Billy Bunter's Blunder!

A Short Story of Greyfriars School

By FRANK NUGENT

(Of the Remove Form)

"ANY luck, Sammy?"

Billy Bunter blinked eagerly at his minor as the latter rolled into No. 7 Study.

Sammy shook his head dolefully.

"No luck at all!" he said. "I've moved heaven and earth to raise the wind. I've tackled everybody in the Second, but the beasts buttoned up their pockets when they saw me coming!"

"So you got more kicks than pence—what?"

"A jolly sight more!"

"Same here," said Billy. "I canvassed the whole of the Remove, but there was nothing doing. The fellows refused to believe that my postal-order was on the way, and that I should settle up as soon as it arrived."

"I'm not surprised," grunted Sammy. "That postal-order yarn of yours is as old as the hills, and as stale as a prehistoric sardine! Can't you think of something new—some gilt-edged wheeze—for raising a loan? You're always swanking that you've got more brains than the rest of the family put together. Very well. Let's see you get your think-tank to work!"

Silence fell between the two Bunters—the silence of despair.

Billy was in the state known as stony. So was Sammy. Billy had been stony for weeks. So had Sammy. Billy had made frantic efforts to raise the wind. So had Sammy. And the enterprising firm of Bunter Brothers was still without capital. Worse than that, they both owed money. And they realised the bitter truth of the saying that in the midst of life we are in debt.

Billy had just made a tour of the Remove studies, in the hope of acquiring funds. He had repeated the same formula in every study, like a small infant reciting a poem by heart.

"So you're not going to tell me what the stunt is?" demanded Sammy. "No!" "Selfish beast!" snorted Sammy. (See page 170)

"I say, you fellows! For once in a way, I happen to be stony; and if you'll advance me five bob I'll pay you back out of my postal-order, which is due to arrive by the very next post!"

This appeal failed to touch either the hearts or the pockets of the fellows it was addressed

to. And the manner of Billy Bunter's exit from the various studies had been much quicker than the manner of his entry. Sometimes he had been rolled out, sometimes booted out, and sometimes thrown out. But he had invariably finished up on his back in the passage, wondering if an earthquake had happened.

Sammy's experiences had been equally painful. His appeal for funds had left his schoolfellows cold.

Both Bunters were feeling hungry. Billy had only been allowed five helpings of apple pudding at dinner, while Sammy had not been permitted to go beyond three. And in their present state of impecuniosity the tuckshop was closed to them. Billy cudgelled his brains—such as they were—to think out a solution to the eternal problem of raising the wind.

It would be useless to write to his father.

Mr. Bunter was reported to have unlimited wealth stored away in the old oak chest at Bunter Court. But none of that wealth ever found its way to Greyfriars. Possibly, like Bunter Court, it did not exist. Anyway, it was easier to get blood out of a stone than to squeeze a remittance out of Billy Bunter's pater.

It would be equally useless to write to Aunt Sally or to Aunt Prudence. Those good ladies were very generous in the matter of giving advice to their nephews, but that advice was seldom, if ever, accompanied by hard cash.

And then, just as he was about to abandon the problem, inspiration came to Billy Bunter.

Why not approach Colonel Wharton or Major Cherry—or both?"

Billy Bunter had, at various times, stayed at Wharton Lodge. He had also been a guest of Bob Cherry's father. He imagined, in his colossal conceit, that both gentlemen were very favourably disposed towards him—that they doted upon him as if he were their own son.

"Surely, if I ask them for a small loan, they'll do the decent thing?" murmured Billy.

Sammy darted a suspicious glance at his major.

"What are you muttering about?" he demanded.

"I've got a wheeze!"

"A wheeze for raising the wind?"

"Yes."

"Get it off your chest!"

But Billy showed no desire to do this. He remained silent, heedless of Sammy's glare.

"So you're not going to tell me what the stunt is?" demanded Sammy.

"No!"

"Selfish beast! Unbrotherly cad! I can see what your little game is. You don't want me to have a share in the spoils."

Billy pointed to the door.

"Scat!" he growled.

And Sammy, realising that he was no match for his major, physically, "scatted."

The fat fag was furious at not being admitted into Billy's confidence. But something seemed to tell him that he would have the laugh of his major at the finish.

As soon as Sammy had gone, Billy wrote two letters—one to Colonel Wharton and the other to Major Cherry.

It did not occur to him that he was descending to the level of a begging-letter writer. Indeed, he did not regard the letters as being of a begging nature at all.

