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**LA VELLMA** (DAVID J. LUSTIG)  
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**ROBERT W. DOIDGE**



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# Vaudeville Ventriloquism

A PRACTICAL TREATISE  
ON THE ART OF  
VENTRILOQUISM



BY

DAVID J. LUSTIG

(LA VELLMA)

AND

ROBERT W. DOIDGE

PUBLISHER

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## PREFACE

This book was written with an object in view.

Namely to set right the many folks who have voiced a desire to become ventriloquists but after reading books on the subject have been at a loss just how to go about studying this fascinating art.

The lessons arranged in this work are framed so that anyone possessing good vocal chords and who are willing to devote the necessary time and patience to studying the art can become ventriloquial entertainers.

The authors know that everything found in this work is practical and trust those interested will profit by the contents of the book.

DAVID J. LUSTIG (La Vellma)

ROBERT W. DOIDGE.

1920



## FOREWORD

The art of producing tones and words without any perceptible motion of the mouth, so that the audience is induced to refer the sound to some other place is called Ventriloquism.

Many people believe the sounds are produced from the stomach. This belief is merely mistaken supposition. We all know that the organs of speech are located in the throat and not in the stomach. The name of this exceedingly interesting and mysterious art is founded upon the before mentioned supposition

The ventriloquial entertainer can give a show most anywhere and under any sort of conditions with his "vent" figure; in a theatre, hall or drawing room and almost anyone who possesses good vocal powers and studies these lessons (written by two vaudeville performers who at times presented a ventriloquial specialty in vaudeville) will within a reasonable time with the proper amount of practice and study be able to give a performance to entertain, mystify and also to earn money by putting on a ventriloquial act.

To become a violinist, one must practice and practice, to become a ventriloquist one must also practice and by studying and following these instructions carefully, lesson by lesson, the student will surprise himself with results attained.

Rome, they tell us, was not built in a day; neither are good ventriloquists made over night.



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# Vaudeville Ventriloquism

## LESSON ONE

When unexpected, the deceptiveness of sound is very great. The performer, when wishing to make the sound appear from above, below or at any place, within reason, must make the spectator expect the voice to issue from a given spot. The sound is not expected to come from the given spot but it unexpectedly seems to issue from that place as the performer draws attention to the place whence the voice seems to emanate from, viz., when working with a figure Ventriloquist says in natural voice, "Hello down there!" Then he has figure look down; or, if working without figure, performer looks down toward spot or up depending on where voice is to come from. These things depend a lot on the ability of the performer as an actor. This same piece of sound-misdirection must be applied to all sorts of voice throwing illusions.

When working with a figure or dummy; look at the figure while speaking in the "natural voice" and also in the "ventriloquial voice." The "natural voice" is the performer's natural voice (which should be pitched lower than the ventriloquial voice) which is the voice used for the figure's chatter.

Have confidence in your own ability. Make yourself believe the voice is to issue from a certain place and the audience will also believe it.

Without moving the lips—with lips almost closed the Ventriloquist makes his audience believe that the sounds issue from a given place.

A figure will help the student and also make his study of the art more interesting. Ventriloquial figures are made, so the performer places his finger in the body of the figure, by means of pressing a lever or strings, operating the different movements of the figure. Movements of arms, legs, eyes closing, winking, mouth opening and closing, spitting, crying, and smoking can be introduced if the student wishes a figure made to order.

The two classes into which Ventriloquism is divided are "near" (or mimicry) and "distant" (voice throwing).

"Near" ventriloquism is the part of the ventriloquist's act in which he uses a figure and "distant" when the performer seemingly throws his voice to different places.

**EXERCISE A**—Inflate the lungs to their fullest capacity. Hold the breath while you count from one to twenty-five. Exhale slowly and steadily. Inhale deeply to fullest capacity and hold. Count to thirty-five (mentally counting) and so on until you are able to hold your breath and count up to two hundred. Practise this about fifteen to twenty minutes two or three times a day and watch results.

