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PUPPET SHOWS.

The Marionette Drama Almost as Old as the World Itself.

How few theater goers of the present day realize that centuries ago, when there were no actors or actresses to argue with managers as to the size of type their name should appear in or what place on the program they were to have, the great amount of amusement of the people of that day was derived from the marionette drama. The marionette theater was the only place where one could hear or see a play. The artists were the puppets, and their ability lay in the deftness of the thread puller, which was the Sanskrit name of the stage manager, and yet some of those puppets were as famous in their day as our well known stars of today.

A peep into the origin of this form of drama shows that it is almost as old as the world itself.

The word marionette is derived from morio, meaning fool, or from Marion, the man who divorced marionettes from the church plays and used them for small comedy plays in Paris, where today they are popular in several manikin theaters.

The word fantoccini is Italian for marionettes, being derived from fantimo, meaning child, and the word puppet comes from poupee, a baby or doll. Marionettes are of high antiquity, because figures with movable limbs have been found in the tombs of Egypt and in the ruins of Etruria. They were common among the Greeks and from them were imported to Rome. Marionette plays are now popular in China and India and for many centuries maintained an important place among the European countries.

Goethe and Lessing mention them, and as late as 1731 La Sage wrote plays for puppets to perform. Don Quixote wrote "the curious puppet show which represents the play of Melissandra and Don Geyferos," one of the best shows that have been acted in time out of mind in this kingdom.

Greece, Rome and Egypt had their marionettes centuries ago, and the historian Herodotus mentions them. Prethenses of Athens was given the very stage in Athens on which the dramas of Euripides were enacted for his puppets by the Archons of Athens. Today they are a favorite amusement in Java, the land of coffee, the Javanese marionette being moved by long, slender sticks from behind a fence, and the figures of wood and leather are taken as highly serious by the spectators, some of them portraying divinities in religious themes.—Philadelphia Ledger.

A Wise Choice.

An old philosopher who had two pupils one day gave each a sum of money and told them to purchase something with it which should fill the room where they studied. One pupil bought a large quantity of hay and straw, and the next morning he invited his master to see his room, which he had almost filled with the results of his purchase.

"Ah! Very good, very good!" exclaimed the philosopher. And now, turning to the other pupil, he said, "Well, friend, what have you bought?"

"A small lamp and some oil which will fill the room with a light in the dark evening hours. This will enable us to continue our studies by night as well as by day if we should so wish," replied the pupil.

"You have made the best purchase," said the philosopher.

He Was Helping.

A Baltimore man whose son is a student at Princeton has had frequent occasion to remonstrate with his boy touching his extravagance, but the father invariably "comes to the front" when request is made for further funds.

In his last letter to his son the father, after the usual recital, stated that he was forwarding a check for \$50, and he wound up with:

"My son, your studies are costing me a great deal."

To which the hopeful in his next letter replied:

"I know it, father, and I don't study very hard either."—Harper's Magazine.

Heredity and Natural Selection.

Heredity is the tendency of every organism to produce its like. But in the production of the new forms there is, generally speaking, a slight variation in some cases from the parent form, and it is in the direction of these variations that natural selection acts. The variation repeats itself and keeps on doing so until finally the change is so marked that what practically amounts to a new species results. Thus are accomplished by slow results, extending through ages perhaps, the ends that man by artificial selection accomplishes in a few years.—Exchange.

COUNTING MONEY.

For Coins Uncle Sam Uses Machines That Make No Mistakes.

Uncle Sam is now too big, too prosperous and too much in a hurry even to count his money, and instead of counting his coins by hand he simply runs them through a sort of hopper operated by electricity, and an automatic register shows how many went through. The coins fall into a bag and are tied up and sealed, the government guaranteeing that the correct number is in the bag. The machine can make no mistake; hence Uncle Sam feels safe in making his guarantee. In this way all the money is counted out at Washington to go to the sub-treasuries and banks throughout the country. The treasury does a great deal of counting of money, and for the purpose women are employed rather than men, as it has been found after long experience that women make fewer mistakes; hence the operators at the electric machines are of the female sex.

But there is one place in the life of the coin where it must be counted by hand, and that is when it comes back to the treasury for redemption. The money then must be gone over by hand to separate the foreign, mutilated, worn out and counterfeit pieces, a work that requires very quick perception, and women have been found to do it excellently well. Usually they can detect a counterfeit coin by its color or as it lies among the others on the table, but if not then the operator captures it when she tosses it from one hand to another, for there is a false ring in its chink as it leaps into her palm.

There are some interesting facts connected with copper cents. You would think that, inasmuch as pennies are money, they would be fairly well taken care of, wouldn't you? But they very mysteriously creep away and are seen no more. We have to put 80,000,000 of them into circulation annually, and the majority never come back for redemption. You can hardly destroy such a coin, so we infer that as they are changing hands frequently and are of small value they are handled carelessly and lost.

One woman in the treasury at Washington spends all her time in making the little paper covers which are seen around the sacks of smaller coins in the banks. They are called "cartridges" and are popular with the banks, as they are easily handled.—American Banker.

He Packed His Trunk.

A very newly married man just back from his honeymoon revealed a secret to a group of friends one night recently.

"You know I was very suspicious of my best man and the ushers," said he, "and I was cocksure they were going to put over some horse-play, so to be on the safe side I packed my trunk myself on the morning of the wedding and shipped it to the Grand Central station. When it came time to dress for the big event in the evening I got all rigged out and then looked in the closet for my shoes. They weren't there nor anywhere else. I had packed them in that trunk, and they were in the baggage room five miles away. The stores were all closed. It was just an hour before the ceremony. Nothing to it. I borrowed our coachman's best patent leathers and was married in those."—New York Sun.

Mary, Queen of Scots.

Mary, queen of Scots, was tall and slender, but very graceful in all her actions. Her face does not seem to have been especially beautiful, for she had rather irregular features, but her fascination of manner was irresistible. She had a way of cocking her head a little to one side and of looking sideways at the person with whom she was talking that gave a strong impression of coquetry. She had very small hands and feet and was fond of showing both, often having her gowns shortened in order that her feet might be seen. She always had her own hair cut close and wore a wig to save the time and trouble of hairdressing.

Siberia.

Siberia is no longer thought of as a land of desolate ice fields and barren steppes. On the other hand, it is known to be one of the most wonderful lands on earth. The rich prairies of the middle Amur and the Ural region, where the wild vine grows freely, and the fertile black earth plains of the Tobol and the Ishim—not mere patches of rich land, but steppes covering tens of millions of acres—and vast tracts densely covered with forests predict for this far northern country a remarkable future. Its population is steadily increasing, and it is already beginning to be one of the great grain centers of the earth.—New York American.

A Christmas Gift for you!!

On Saturday, Dec. 24th, at our store, corner of First and Meridian Sts., we will give to each person making a cash purchase amounting to \$1.00 or more, a pretty dish absolutely free as a CHRISTMAS GIFT TO YOU! Remember the place and date.

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