"All I'm asking for is a loan," he told himself. "And, being a fellow of honour, I shall settle up the moment my postal-order comes!"

The fat junior had told the tale of the postal-order so often that he had almost come to believe it himself!

No sooner had he finished the letters than his study-mate, Peter Todd, came in.

Billy Bunter hurriedly folded the letters, and thrust them into the envelopes, which were already stamped and addressed. He sealed them in hot haste, fearful lest Peter Todd should discover what he had been doing.

"What's the game, Tubby?" asked Peter, in surprise.

Billy Bunter did not reply. He snatched up the letters and rushed through the open doorway like a cyclone, almost bowling over his study-mate en route.

Two minutes later the letters reposed safely in the pillar-box. And Billy Bunter heaved a deep sigh of relief.

But the fat junior would have felt far less

easy in his mind had he realised that, in his feverish haste, he had mixed up the two letters, putting Colonel Wharton's in Major Cherry's envelope, and vice versa!

II.

COLONEL WHARTON was seated at the breakfast-table at Wharton Lodge. Before him lay a little heap of letters.

The colonel's attention was arrested by the topmost letter of the pile. It was addressed to him in a sprawling, spider-like hand, and the postmark was Friardale.

"H'm! That's not Harry's writing, I'll be bound!" mused Colonel Wharton. "I wonder—"

He ripped the envelope and drew out a grubby sheet of notepaper. The next moment he started forward in his chair, and his eyes nearly bulged out of his head.

The communication which greeted his gaze ran as follows:

Colonel Wharton fairly spluttered with wrath. "A mean, stingy beast, am I? A conceited autocrat? I'll make that precious rascal feel sorry he ever penned such words!" (See this page)

"Deer Major Cherry,

"I make no appolergy for writing to you, as yore son and I have allways been boozum palls.

"The fackt is, I happen to be sumwhat short of the reddy; in other wurds, I am on the rox. I reelly don't no wich way to tern. My pater is away on the Kontinent, and I can't get into tuch with him. The same remark applies to my Ants. I did think of writing to Colonel Wharton, asking for a lone, but he's such a meen, stinjy beest, and such a conseated orterkrat, that I'm sure it wouldn't be any use. But I no you won't fale me, deer Major, and if you will let me have a fiver by return of post I will repay you out of my postle-order, when it comes.

"Hopping you will be able to meat my wishes in this respeckt, I remane,

"Yores sinseerly,

"W. G. BUNTER.

"P.S.—You won't let Colonel Wharton no what I think of him, will you?"

For some moments Colonel Wharton sat like a man in a dream.

His first impression was that the whole thing was a practical joke. The amazing spelling seemed to suggest that.

On consideration, however, the colonel realised what must have happened. This letter had unwittingly been put into the wrong envelope.

Colonel Wharton fairly spluttered with wrath.

"A mean, stingy beast, am I?" he snorted. "A conceited autocrat? I'll make that precious rascal feel sorry he ever penned such words! I'll get through to Dr. Locke on the telephone—no, I won't—I'll pay a personal visit to Greyfriars! After all, I haven't seen Harry for some time."

And the colonel promptly instructed his chauffeur to have the car ready after lunch.

Meanwhile another military gentleman—Major Cherry, to be precise—was ramping and raving, and letting off steam, in the breakfast-room at his residence.

The major had just finished reading the following extraordinary epistle:

"Deer Colonel Wharton,

"I need no interduckshun to you, as I have on numerus okkashuns vissited Wharton Lodge as yore gest, and been the life and

sole of the party. I am allso a close chum of yore nephew Harry. A long wile ago I prommised you I would take him under my wing at Greyfriars, and I have foolfilled my prommis.

"I now wish to approach you on a rather dellyket subjick. I am short of funds, and for varyus reesons my titled rellations are unable to help me. I did think of writing to Major Cherry, but he's such a cross-graned old buffer that I don't no how he'd take it. Besides, I hate his son Bob like poyson, so I will seek no favers from that ¼. You are much more of a gentleman than Major Cherry, so I appeel to you with konfidense. If you will send me a fiver by return, I shall nevver forget yore jennyrossity. An I will pay you back as soon as my postle-order comes.

"I trussed you are kwite well as it leeves me at pressent with a slight tuch of hooping-koff.

"Yores in antisipashun,
"W. G. BUNTER.

"P.S.—Should you meat Major Cherry at any time, please don't tell him my private oppinion of him."