## LESSON TWO

The exercise given at the end of Lesson One may seem to the beginner a useless waste of time but when one has practised and can hold the breath comfortably until they mentally count two hundred and then exhale, one will have but little difficulty in mastering the remaining lessons. For the art of ventriloquism consists mainly in taking a deep inhalation of breath and allowing it to escape very slowly; the sounds of the voice being modified and muffled, producing different sounds by means of the muscles of the upper part of the throat and palate, and when speaking to refrain from moving the lips.

After the student has learned to control (ventriloqually speaking) his breathing, let him proceed as follows:—

Stand in front of a large mirror and recite the alphabet from A to Z with his features rigid and his lips and teeth slightly apart. Practise each letter a number of times before going on to the next. The letters which cannot be pronounced distinctly should be gone over time and again until perfected. The letters that will require the most practise will be as follows; "B," "M," "P," and "V." These letters should be gone over at least twenty-five times every time the student practises.

The letters above may be difficult to pronounce even after a week's practise, but do not become discouraged, always bearing in mind that Rome wasn't built in a day, and that many stage Ventriloquial entertainers cannot pronounce these letters themselves.

**EXERCISE B**—Stand before mirror, with mouth and teeth about a sixteenth of an inch apart and repeat the following letters: W, B, G, U, V, T, A, D, R, F, S, H, J, P, Q, K, C, I, L, N, M, E, O, Z, X, Y. Going over each one ten times and those found difficult twenty times.

## LESSON THREE

This lesson should not be attempted until the last lesson and exercise has been perfected. If the student is able to pronounce all the letters of the alphabet without moving the lips, he is ready to continue.

Stand before a mirror and say in the NATURAL VOICE (your own natural tones) "Hello, are you there?" Now, without moving the lips, roll the tongue back so that the tip just touches the roof of the mouth (the student has no doubt seen at some time a Punch and Judy show; try to remember how Mr. Punch talks in a squeaky voice; now try to lower the voice a bit) and say, "Hello, I'm here!" The sound should be pitched higher than the natural voice and not quite as high as the Punch voice.

Practise this about ten times and then try the following exercise.

**EXERCISE C**—Natural Voice: "Are you well?"

Figure: "I am."

Natural Voice: "Are you here?"

Figure: "No, I'm there!"

Natural Voice: "How are you?"

Figure: "Pretty well, old top!"

Natural Voice: "Goodbye."

Figure: "So long, Dave."

Many other short sentences of this sort will suggest themselves to the student while practicing. Practise the following also: (Ah!) (Da!) (Ma!) (Pa!) (Hello!) (Yes!) (What!) (Go!) (Blow!) etc., etc.

## LESSON FOUR

Draw the muscles of the throat together as is done when one gargles, inhale a deep breath, emit a sort of far away sound in throat, sounding as if it came from the stomach.

Tongue must be slightly curled up toward the roof of the mouth. Taking another deep breath, fix tongue in proper position and sound a prolonged "Ah," until breath is exhausted.

Don't under any consideration strain the throat while doing this, or if the throat aches or head seems about to burst, stop and rest a few moments, then try again. If strain results and continues lots of harm may be done to the vocal cords. Continue trying to locate in throat the point at which you can maké the distant "Ah." Try to remember how the telephone receiver sounds at times when off the hook and try to imitate the sound. Imagine how a sound sounded to you when far off and try to imitate the sound.

After you can emit the prolonged "Ah" to satisfactory results, try short words, such as "Hello," "Well," etc. Gradually increase words also increasing gradually sound volume and then try short sentences.

When voice is supposed to come from a good distance, roll the tongue closer to roof of mouth. The nearer the sound, the more the tongue must be unrolled. Practice without tiring the throat muscles.

**EXERCISE D**—Ventriloquist: "Hello, are you there?"

Voice: "Sure I'm here."

Ventriloquist: "I say are you there?"

Voice: "Sure I am, why?"

Ventriloquist: "Come on up."

Voice: "I can't come up."

Ventriloquist: "Why can't you come up here?"

Voice: "The floor won't open." Etc., etc.

