

A Fascinating Handicraft

BY FLORENCE C. DRAKE

THE marionette illustrated is very easy to make as well as to operate. Even a child should be able to make one from the following directions. It is made of dowels. They are round sticks of wood about twice as thick as pencils; you can get them at the hardware store, and they cost five cents apiece. They are 36 inches long, so two will make several dolls. Ask for half-inch ones.

The body and head and feet pieces are cut of soft kindling wood; the hands and forearms are made of paper spoons cut like diagram.

The boys can whittle the head, feet and body pieces while the girls are making the arms and legs. Cut from the dowel four pieces, 2 inches long, and two pieces, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The latter are for the lower legs, the other pieces for thighs and arms.

From unbleached or any soft muslin, cut six pieces about 2 by 3 inches. These are to be glued around dowels, as shown by drawing. A space of half an inch is left between thigh and leg so that legs will move easily; the muslin covers this space, forming a hinge. The muslin on thigh at top is drawn together and tacked with small brads to under

part of hip pieces. The arms in same manner are tacked to shoulders.

Let the glue dry thoroughly before attaching to body. Be very careful to have legs exactly the same length before nailing and gluing feet on. Your pup-

pet must walk and walk fairly well; it would not if legs were uneven.

The boys, from sugar pine or bits of kindling wood, can, with an ordinary penknife, whittle the two pieces for shoulder and body, the head piece and the feet. The sizes are shown in drawing. Tack pieces of lead to soles of feet and on back of hip piece to weight them. The head need not alarm you. Begin with a bit of wood about the right size, $2\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$. First cut off the upper corners, then cut away under chin and around back to form neck. Keep on

cutting till you have an egg-shaped piece (point down to chin) on a round throat. It makes no difference if it is a bit rough, the hair will cover most of it. Halfway down the face, cut out two depressions for eye sockets; this also helps form the nose, the end of which should be halfway between eyes and chin. At this point cut back and down to chin.



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Painting it flesh color with shadows around eyes, red lips and cheeks, will give all the expression necessary.

A screw eye is to be put in neck, a piece of copper wire is looped through this, twisted twice and passed through a hole bored in shoulder part, then wire is turned, one end right, one left and tacked in place.

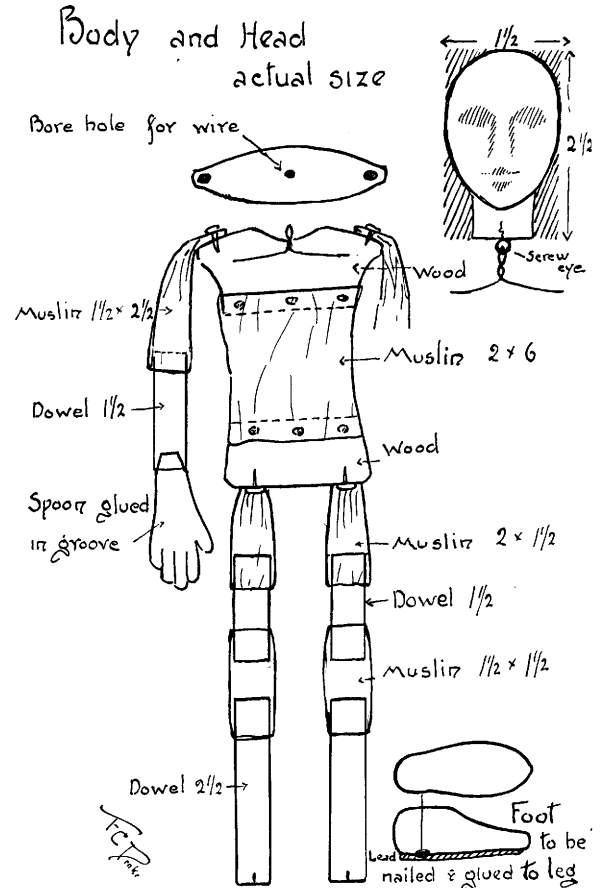
Perhaps the girls had better arrange the hair. This may be of fur, yarn floss, or cotton wadding as you wish, or as the character of your puppet requires.

Children's figures are made a trifle smaller than the drawing. Omit the dowel in the arm and attach the hand to muslin, which should be weighted with a piece of lead or some shot; sew this in firmly at wrist.

The upper leg dowel may also be left out. This will shorten the figure to about 9 inches. If girls prefer to make heads of stockings stuffed with wool and then colored with crayon with hair sewed on, this may be done, and is very good.

Each marionette requires two controllers. These can be made from an old yardstick, cut in 9-inch lengths. Pierce holes or cut notches in both sticks one-half inch from each end. On one also notch 3 inches from each end. The other one, notch in the exact center. The strings from the head are tied to each end of this stick, the leg strings being tied to the end notches of the other stick, the hand strings to the inside notches. (See drawing.)

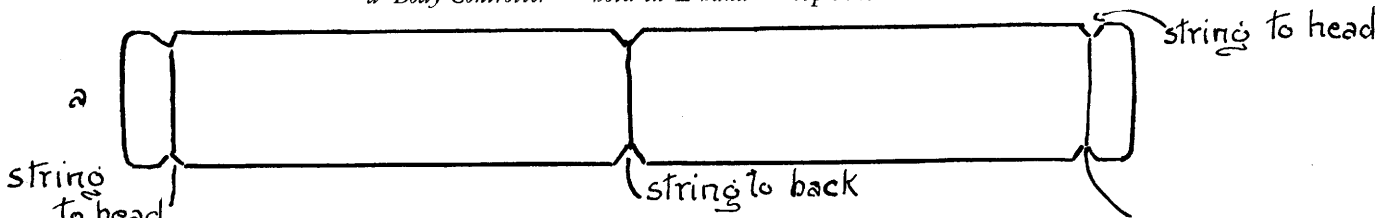
Clothing must be of soft materials, and made loosely so doll will move easily. If lower body is weighted at back, it will sit better. These puppets have seven strings. One from each side of head, and one from middle of back. By this it can be made to bend, bow and sit. One on each hand and one on each leg. Use linen carpet thread, each string being about thirty inches long. Take a stitch at side of head, knot end and pull tight. Do same on opposite side, also in middle of back. Tie head strings on end notches of controller, and back strings on center



notch. Be sure they are the same length. Cut off extra thread. Leg strings are sewed on back of knee, and then brought through to front, and attached to end notches of second controller. Pierce the hands above thumb, draw thread through, tying strings to two inside notches. Strings should be about twice the height of puppet.

With a card table, some material for curtains, and an electric light a very satisfactory theatre can be arranged in any doorway. A packing box also makes a very good theatre.

a Body Controller — hold in L hand — tip ends to turn head



b Leg Controller — hold in R hand — tip ends to make walk