"The cheeky young cub—the insolent young jackanapes!" roared Major Cherry. "A cross-grained old buffer, am I?" (See this page)

"The cheeky young cub—the insolent young jackanapes!" roared Major Cherry, striding up and down in great wrath. "A cross-grained old buffer, am I? Much less of a gentleman than Colonel Wharton! By George! I—I'll make that audacious young reprobate eat his words! I'll notify his headmaster—no, I won't—I'll go to Greyfriars and deal with the rascal myself, begad!"

Major Cherry continued to deliver himself in this strain. Billy Bunter's very outspoken criticism had infuriated him beyond measure.

The major had some business to transact that morning, but after lunch he drove to the railway station and took a ticket to Friardale.

Billy Bunter wasn't expecting visitors that afternoon; but this was one of those cases where the unexpected would happen—with a vengeance!

III.

WE—that is to say, the Famous Five of the Re move—were at tea in No. 1 Study, when the throbbing of an automobile in the Close caused us to go to the window.

Billy Bunter was present. He had been trying to cadge a free feed, and we had been about to pitch him out neck and crop when the arrival of the car diverted our attention.

"Why, it's your uncle, Harry!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"My uncle! Great Scott! I wasn't expecting him."

"I—I say, you fellows," said Billy Bunter, "Colonel Wharton's come specially to see me!"

"Eh? Why should he want to see you, you fat duffer?" demanded Johnny Bull.

Bunter said nothing. But he thought he knew why the colonel had come. Realising that the fat junior was urgently in need of funds, he had made a special journey to Greyfriars in order to hand him a fiver. So Bunter thought, anyway. But he was soon to be disillusioned!

A moment later Colonel Wharton came into the study. He exchanged hasty greetings with Harry—then he spun round upon Billy Bunter.

"You impertinent young rascal!" he thundered.

"Oh, really, sir——"

"How dare you make libellous statements concerning your betters? How dare you, I repeat?"

Billy Bunter looked utterly flabbergasted.

"I—I——" he stammered feebly.

"What's Bunter been doing, uncle?" inquired Wharton.

"He wrote a letter to Major Cherry, and apparently sent it to me in error. He referred to me in the letter as a mean, stingy beast and a conceited autocrat!"

"Oh, help!" groaned Billy Bunter.

And he fervently wished that the floor would open and swallow him up. The floor, however, remained firm.

Colonel Wharton then cross-examined the fat junior at some length, and pointed out to him, in measured tones, the error of his ways.

"I should be perfectly justified in reporting you to Dr. Locke," he concluded. "Your conduct is altogether unprecedented!"

"Leave the fat worm to us, uncle," said Harry Wharton. "We'll deal with him!"

And we did!

Billy Bunter was heaved across the study table, face downwards, and a fives bat was applied to his plump person. Johnny Bull acted as public executioner.

"Yaroooooh! Help! Murder!"

The victim's yells of anguish echoed along the Remove passage.

"I think that will do," said Colonel Wharton at length.

And Johnny Bull desisted.

No sooner had Billy Bunter rolled off the table on to the floor than Fisher T. Fish, the Yankee junior, poked his head into the study.

"Guess your pater's here, Cherry!" he announced.

"What!"

"He's on the warpath, too! Looks as if he's going to wring some galloot's neck!"

"Help!" panted Billy Bunter.

And he dashed wildly out of the study.

I will not attempt to describe in anything like detail the scene which followed.

The rest of the afternoon was devoted to a game of hare-and-hounds. Billy Bunter was the hare, and Major Cherry the hound.

"Has—has he gone?" inquired Bunter, anxiously.
"Ha, ha! Yes!"
"Thank goodness! I've never had such an awful afternoon in my life!" (See this page)

The unfortunate Owl dodged here, there, and everywhere in order to escape the vials of the major's wrath. Up and down staircases, in and out of studies, round the corridors, and across the Close, the terrified junior fled, as if a pack of wolves were at his heels. And, indeed, he would have preferred meeting a pack of wolves rather than the infuriated major.

Finally, Billy Bunter sought sanctuary in one of the lumber-rooms, where he remained until dusk.

When he emerged, hours later, covered with dust from head to foot, he encountered a grinning crowd of juniors in the passage.

"Has—has he gone, you fellows?" he inquired anxiously.

"Ha, ha! Yes!"

"Thank goodness! I've never had such an awful afternoon in my life! It's been a perfect nightmare!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter's painful ordeal was over at last, and he rolled disconsolately away. He hadn't gone very far when he caught sight of his minor.

