

Street Toys.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY ERNEST C. FINCHAM.



HE number, the variety, and the ingenuity of the articles which are sold in the streets, mostly for a penny, must have struck every observer with astonishment. Toys form a

large proportion of the stock-in-trade of the itinerant gutter-merchant, and it is of these alone that I propose to give a tolerably complete account. Classed *en masse* under the generic heading of "Toys," they may be roughly divided into three groups: 1. Novelties and curiosities. 2. Puzzles. 3. Toys (mechanical or otherwise).

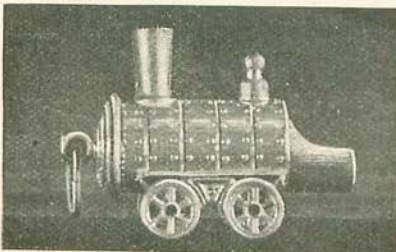
1. NOVELTIES AND CURIOSITIES.

MINIATURE "CHURCHWARDEN" PIPE AND POUCH.—This is a facsimile of the old-fashioned "churchwarden" clay pipe, inseparably associated with a quaint, old-world parlour of a little village hostelry. A tiny india-rubber pouch is sold with these pipes. They bear various legends: "Leave a bit," "Buy your own tobacco,"



"Don't grab," "Pocket none," "Hands off," "Take a pipe," and other inscriptions, more expressive if less polite.

MODEL ENGINE WHISTLE.—A capital little representation of a locomotive in minia-



ture. The body of the engine forms the barrel of the whistle, the footplate of the

locomotive forming the mouthpiece. Some of the hawkers, who have a sense of the ludicrous, sell their "rolling-stock" with cotton-wool smoke pouring from the funnel.

MINIATURE BIBLE.—"The smallest Bible in the world, containing twenty steel-plate

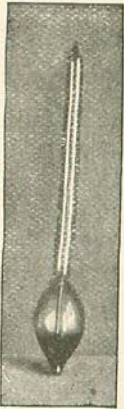
THE BIBLE.		THE BIBLE.	
The Bible contains		The 21st verse of the vii. chap. of Ezra, contains the alphabet except J.	
" 3,566,480 letters,		The xix. chapter of the 2nd Book of Kings, and the xxxvii. chap. of Isaiah are alike.	
" 810,697 words,		The least verse is the 35th of the xi. chapter of John.	
" 31,173 verses		The 8th, 15th, 18th, and 31st, verses of the xvii. Psalm are alike.	
" 1,189 chapters		Each verse of the cxxvi. Psalm ends alike.	
" 66 books		There are no words or names in the Bible of more than six syllables.	
The word "Lord" occurs 46,227 times.			
The word "Reverend" occurs only once, which is in the 9th verse of the cxi. Psalm.			
The middle and least chapter is the cxvii. Psalm.			
The middle verse is the 8th of the cxviii. Psalm.			

engravings; a penny." The leaves are gilt-edged and measure 1 5/8-in. by 2 1/8-in. It is illustrated by woodcuts, which are very quaint. The last few pages contain some very interesting notes as to the number of letters, words, verses, chapters, books, etc., in the Bible, and other information which is alone worth the expenditure.

CORK CONTAINING A CHINA DOLL.—At first sight this looks like an ordinary cork,



which would fit the neck of an average wine bottle. On closer inspection, however, a narrow strip is seen to be fitted accurately into the body of the cork. On sliding this out a lilliputian china doll is discovered



reposing on a couch of pink cotton-wool. Some of these corks contain three miniature dice, instead of a doll.

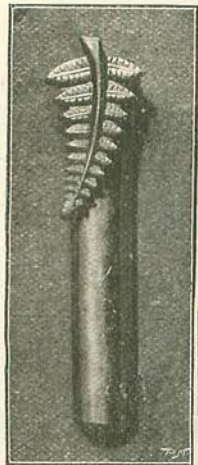
THERMOMETER BULB.—This is a very ingenious little novelty. The bulb contains a liquid with a very low boiling-point. As soon as the bulb is held in the fingers, the liquid begins to bubble up and down the tube in a most reckless manner.