## LESSON FIVE

When talking to a "dummy," always show the audience that there is a marked difference between your own voice and the figure. Don't tell them this but show them. When practising, try to make both your voice, and the figure's voice, two distinct, yet entirely different voices. Practise until you, yourself, will think that you are talking to and being answered by another person.

When performing with a figure, use the figure, or rather manipulate the figure, as if it were human. This, too, requires lots of practice. Talk to the figure as you would a small boy—forget it is wood or papier maché.

It is half the show to have a good figure; to know how to manipulate it, and to be able to ventriloquize correctly, and the other half 'is to have a suitable dialogue.

The compilers of these lessons have written a number of ventriloquial dialogues and complete acts, and will write to order suitable material for ventriloquial entertainers.

For full particulars, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to either David J. Lustig (La Vellma), 173 Catherine Street, Bridgeport, Connecticut, or to Robert W. Doidge, 16 Elm Street, Somerville, Massachusetts.

Never try to do impossible things with ventriloquism, such as attempting to

throw the voice wherever fancy presents itself. People will only wonder what that peculiar noise in the throat is, or what you are trying to do.

Practice before the mirror, with the figure on your knee, at least half an hour a day; more if possible. Don't become discouraged if you don't at first succeed, but try until you master each successive step.

## LESSON SIX

Stand in a room near the door and say in your own voice, "Hello Bill." Then immediately in the ventriloquial voice say, "Hello Bill," making it appear as if it were an echo. Then try "Hello" alone. Prolonging it.

Practice trying to throw the voice, while in a room, towards the ceiling, under the floor beside you, across the room, etc.; the student after procuring a figure will find his practice more interesting.

Ladies as well as gentlemen are on the professional stage as Ventriloquial entertainers.

When a lady studies ventriloquism she must remember to aim to use a deep voice for her boy figure; her own voice will be quite a contrast to the figure's.

Study a boy's voice and try to imitate that and not some other ventriloquist's figure that you may have seen on the stage.

Sometimes the best of ventriloquists move their lips while giving a show. Don't try to keep the mouth entirely closed, because muffled sounds and words which cannot be half understood is liable to be the result.

Go over each lesson a number of times, studying them and practice thoroughly as you go along. You will gain nothing by just reading them over a few times.

When practicing on the piano, the student practices each exercise over and over until he or she can play them right. Then after the book is completed, a review is given by the instructor. The same applies to Ventriloquism; practice each and every lesson and exercise; there are very few, but they are all important, and after completing this course, go over each and every lesson and exercise several times in review.

To become an expert in this mystifying art, the student must practice, as only practice can make you a ventriloquist.

## LESSON SEVEN

After you have mastered the lessons so that you are confident that you can give a performance purchase a dialogue, one that is amusing. Study it. After you have memorized the material, take your figure, sit before our much used and needed friend, the mirror, and do your act. Watch yourself in the mirror at times and the figure most of the time. Try to "put over" the material as if you were doing what is known to professionals as a "team act," or "patter act." Watch your figure's movements and be sure they are natural, also be sure to watch your mouth and see that your lips, jaws and features are immovable.

A ventriloquial act most always opens with a topical, up-to-the-hour song, then the talk, and close with a song.

Some acts open with talk, use a song in the middle of the act and more talk, with a song for a finale, while walking amongst the audience. Others use whistling as a

finish. The performer pushes a silk handkerchief into his mouth, pulls the dummy's head from within the body, proving that the figure is not fitted up with a whistling apparatus. The writer has in mind a friend, a professional, who is a wonder at this whistling illusion.

Some performers use a number of different ventriloquial figures representing an Irish boy, old lady, old man, little girl, parrot, dog, chinaman, colored boy and many other varieties.

## LESSON EIGHT

Several of the effects that are used on the stage by ventriloquists will be found below.

The ventriloquist takes the receiver off a "prop" telephone and asks for central. A voice is heard, which seems to come from the receiver, as if somebody was talking at the other end of the wire.

This effect is obtained by using the "Distant" voice. By the dummy's attitude the audience are brought to believe that the figure is listening to a party talking at the other end.

Another effect is, the ventriloquist smoking as the figure is singing or talking; the performer holds between his lips a lighted cigar or cigarette, puffing and enjoying a smoke.