Sammy was chuckling gleefully. His fat face was positively beaming with delight. It resembled a full moon.

"What's the joke?" demanded Billy irritably.

"I'm in funds!" chortled Sammy.

"Eh?"

The fat fag produced a couple of Treasury notes from his pocket. He flourished them under his major's nose.

"How—how did you come by those?" gasped Billy.

"It was like this," explained Sammy. "While Major Cherry was chasing you from pillar to post, he happened to drop his wallet, and there was a big bundle of notes inside. By a lucky chance, I found it——"

"And stuck to it?"

"Not at all! I returned it to Major Cherry, and he rewarded me with a couple of quid, and said I was an honest little fellow! He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter attempted to link his arm in that of his minor.

"I've always been an affectionate brother to you, Sammy," he said. "Let's come along to the tuckshop!"

But Sammy wrenched himself free.

"You wouldn't let me share your wheeze for raising the wind, so you're not going to share my wealth!" he said. "I'm going down to the bunshop in the village to have a jolly good tuck-in. Ta-ta!"

And Sammy rolled away, while Billy gazed after his minor's retreating figure, with feelings too deep for words!

—THE END—

Sports and Sportsmen

No. 9.—TUG OF WAR

See how they strain upon the rope!
Two sturdy lines of fellows;
While messages of cheer and hope
Each keen supporter bellows.
"Pull, Bunter, pull! On, Cherry, on!
Extend your beef and muscle!"
And not until their breath is gone
Will they give up the tussle.

This way and that the rivals sway,
'Mid loud and frantic cheering;
Each team resolved to win the day,
Each fellow persevering.
See! Billy Bunter tugs with vim,
Just note his look conceited,
As if to say that but for him
His team would be defeated.

Then comes a loud and mighty roar,
The strenuous fight is over;
And Billy Bunter chuckles, for
His comrades are in clover.
They stoutly pulled, with might and main,
Until they won the issue;
And now, worn out, they feel the strain
In every joint and tissue.

Among the sports where strength and weight
Are needed every minute,
The tug of war is just first-rate,
Few other sports are in it.
So let us, in the game of life,
Pull hard, each effort bigger,
And gamely combat storm and strife
With energy and vigour.

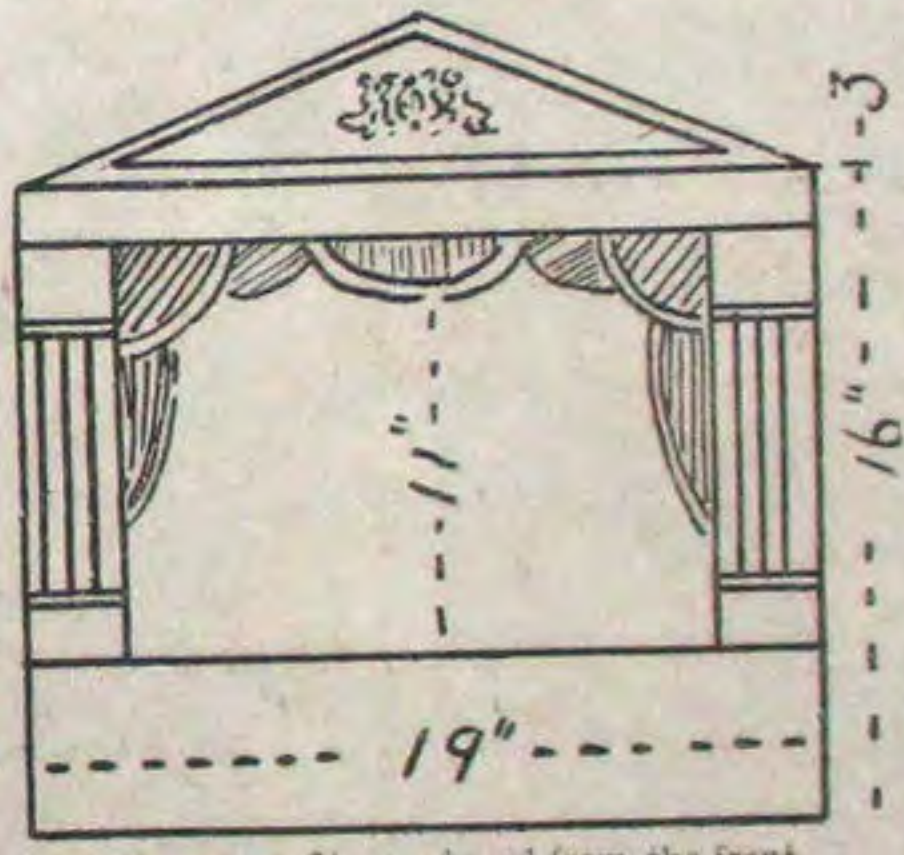
HOW TO MAKE AND WORK A PANORAMA

To the question, What is a Panorama? the answer might be, "A panorama is a painting of a complete scena viewed from a central point or made continuous upon an unrolling canvas."