BIRD IMITATOR.—A rough little piece of glazed pottery in the shape of a vase. A mouthpiece projects from one

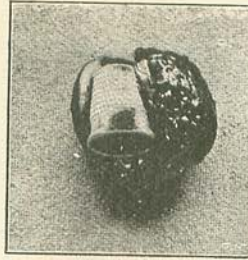
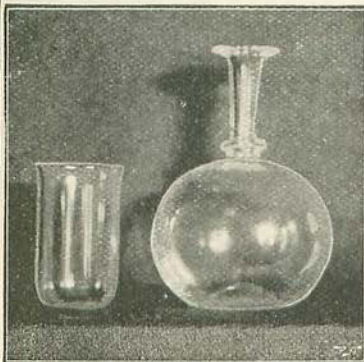
side. When the vase is *half* filled with water, by blowing gently through the mouth-piece the trilling of a canary or a lark can be readily reproduced.

THE AESTHETIC FLOWER-HOLDER.—A marvellous pennyworth! Made of metal, with a fern-leaf, in miniature, to retain the flower-holder in the button-hole: this is a veritable *vade mecum*.

CARAFE AND GLASS.—The accompanying photograph gives a very good idea of this dainty piece of glass-ware. A fit present for a doll's dinner-table.



WALNUT CONTAINING A THIMBLE.—In appearance an ordinary walnut, the shell of which has been

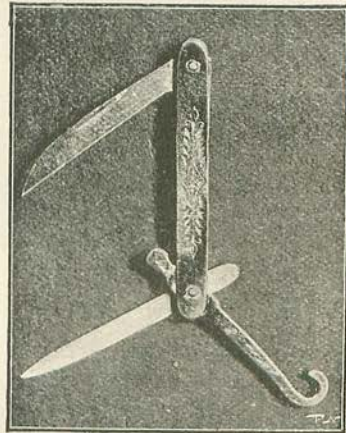


varnished. On examining it more narrowly, the walnut is found to open, on a strong spring hinge, and to contain a little thimble. Others, in place of a thimble, secrete miniature dice; others, again, a tiny

china doll. The spring hinge is made of a piece of broad elastic, each end of which is firmly glued to the interior of the walnut-shell.

"THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE SPACE OF A THREEPENNY-BIT" drew one's attention to some little metal discs, on the obverse of which was stamped "The Lord's Prayer," and on the reverse "The Doxology." These discs are "struck" six at a time, and are subjected to a pressure of two and a half tons.

KNIFE, TOOTHPICK, AND BUTTON - HOOK COMBINED.—Not very well suited for cutting a piece of hard wood or buttoning a refractory



glove, but at the price asked for it, as a "little curiosity," it is not dear.

"THE LITTLE BROOCH-WATCH, A PENNY!"—A miniature watch, suspended from a metal bow, which forms a brooch. This is made in gilt, "silver," or oxydized silver, so that there is an ample range for the most fastidious taste. Occasionally a vendor of these little novelties fastens a score or so

on his coat, and, at a short distance, looks like some much-decorated warrior.

SPADE GUINEA.—An excellent imitation of a spade



guinea, which at first sight deceives one. On the reverse the letters C-P-E-V-E-R-L-L-E-L-A-T-E-M-C-A-R-R-O-L-L-M-A-K-E-R run from left to right round the coin. On the obverse is the inscription "Georgius III., Dei Gratia."

THE MAGIC BOTTLE.—A narrow bottle about $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, with a convex base. It bears a label, "Champagne." The base is "leaded," so that the bottle always remains a vertical position, and will not lie down except by word of command; in other words, until a small rod of iron has been deftly inserted into the neck.

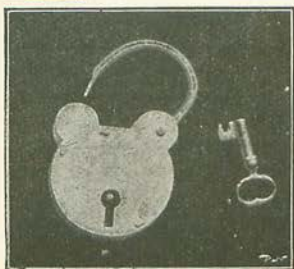


THE LILIPUTIAN CANDLE-STICK.—A tiny model $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. in height and 2 in. in breadth. A miniature extinguisher is provided to put out the wax-match candle when necessary.

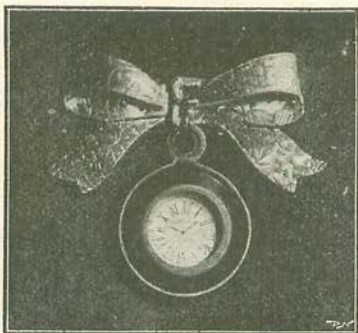


$1\frac{1}{2}$ in. broad. Though crude in finish, the lock acts perfectly.