The cigar or cigarette is held between the lips and teeth in the centre of the mouth. This not only is a good effect but also helps the performer to talk without moving the lips. The sounds are emitted on the side of the mouth nearest the figure.

During a song, with a lighted cigar or cigarette between the lips, smoke is seen to issue forth from the mouth of the performer.

At the start performer draws a mouthful of smoke, which while singing he allows to escape slowly. Between each line or two, the song being of slow tempo, he takes another puff of smoke, allowing it to issue forth. To the audience it seems as if the performer is continually smoking and exhaling.

## LESSON NINE

When a sleight of hand performer gives a performance, he must have either full stage if he uses illusions, etc.; or can work "in one" before a drop with a table or two.

The ventriloquist walks out before either a curtain or in full stage and works his act. If he uses a telephone, decanter of wine (?) or any other paraphernalia it is set out before the "drop" curtain before the lights are turned on.

But when he only uses the figure, he walks on, has a chair in centre, and amid the chord from the orchestra and a storm of applause (sometimes) goes right into his act which is best to occupy between ten and twelve minutes and retires (let us hope) amid more applause.

And let it be understood that a good ventriloquist deserves applause and plenty of it.

There are very few people today, who attend the theatre that do not enjoy a good ventriloquial act on the bill.

The art is a very mystifying one. Most people know that ventriloquism is only a certain form of illusion. Some persons believe it is a trick, but such is not at all the case.

Is it a trick to play on the violin, piano or any other musical instruments? No. It is the study and practice of music that makes one expert and so it is with the study of the ancient yet ever interesting art of ventriloquism that makes one a successful performer.

## LESSON TEN

In this, the last lesson or chapter the student will find the requirements necessary to become a successful ventriloquial entertainer.

1. Constant practice and study.
2. Be a good actor.
3. Be able to manipulate figure.
4. Control the facial muscles.
5. Also control of throat muscles.
6. Have confidence in your work.
7. Have confidence in yourself.
8. Have suitable dialoguc.
9. Purchase a good figure.
10. Constant study and practice.

The student should not become easily discouraged while studying. A good ventriloquist is made and not born.

All ventriloquists had to learn at some time or other. They didn't find the road to success easy or one of smooth going, but as practice makes perfect in many things, this rule also applies to ventriloquism.

So, dear student, keep up hope, follow these instructions and again let me say: Practice, practice, and then some more practice and watch results and you will be able to give a ventriloquial performance on the vaudeville stage as an expert exponent of the art of Ventriloquism.

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## VENTRILOQUIAL AFTERTHOUGHTS

In closing these lessons, which will benefit anyone who will devote the time and practice to them, are arranged by practical performers and not by persons who have read a lot of useless bunk on ventriloquism nor ones who think themselves self-appointed criterions and who write books for the glory, fame or few paltry dollars that may be in them. Many is the time the co-authors have been asked why they did not write a number of books on the art of magic and ventriloquism, to which they have replied that at some time when time permits they would and the first of the series was VAUDEVILLE MAGIC, which went over big, the demand calling even now for a second edition, which will soon, we trust, be forthcoming. Then the third book will be VAUDEVILLE MIND READING AND KINDRED PHENOMENA, and after that—well, who can tell.

But back to our original subject—while the rest of the manuscript is in the hands of the printers let us see if there isn't something more we can add to aid the student and perhaps further enlighten the professional performer.

Ventriloquists will tell you that many is the time when they are besieged by friends and others to give an example of what they call ventriloquism. The friends

will ask, "Won't you throw your voice into that room?" A ventriloquist cannot please everybody and what is more the student should forget the books he has read about this and that wonderful ventriloquist who threw his voice into the next house or across the street, fooling his friends. This is all bunk, pure and simple, as the men who wrote those old time books in which such stories appear did so because they knew a certain percentage would read that line of press junk and believe it and what the other folks thought never worried them a bit. You can deceive by aid of illusion but you cannot allow someone to stand by your side and make them believe the sound travels, because all they'll hear is a throaty sound which they will wonder what it is all about.