This reply would be correct, but there is very much more to be said about it, for the "panorama" is the grandfather of the whole cinema family around us to-day, and possibly it is a more beautiful production. It can be viewed as a stationary picture, or as a moving one.

In the latter case wonderful effects can be produced by the aid of just a little ingenuity.

In the days of some fifty years ago the panorama was not only a thing of beauty, but a highly instructive amusement. It used to be taken about from town to town and exhibited by a clever lecturer well versed in his subject, who dilated on the various beauties presented, and who possessed a good store of anecdotes both amusing and instructive.



Panorama Stage, viewed from the front

In fact the advent of the panorama caused nearly as much excitement to the young folks then as the visit of a circus to the town. Many a grandfather, ay, also many a grandmother, recounting the pleasure enjoyed at the panorama of their young days, and would rejoice to have the opportunity of a repetition.

Now, it is the purpose of this article to tell our young readers how to make for themselves a panorama of simple and inexpensive construction and practical efficiency; all that is necessary to ensure success is a little ability and a little artistic taste, both of which are possessed by the youth of to-day.

HOW TO MAKE THE PANORAMA

If the reader likes carpentry he will quickly grasp the following directions:

See Fig. 1. This is the "floor." Procure pieces of wood of the following sizes:

A. 2 pieces 15 in. long, 1 in. wide, and ½ in. thick.

B. 2 pieces 12 in. long, 1 in. wide, and ½ in. thick.

C. 1 piece 18 in. long, 6 in. wide, and ½ in. thick.

D. 1 piece 14 in. long, 3 in. wide, and ½ in. thick.

To be fastened together as shown in the sketch.

On the piece marked D nail a strip of wood about ½ in. wide and one inch space from the front edge (see thick line on Fig. 1).

Fig. 2 is side view of the stage.

F. 1 piece of wood 12 in. by 3 in. wide and ½ in. thick

F. 4 pieces of wood 13 in. long by 1 in. wide and ½ in. thick.

G. 1 piece of wood 12 in. long by 1 in. wide and ½ in. thick.

Fasten together as indicated in the sketch,

and make duplicates for the other side of the stage.

Fig. 3. Two rollers will be required, and these should be 11 in. in length, and can be cut off a broom handle. A wire handle to be fixed in the top and a French nail driven into the other end, as shown in the sketch.

Fig. 4. This is the top of the stage.
3 pieces of wood 15 in. by 1 in. by $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
2 pieces of wood 12 in. by 1 in. by $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
1 piece of wood 18 in. by 6 in. by $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
The second rail on the top is to be fastened *under* the side rails, not on top of them, a space of one inch from the first rail, as in sketch.

Fig. 5. Front of stage.