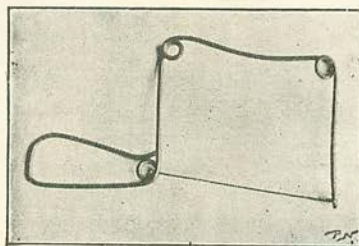
FRET-SAW.—This consists of a wire framework, carrying a fine fret-saw. The frame is "made



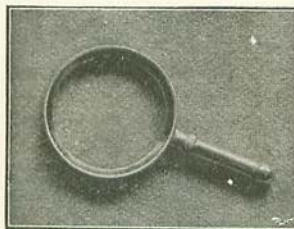
PADLOCK AND KEY.—"A penny buys the padlock!" Strong, though roughly made, it is a wonderful pennyworth—but "made in Germany." Its dimensions are $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. high and



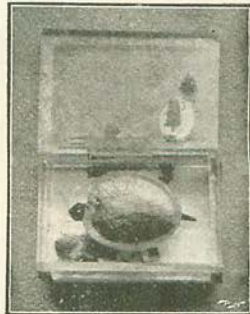
while you wait," of stout wire, about one-eighth of an inch in diameter. A strong piece of board, to which are affixed five iron pegs, is the chief factor in the manufacture of the fret-saw. The wire, rapidly bent into shape round the skeleton outline formed by the pegs, is finished off by the aid of a pair of pincers, the saw inserted, and the whole process completed in less time than has been taken in penning this description.



MAGNIFYING GLASS.—The length of this little curiosity is 2 in. Made of a white metal (the handle perforated for attachment to the watch-chain) and carrying a lens of fair magnifying power, it is a useful adjunct in reading small type or deciphering an inscription.



TORTOISE.—A glass box, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. in length and $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide, contains the model of a tortoise 1 in. long. The carapace is well modelled—the head and legs, made of black paper, are suspended from the body by very fine wires. At the slightest movement of the box, the head and legs are set in motion; the effect produced being most realistic.



THE JAPANESE TUMBLER consists of a small, oblong box $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. long, by 1 in. wide. The ends are markedly convex. On being placed on a slightly-inclined plane, this toy turns head



over heels till it reaches a level surface.

SAND-GLASS OR EGG-BOILER.— There is no need to describe the principle of the sand-glass. This one is made for attachment to a flat surface, *e.g.*,

a wall, and works on a pivot, so that when the lower glass is full of sand the egg-boiler can be reversed.

SNAKE.— This gruesome reptile on a closer inspection

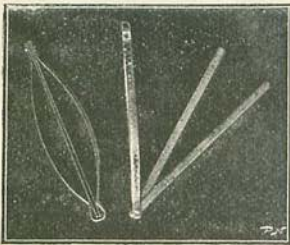


loses some of its terror-inspiring influence. It is found to consist of a spiral bone-shaving; a splitting;



pea is fastened to one end, and a roughly carved head with bead eyes and a red flannel tongue is attached to the other extremity—and there's the snake! Packed in a wooden case, it is warranted to frighten any luckless child who, prompted by a spirit of inquiry, may take off the lid.

"**HAIR-CURLERS**, six a penny," raised my curiosity. When purchased, their mechanism was not apparent, but as my lady-readers are alone interested in hair-curlers, I will not attempt to describe an article which is so much in favour at the present day.



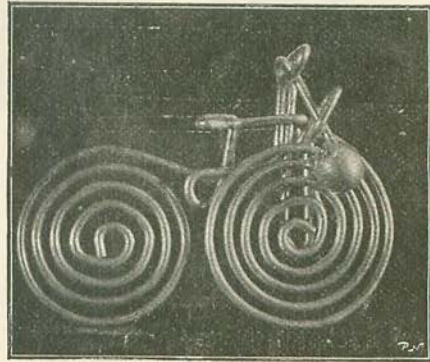
THE JAPANESE EGG.— Made of white wood and slightly larger than "the egg of



commerce," it contains eleven other eggs, each fitting with mathematical precision one inside the other. They are decorated with concentric rings of green and red.