When called upon to do a turn you have your audience some feet away and then give them the best that is in you. Ventriloquists should study elocution. You must be able to use your voice correctly if you are to become an entertainer. The actor studies his own voice. He knows just how to place it and how to modify it as his lines demand. This is something that takes many years to really accomplish, but it is by practice—persistent practice—that the actor becomes proficient in his art and the ventriloquist in his.

Then again folks say, "He was born a ventriloquist," or "He is a born actor." All well and good, as far as they go, but if an actor was born an actor and a ventriloquist born a ventriloquist why didn't the actor act and the ventriloquist ventriloquize while lying in their cradles?

Ventriloquism is something that like acting must be learned. One may be born with some sort of talent, but that talent must be brought out and developed. And only practice and lots of it can do that.

Imitating various instruments, locomotive whistles, etc., may be all right in its way, but we will not take up the subject of Polyphonism, as a number of writers have treated this form of entertaining at great lengths, but we will say that if you wish to become proficient in imitations you should at all times imitate the real thing. For instance, were you desirous to imitate the whistle of a steamboat, you must go where you can hear the real thing and not the imitation steamboat whistle one hears in the orchestra blown by the trap drummer in some motion picture theatre. Study from life—that's the best advice.

Take good care of your teeth, the absence of one or more teeth will not be a most delightful sight to your audience. See a dentist and have any teeth trouble attended to.

Mornings are the best time to practice but don't tire yourself. You need lots of real practice, but to overdo a thing is almost as bad as not doing it at all—and less injurious.

Most ventriloquists are good singers. But if you are not a vocalist don't sit up at night and worry over it—for as far as being a vocalist goes La Vellma never did nor never will set the world afire when it comes to singing, as he had to depend on putting the number across aided by the comedy business with the figure than he did upon his vocalizing abilities.

Much attention must be given by the student in the natural and ventriloquial voice. Always keep the figure's voice pitched a bit higher and louder than the natural and ventriloquial voice, which should be lower and slower. Then again watch when practising that there is no pause between when you speak to the figure in your own voice and when the figure answers you. Pretend that the wooden dummy you are operating is a human being and you are holding a conversation with him. Make him seem like real to you and the audience by your acting will be convinced of it too.

Remember the nearer the sound to be given, the more air you may allow to escape while speaking ventriloquially, and the more toward the back of the mouth must the tongue be placed. When the voice is to seem as if coming from a distance, the farther the distance the more breath must be kept back, and the tongue must be kept forward in the mouth and the sound thrown back in the throat.

Producing mysterious voices isn't ventriloquism, but the producing of natural voices from figures is what makes the ventriloquial exponent stand out as an entertainer.

After you have procured a suitable figure and have practised so when looking into your mirror and ventriloquizing you cannot see the muscles of your face moving nor your mouth moving continually, keep on practising and either arrange an act for yourself or have a suitable dialogue or novelty ventriloquial act written, then practice, practice and practice some more and before many moons you will be able to take your place in the front ranks of amateur ventriloquists and then when you learn what an audience wants and just how to put an act "across the footlights" as they term it in stage parlance you may, if you so desire, enter vaudeville as a professional ventriloquial entertainer.



## SUPPLEMENT

Following will be found a number of gags used by La Vellma, which can be used by the Ventriloquist arranged to suit his fancy in arranging a dialogue, which is the Ventriloquist's act. Two specimen acts, one used by La Vellma some years ago when he was doing a ventriloquial specialty in vaudeville and the other an act arranged by La Vellma for a well known ventriloquist who not only presented the act with great success in this country but who presented the dialogue in England and who was so successful that it is claimed he was commanded to appear before royalty entertaining many royal personages.

Bear in mind it isn't how the dialogue is written or how comical it may be when presented before an audience, but what really counts is the ventriloquist's art and his knowledge and ability as a showman, for showmanship is the biggest and most valuable asset in any line of theatrical work.

### DIALOGUE JOTTINGS

Ventriloquist: Lend me a five spot, old man.

Figure: A five spot? Why, I'll lend you a whole deck.

Ventriloquist: A ring on a finger beats everything.