Fig. 6 The Proscenium is the ornament

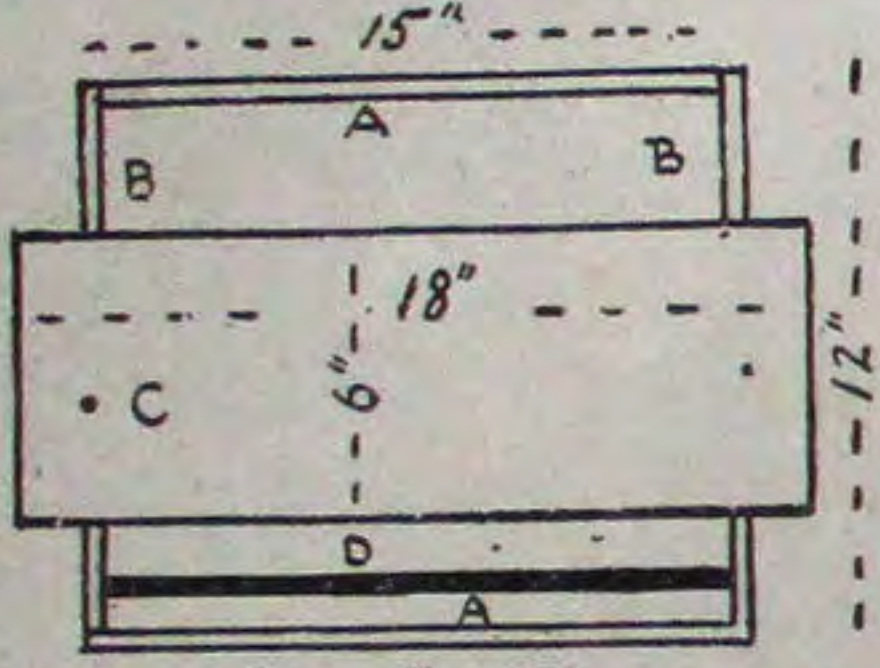


Fig. 1. Floor of Stage.

of the stage front. This is a simple design, but the young artist can, if he wishes, make a more elaborate one. It can be cut out of a sheet of cardboard, or in sections (which would be easier), according to the measurements in the sketch, or it could be made from pieces of white paper and stuck with gum, paste, or very thin glue, on stout brown paper, and then fastened on the stage front itself.

HOW TO WORK THE PANORAMA

A long roll of paper will be required, which can be provided very cheaply by obtaining a roll of decent wall-paper, about 22 in. wide. This, cut in halves the whole length, will give you about 36 ft. run twice over, by 11 in. in width, so you will have a good supply at little cost.

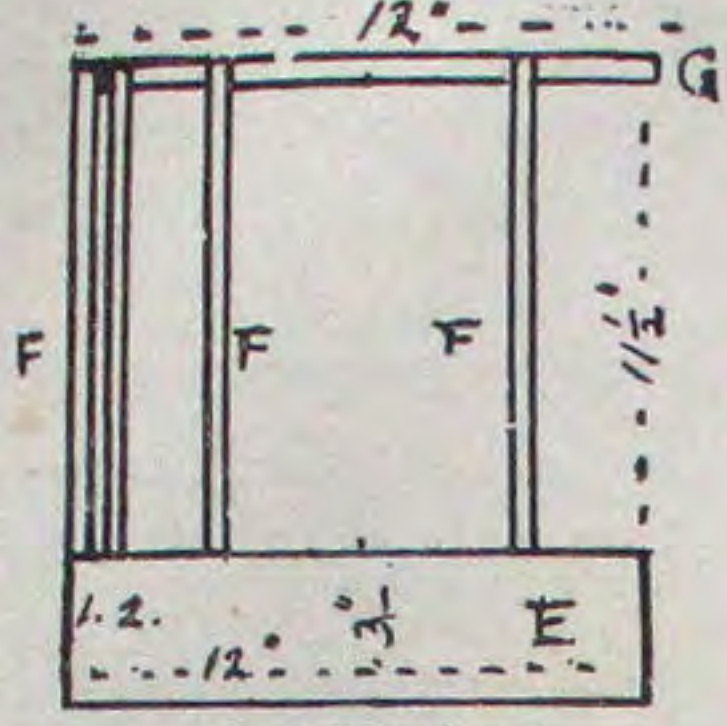


Fig. 2. Side view.

Now choose your subject: for instance, "Sights of London." Plenty of pictures for this could be got from various illustrated papers. Cut these out and paste them on the *plain* side of the scroll you have cut, at a little distance from each other. This might be followed by a "Visit to the Zoo." If so, cut out picture animals, and let these follow on the scroll. Then "Favourite Footballers" and "Cricketers" might follow; also "Cinema Stars." If on "The Thames," cut out pictures of barges, tugs, boats, etc., and add these on the scroll. A few anecdotes mixed in with the lecture as you proceed makes the thing the more enjoyable, especially if they are school stories.

Take another instance. Suppose you would like to give "The Prince of Wales's Visit to India," then begin with a picture of the Prince, and any of the staff that accompanied him. Then let a picture of the Renown follow on; pictures of some of the ships follow, a picture or two of the lighthouses round the coast, a yacht or two. Some of the pictures from such papers as the Daily Mail and Mirror, etc., will be useful for the Indian views. Then there's the "home-coming" of the prince—his arrival at the station, and drive to the Palace.

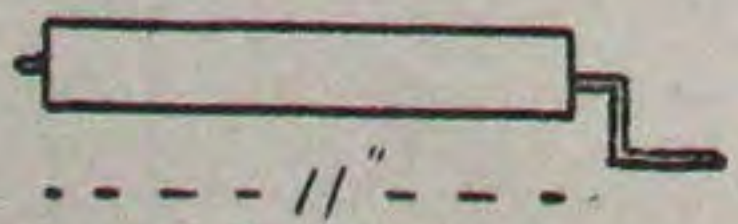


Fig. 3. Roller.