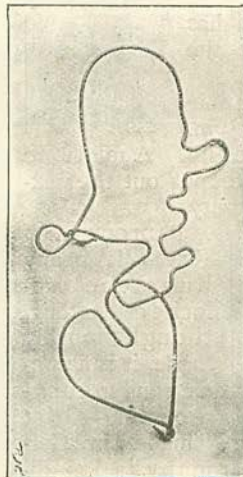
2.—PUZZLES.

BICYCLE PUZZLE.—The round knob attached to the handle represents the bicycle

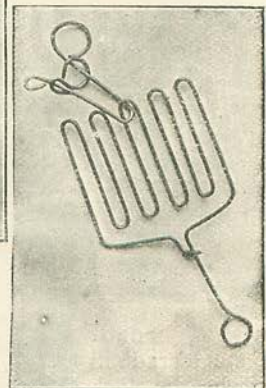


lamp. The knotty point to solve is, how to take off this lamp. A very good puzzle.

"**ALLY SLOPER**" PUZZLE. — Here the features of "the Eminent" are roughly portrayed in wire. To disentangle the heart from the "Friend of Man's" head is the difficulty.



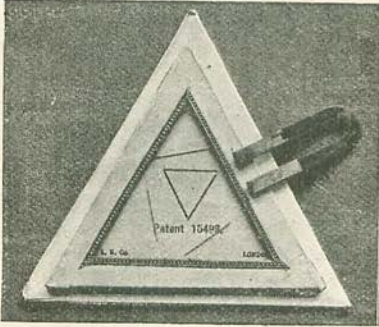
GRIDIRON PUZZLE.—To this is attached an initial letter "A." Before this puzzle is



solved, mental agonies akin to the physical pain of martyrdom on a glowing gridiron will be experienced.

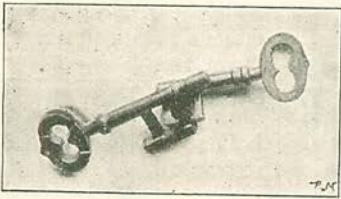
THE MAGNETIC PUZZLE.—This is an excellent puzzle, very simple, yet very difficult. The puzzle is to place the three needles, by the aid of a magnet, exactly upon the three lines of the printed triangle. To effect this,

separate the three needles by drawing them as far apart as possible. Then select any one of the needles, and with the aid of the magnet place it over a line of the triangle, then gently withdraw the magnet from the glass. It is comparatively easy to place the first needle in position, but the



second and third are a source of considerable trouble. In order to complete the triangle one must remember that the ends of the magnet are positive and negative respectively, therefore one must ascertain, when drawing the second needle forward, which end of the magnet is to be held towards the already placed needle in order not to disturb it, and the same applies to placing the third needle.

THE KEY PUZZLE.—Two keys are, apparently, inextricably interlocked. By dint of

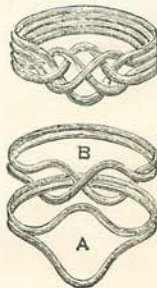


much patience and some time they can be separated one from the other.

THE ORIENTAL RING.—The principle of this puzzle-ring is familiar to all who have journeyed as far as India. Place the two wires like sketch A, and then twist the other two wires to form a figure of 8, like sketch B, then draw the widest wire of figure A into the centre of B, then the other wire in a similar manner.

The remainder of this article will be devoted to:—

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3.—TOYS (MECHANICAL OR OTHERWISE).

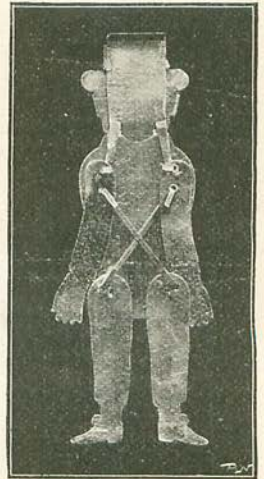
DANCING YANKEE.—This ingenious little toy is made of tin. By placing the thumb and second finger on his ears, and by press-



ing down the top of his hat with the index finger, he shoots out his tongue in scorn, rolls his eyes, and moves his arms and legs as though afflicted with St. Vitus's Dance.