Figure: Yep. One ring on a finger, to a woman, beats three on a phone.

Figure: Better not take things too easy—unless they belong to you.

Figure: (Recites)

There is sunshine in her laughter,  
And love's fire in her eyes  
She was just the girl I was after  
So I thought I'd take her by surprise.  
I called her on the telephone  
Some man he answered it—  
He said his wife was not at home  
I immediately threw a fit.

Ventriloquist: Every man should take a wife.

Figure: Yes. But he wants to be careful who's wife he takes.

Figure: You're dead, but too lazy to close your eyes.

Figure: Where there's life there's expenses.

Figure: Fire away I ain't listening.

Ventriloquist: You remind me of my wife.

Figure: I'm as bad as that, eh?

Ventriloquist: My wife is the grandest little woman that ever lived.

Figure: Old stuff, old stuff!

Ventriloquist: Last night I met my girl at ten o'clock. It was quite late.

Figure: No.

Ventriloquist: Yes. I wonder where she was before that?

Figure: I won't tell you. She told me to promise I wouldn't tell.

---

Ventriloquist: Yes—I've travelled all over the world.

Figure: (Doesn't answer, but looks at Ventriloquist.)

Ventriloquist: Well—I suppose you doubt it?

Figure: No. I was wonder—

Ventriloquist: (Anxiously) Yes?

Figure: If you are still true to me?

---

Ventriloquist: What is love?

Figure: Something that is but ain't.

---

Ventriloquist: Why do you sneer at love?

Figure: You had better call a doctor.

---

Ventriloquist: The truth is I am in love.

Figure: Why worry me?

---

Ventriloquist: Women are so careless with money.

Figure: Yep. They are so much so that sometimes they actually spend it for something useful.

---

Ventriloquist: I sure like work.

Figure: But can you prove it?

---

Ventriloquist: Some day I'm going to get out of vaudeville—

Figure (interrupting): And go to work.

---

Ventriloquist: You are a fresh young man.

Figure: Not fresh. Truthful.

---

Figure: I saw Bill last night.

Ventriloquist: Was he sober?

Figure: How can you ask that nowadays?

---

Ventriloquist: What is so delightful as an evening in May?

Figure: What was so rare as a night last June?

---

Ventriloquist: Are you living in New York.

Figure: No. Rooming in a rooming house.

---

Ventriloquist: Wont you please try and behave?

Figure: How much is in it?

## A SUGGESTION

Many ventriloquial entertainers close their acts with a song sung with figure or many times half with figure and rest with natural voice.

Today audiences want something different. What goes over big is a ventriloquist finishing his turn with a recitation providing the actor can recite. Naturally one knows there are two varieties of recitacionists; the one who has studied elocution for home gatherings and the other the vaudeville elocutionist. The following recitations, not new by any means (except the one about the war) but of the type that when properly presented never fail to be sure fire and draw applause from vaudeville audiences.

---

### BUT DID IT?

For fame and fortune's laurels  
You early went in quest,  
But you've found you've done a Brodie  
And it happened for the best,—  
But did it?

The bank roll that you sweated for  
The egg stored in the nest,  
Was frisked by dips in broadcloth  
But it happened for the best—  
But did it?

You hurt a buddy's feelings,  
But you only spoke in jest  
And he cashed before you squared it  
It happened for the best—  
But did it?

The gal you near went nuts on,  
When you put her to the test,  
Gave you the gate and married Bill  
It happened for the best—  
But did it?

The blue-eyed kid you loved like life  
And laid away at rest,  
No more will lisp her daddy's name  
It happened for the best—  
Like hell it did!

When they send us down forever  
Far away from all the rest,  
Some boob will pull that same old gag,  
It happened for the best.