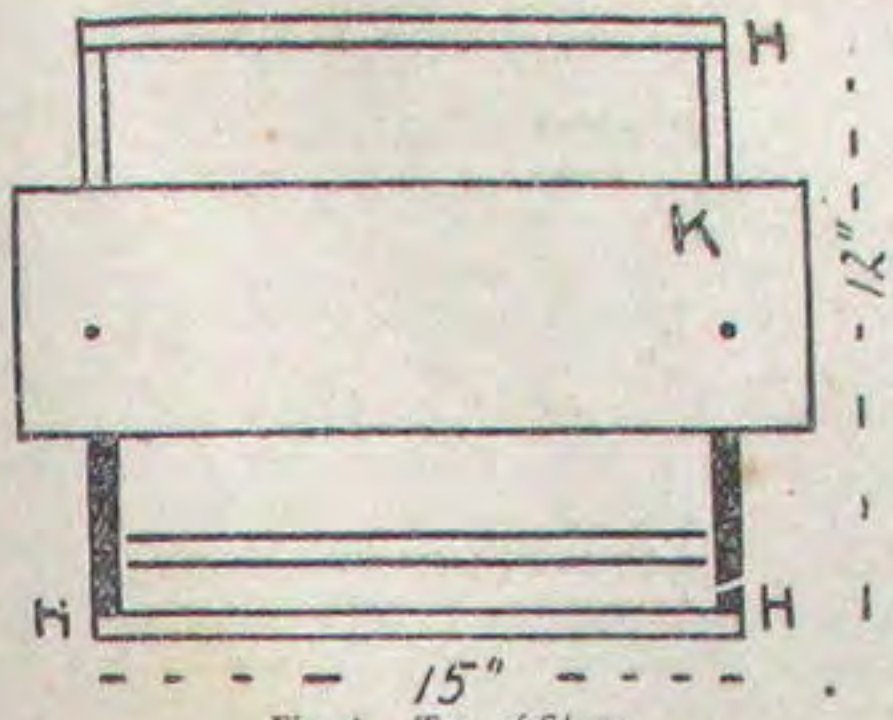


Fig. 4. Top of Stage

Again—if you like an audience of children you can give them illustrated nursery rhymes, and the more nonsense you rattle out with—the more laughable you make the pictures—the better.

These hints will give you ideas you can work upon, and other subjects will quickly come into your mind.

One end of the scroll when ready is to be fixed on one of the rollers and wound round it; then fasten the other end on to the other roller with the handle. This done, place the rollers in position, one each side of the stage on the platforms in Figs. 1 and 4 where you will see dots marking where holes are to be made. The scroll must go, that is travel, in between the rails 1 and 2 marked in Fig. 2—so as to keep it working close up to the front.

You will best work with an assistant. He will stand at the side of the stage to work the handle. You will want the scroll to stop at various points in its travel, so that you can talk about that particular picture or view.

To ensure this, put a small piece of paper on the back of the scroll (stamp-edging is the thing) at the place you desire a stop to be made. Your assistant, being at the back, will notice this come to a certain point, and so will not wind further until required.

If you can manage to borrow a curtain to hang on a cord across the room, and so hide your assistant, so much the better.