BACK VIEW OF THE ABOVE (to show how the various movements, etc., are effected).—Two pieces of tin (a continuation of the hat) are attached to the arms, just *internal* to their central axis.

By applying pressure in a downward direction, the tops of the arms are approximated, the hands and forearms, as a consequence, being jerked out. The leg-movements are produced in a somewhat similar manner. Here strips of tin are attached to the legs at a point just *external* to their central axis, the other end of the strip of tin being fastened to the arm. Hence it follows that, whenever the arms are drawn away from the middle line of the body, the legs follow their example. The mechanism by which these results are achieved is very ingenious and very simple.





AUTOMATIC SWEET BOX.—A dazzling combination of red, yellow, and green tin; in shape not unlike the Clock Tower at Westminster. Through the glazed aperture in the front of the box can be distinguished some sweets, of the size and shape of pills. By pressing a spring at the back, the rosette, which masks a small drawer, is pushed forward. As the drawer has no

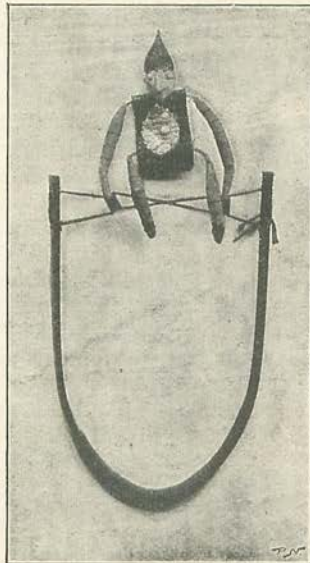
bottom the sweet drops into the little bracket below the rosette. This process is continued until all the sweets are expelled. They can then be replaced by sliding off the roof of the box and refilling the container.

ACROBAT.—A quaint little figure, with feathers in his cap, performs various antics at our behest. By pressure on the sides of the U-shaped piece of cane, the tension on the wool forming his horizontal bar is released. Relax the pressure, the wool is tightened, and the little gymnast is jerked into a fresh attitude. He performs "the up-start" with an ease and confidence engendered by constant practice.

THE MONKEY AND THE NUT.—The principle of this

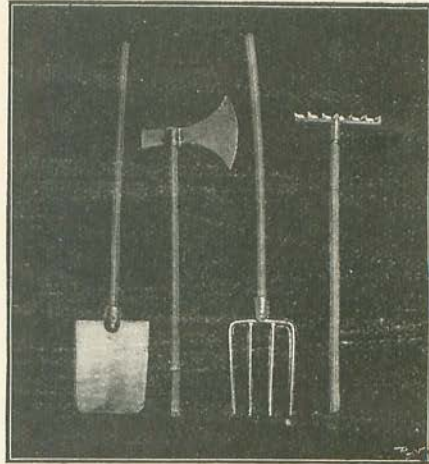


effectual attempts of the monkey to reach the nut are very ludicrous.



toy is, roughly, the same as that of the climbing nigger. The in-

GARDENING TOOLS.—A set of gardening tools, comprising spade, fork, rake, and hatchet. These are made of lead and fitted with cane handles. "This is an opportunity



which rarely presents itself, and may never occur again," as an auctioneer would say. The price is one penny!

SQUEAKING FROG.—A life-sized frog, made of a wire framework covered



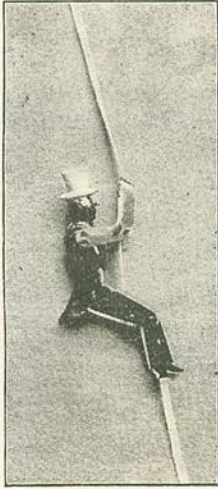
with paper. When pressed it emits a shrill squeak. Judging from the gaudy colouring, its habitat is a tropical region.

BAG-PIPES.—From this toy, in the hands of the hawker who sells it, strains are produced

which fill the heart of a patriotic Scotchman with pride.

