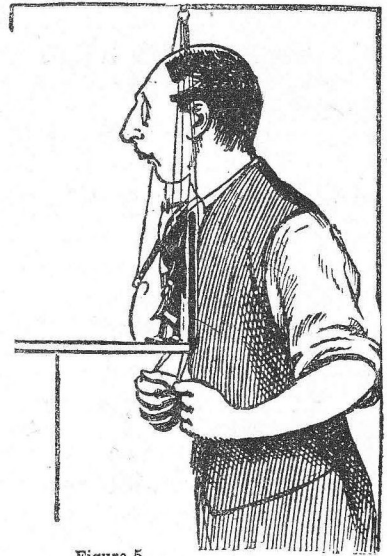


Figure 5

#### COMICAL EFFECTS.

Songs and monologues are naturally the best turns for the living Marionette. Choose a rollicking, nautical song, suitable to Jack Tar. All the gestures and motions can be given to the limbs by means of the threads, whilst every now and again Jack can enliven himself and the audience by executing a horn-pipe. A little practice with the leg-strings will enable you to perform this with great effect.

Always strive to obtain comical effects. If the gallant mariner has a telescope in his hand, this should be raised to the eye, where the extraordinary contrast between the tiny hand holding a midget telescope, and the enormous face emerging from its forest of beard, is ludicrous in the extreme.

Or if the other branch of the Service be on the boards, Mr. Thomas Atkins, resplendent in scarlet, may flourish a sabre, which, at full arm's length, will scarcely reach the tip of his ear. A tiny rifle raised to the shoulder makes another laughable effect.

The Man about Town is a

humorous figure. Dressed in an exaggeration of the latest style, with a dapper strut, flourishing a modish cane, he is a person to be admired—and laughed at.

Over the pigmy body looms an enormous face, smoking a huge cigar, big even for an ordinary individual. Naturally it would be impossible to sing or speak with the cigar in his mouth, and it cannot be gracefully removed with dummy hands that will scarcely reach it. The simplest method of getting the cigar out of the way is to make "Bertie" stumble over his own cane, for instance, and in the agitation of the moment drop his "smoke." He will then be able to air his peculiarities in comfort, and will prove a most amusing personage.

Two figures may be introduced upon the stage, although they are likely to prove a tight

fit. Some laughable dialogues and duets are the result. Quarrels or love scenes must be intensely funny. A young gentleman and a younger lady can be introduced with much formality, and, advancing to shake hands, meet with an embarrassing adventure.

Owing to the smallness of their arms and the largeness of their faces, before their hands have met their lips have perforce sealed the contract of friendship.

Living Marionettes are sometimes introduced in conjunction with an ordinary Marionette show, and should be given after the latter has concluded. The contrast between the symmetrical little manikins and the distorted living doll will be remarkable, whilst the exuberant humour of the latter is sure to provide a pleasant finale to what all will judge a delightful evening.

## Riddles in Rhyme

My first is one of St. James's girls,  
My second she owns, and they're white as  
pearls.

My third is the lordliest "nut" on earth,  
My fourth is an organ of priceless worth.  
My fifth, Fatty Wynn's plate after a meal:  
My whole is a sportsman, honest and real.

*Solution to the above.*

M a r i e  
t E e t h  
D a R e y  
h e a R t  
e m p t Y

My first is a coin of trifling worth,  
My next, a resort of fashion and mirth.  
My third, a sad state you are sometimes in,  
My fourth is a prince of dusky skin,  
My fifth is used in an indoor game,  
My last is a vessel—a curious name!  
The initials and finals, when set in a row,  
Will reveal the names of two fellows you know.

*Solution to the one at bottom of first column.*

G r o a T  
R i v i e r A  
U n w e l l  
N a b o B  
D o m i n O  
Y a c h T

My first is an ancient Midland town;  
If you sat on my next, you'd be stung—don't  
sit down!

My third is a man who invents an idea,  
My fourth is a half of my whole—persevere!  
My fifth Bunter loves (soon he'll eat one, and  
choke),

My sixth is a fellow who plans a deep joke.  
My last—why, you've all heard them thunder  
and blare,

In No. 6 Study, St. Jim's, one is there.  
My whole, if you place the letters aright,  
Two prominent schoolboys will bring to light

*Solution to the above.*

w a r W i c k  
a n t H e a p  
c r e A t o r  
H E R R I E S  
j a m T a r t  
s p o O f e r  
c o r N e t s