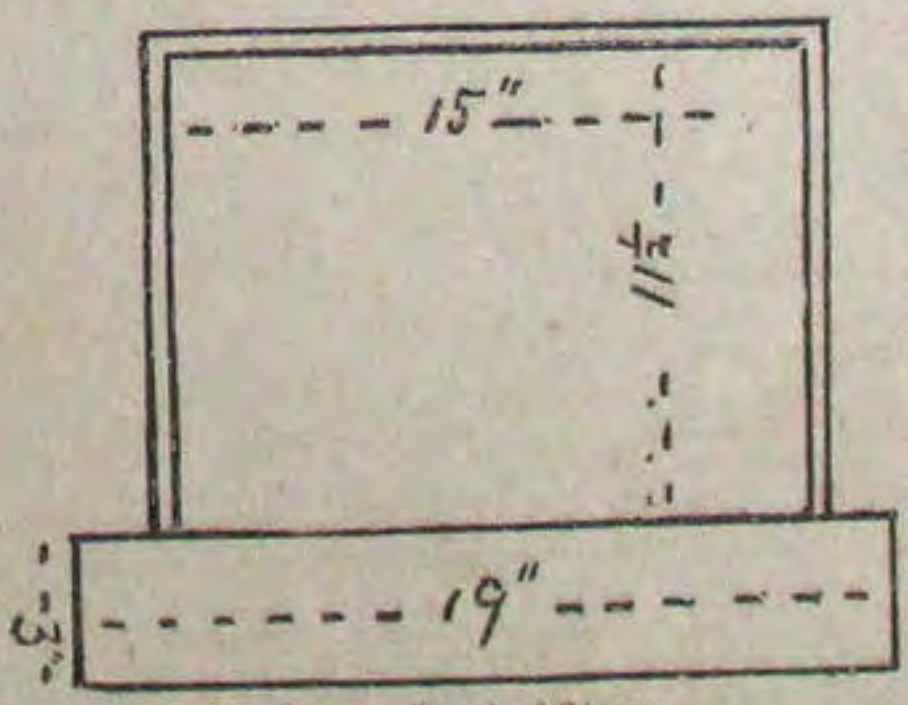


Fig. 5. Front of Stage.

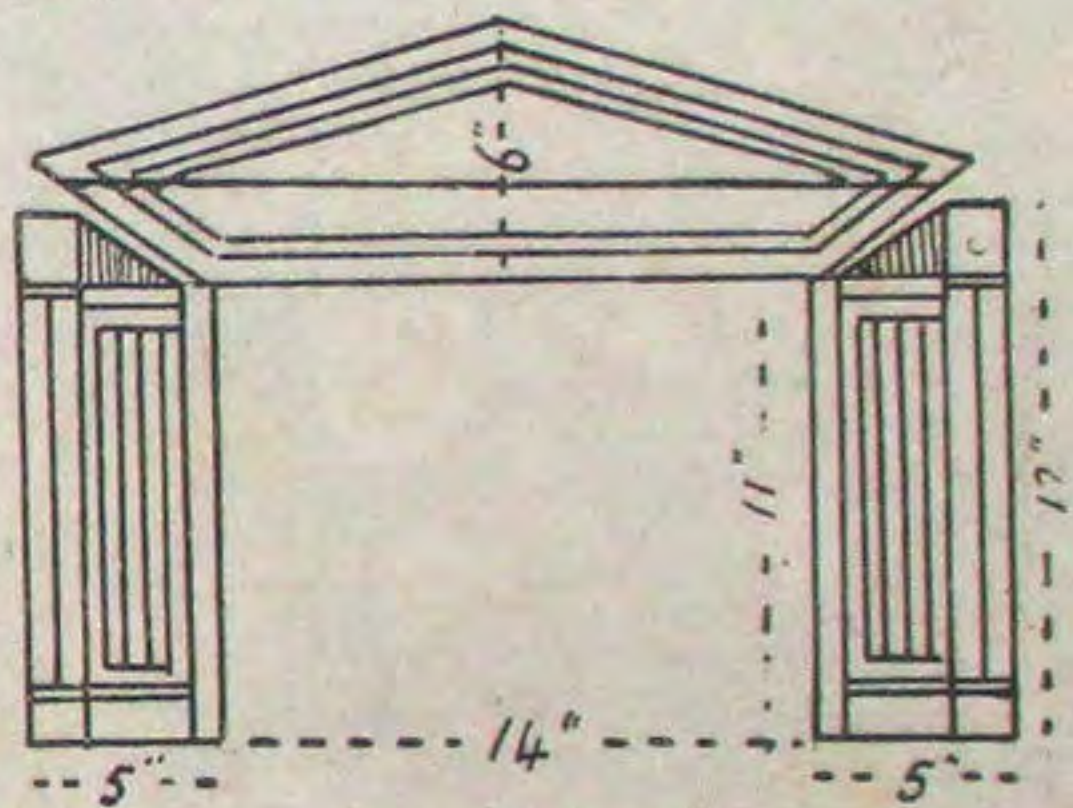


Fig. 6. The Proscenium

A final hint. Keep some "lay" figures for use, such as pictures of policemen, soldiers, sailors, a group of people, children, nurse, etc. Paste on stout paper and cut them out. A little piece of flat wood is wanted for a stand for each; fasten them on separately, then keep them by you, where they are at hand to place on the stage just in front of the scroll whenever you require a figure. As they will be stationary they will add materially to effect as the scroll passes along. If a piece of cotton is fastened on to each of these you can the more easily pull them off when you so desire.