THE CLIMBING NIGGER.—This tin figure and a piece of ordinary white tape furnish us





with a fund of amusement. By holding one end of the tape in the left hand and pulling the other end vigorously, the nigger, by a series of jerky movements, climbs to the summit. The mechanism of this toy is distinctly clever. The tape passes between two india-rubber rollers, which are on a level with the hands of the figure. Thence it passes under and over two tiny rods which connect the ankles. A strong spring in the nigger's pelvis

flexes the thighs upon the trunk. We have here a lever of the first order. The power is the force applied on pulling the tape; the fulcrum, the hinge at the pelvis; the weight is represented by the friction of the tape between the two india-rubber rollers. By extending the thighs the figure is forced a few inches along the tape.

PUNCH AND BABY.—Here Punchinello is seen throwing a puppet from one hand to the other with the greatest ease, turning his head round at each fresh effort with a self-satisfied smile, as if to say, "Alone I did it." The figure is worked by pulling on a string, which is concealed underneath his flowing gown. The mechanism involved is a lever of the first order, the fulcrum being at the shoulder-joint, the weight being represented by the extended arm supporting the puppet. The puppet is fastened to an L-shaped wire. One end of this is fastened in the doll's back, the other to Punchinello's spine. One branch of the L rests on the extended arm of the figure—as this is raised the puppet is carried to



the other side of the body. The head is connected to this wire by a string: this accounts for the movements of the head.

THE REVOLVING BALLS.—Two spheres of wood, an inch in diameter, connected by a piece of elastic, form this toy. The colours of the balls vary, but red, yellow, and green are predominant. Hold one ball in the right hand on some flat, smooth surface, e.g., a

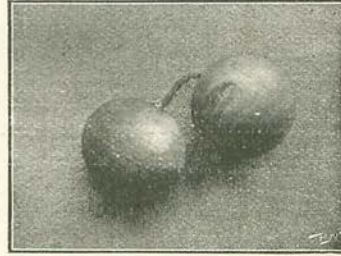
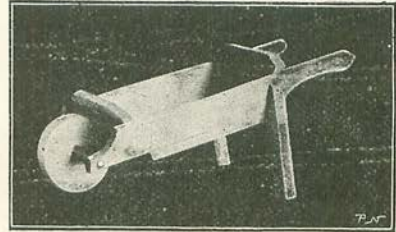


table. Now with a rotatory movement make the other ball describe a series of circles. The connecting piece of elastic

will thus become twisted in a spiral fashion. Release the balls, and they will revolve rapidly, winding and unwinding the elastic until they gradually slow down and finally stop.

GARDEN BARROW.—This will be found very useful in conjunction with the gardening



tools already mentioned in this article, for keeping the garden of the doll's house neat and trim.

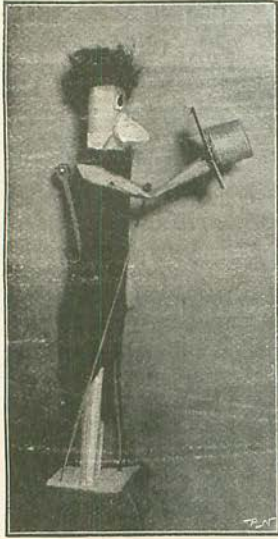
MOUSE AND MATCH-BOX.—Apparently an ordinary match-box; on opening it a tiny little mouse creeps out upon the lid. Here again is a very ingenious and simple piece of



mechanism. A piece of elastic attached to the lid of the match-box passes through the lumbar regions of the mouse, and the extremity forms his tail. A small cylinder of wood fastened at each side of the box by

two tin-tacks completes the mechanism. When the box is partially opened, the elastic is made tense, and the head of the mouse is prevented from appearing by the lid. Open the box still further, there is now no resistance to the head of the mouse, and he creeps out on the top of the box.

THE "ANCIENT MASHER."—This odd toy is composed of paper, cardboard, wire, and a piece of elastic. His coat and waistcoat are formed of a single, toga-like garment. The arms and legs are made of rolled paper. The figure is supported by a piece of wire, which runs from the cardboard base up the left arm and emerges at the shoulder-joint, passing then into the body. A second wire, Z-shaped, pierces the thorax from the left side, emerges on the right side and runs down the upper arm, terminating at the elbow-joint. To this point is

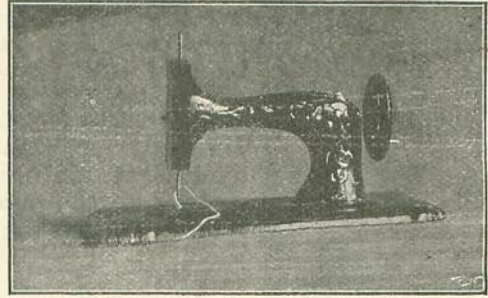


fastened a piece of wool, which passes down through a hole in the cardboard base. By pulling this wool the "ancient masher" takes off his hat with an air of ridiculous gravity. This act stretches an elastic band which is attached at one end to his spinal column, at the other end to an arm of the Z-shaped wire before referred to. On releasing the wool, the elastic contracts and the hat is replaced on his head.

KITCHEN FURNITURE.—A well-made dresser, table, and chairs suitable for kitchen use. "Very strong, will wear for years." The dresser is 8½ in. high by 6 in. wide; the table measures 5½ in. in length and 3½ in. in height.

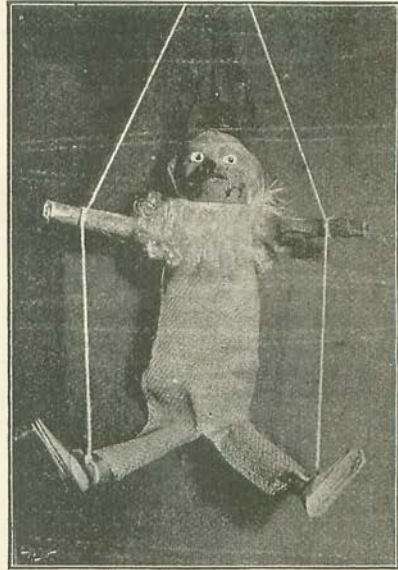


THE MINIATURE SEWING MACHINE is made of stamped tin and tastefully painted. It measures 3½ in. in length and 1½ in. in



height. Furnished with a handle that really turns, and a needle that really moves up and down, no well-regulated doll's house should be without one.

DANCING MONKEY.—This grotesque simian is suspended by means of a piece of



india-rubber. A thread of wool is attached to each of his ankles and wrists. On holding the figure up, the elastic stretches—the wool does not—consequently, the upper and lower extremities are set in motion.

THE COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO TRUMPET.—A 5 in. trumpet, on which stands a haughty chanticleer made of *real feathers*. The rooster measures 3 in. from his spurs to the

top of the tail, and with his red flannel comb, looks so regal as to well deserve the title of the "Bantam King." The trumpet when blown emits the well-known sounds always associated in one's mind with daybreak in Arcadia.

"THE LITTLE LADY."— This is the figure of a woman with poke-bonnet and dress made of crape-paper; the arms are formed of chenille; the face is



nately pulling on the loops and then relaxing the tension the disc revolves very rapidly, emitting the while a sound half-way between a whistle and a moan.

THE MIKADO is contained in a flat box made of cardboard. Two small tubes lead from the interior of this toy to the outside air. On blowing briskly through



this mouth-piece a Japanese paper figure leaps out. The effect is somewhat startling and decidedly unique.

THE DANCING HOTTENTOT. — A curious little figure, whose limbs and feet are attached to the trunk



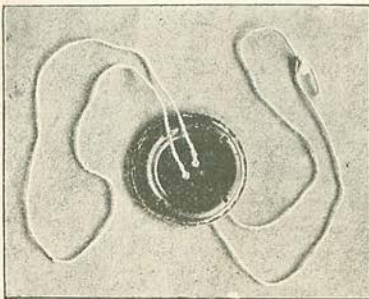
by fine wire. The toy is suspended by a piece of elastic, which passes through the head. Every movement



painted on an india-rubber bag which, when distended with air, has a very comical effect.

THE SINGING TOY consists of two concave discs of tin placed in juxtaposition. Four or five square openings on each disc establish a communication between the outside air and the interior of the singing toy.

A double loop of string passes through the centre of the discs. Hold each end of the loop in the right and left hands respectively, having first twisted the string several times; by alter-



of the body sets the limbs in action.

DEATH'S HEAD IN COFFIN. — A model of a coffin in black cardboard. On pressing a spring at the back a small disc drops and discloses a grinning "death's head," symbolic of the fate that awaits us all.