---

## LIFE IS LIKE A BUBBLE OR A LITTLE PUFF OF SMOKE

Life is like a bubble or a little puff of smoke,  
When you reach the end you'll find life but a joke.  
You begin like all the others with hopes drawn high  
And when it's time to quit the world you leave it with a sigh.  
Life to us is an endless battle, you advance then you retreat,  
Either you're marching on to victory, or you're marching to defeat.  
While you're young you try and try again,  
But when you grow old you know the battle's all in vain.  
Sorrow, disease, misery, poverty and despair,  
Are only little items in this world of strife and care.  
When you're broke, you drift along from day to day,  
Then hope is your life—your all—  
A sudden jolt—you lose your grip—you fall.  
You keep on drifting, your heart is filled with grief,  
And you think if you were mad it would be a sweet relief.  
It is then you try to drown your sorrows in whiskey and in wine—  
But drink only drowns your sorrows for a time.  
The pipe, the needle and the white dust are next in line,  
They, too, will drown your sorrows for a time,  
Sadness is turning fast to madness and death is near at hand,  
But hope within you cries out to make a stand!  
The wise ones nod their heads and say it's too late now to mend your ways—  
You had plenty time to do it—in your younger days.  
The curtain is descending on the drama of your life—  
And when the curtain is lowered it shuts out all care and strife—  
Shakespeare said we're all fellow passengers to the grave,  
At the open grave we meet on equal terms, be we gentlemen or knave:  
And so the book of life is writ with tears from the human heart—  
But be it tears or laughter—we all must play our part.

## JUST THINKING

Standing up there on the firestep looking ahead in the mist  
With a tin hat over your ivory and a rifle clutched in your fist,  
Watching and waiting and wondering—'Are the Huns coming over tonight?'  
Say—aren't the things that you are thinking about enough to give you a  
fright?

Things that you haven't even thought of for a couple of months or more  
Thing that will set you a-laughin; things that'll get you sore.  
Things that you saw in the movies, things that you saw on the street,  
Things that you're really proud of, things that are not so sweet.  
Debts that are past collecting, stories you've heard and forgot—  
Ball games and birthday parties, hours of drill in the wet.  
Headlines, recruiting posters, sunset way out at sea  
Evening of pay days, Golly! It's a queer thing this memory.

Faces of pals in the homeburgh, voices of women folks  
Lessons you learned in school days, pop up in the midst of smoke  
As you stand there a-gripping your rifle, wet and chilled to the bone,  
Wondering and wondering and wondering—just thinking there all alone.  
When will the war be over, when will the gang break thru  
What will the U. S. look like; what will there be to do?  
Where will the boches be then, who will have married Nell?  
When's the relief coming—Gee—but that thinking's hell!

## THE GAMBLER

I've flirted with Dame Fortune from the day that I was born,  
And she's led me a very lively dance.  
But I've reached the conclusion as my footsteps travel on,  
That life is nothing but a game of chance.  
The dealer of the cards is fate, and we must play our hand  
Sometimes it's a high one, sometimes low.  
Till finally when grim old death a showdown does demand,  
Into the discard all of us must go.  
The rich man's son comes to this earth, he holds four aces cold,  
On such a hand I'd gladly bet my stack.  
And yet how often do we find when his life story's told  
That he is but a joker in the pack.  
The poor man's son is oftentimes born with nothing but a deuce,  
But still against all odds he makes advance,  
That's why I say, don't curse your luck, it really is no use,  
For Life is nothing but a game of chance.

How often have I sat with cards that didn't run my way,  
And had to keep on smiling just the same.  
Or if I had a streak of luck that gave me a big play  
I never bluffed the loser in the game.  
One time I tried the game of hearts, I longed to take the queen  
And on her finger place a wedding ring.  
But just as I thought she was mine, a rich man stepped between  
For I was but a two-spot, he was king.  
I've seen the winners in life's game look happy and content  
Yet giving unto charity no heed,  
I've seen the wretched gambler parting with his last red cent,  
In order that the "kitty" he might feed.  
Beneath the diamond in the rough, true hearts I've often found,  
It isn't fair to judge cards at a glance,  
And if I come this way again, I think I'll bet 'em blind,  
For life is nothing but a game of chance.



## VENTRILOQUIAL DIALOGUE

(This act was presented in vaudeville for three years by a well known ventriloquist.)

Written and Arranged by David J. Lustig

Open with a song.

After song:—

Figure: I feel like a man that just had an aching tooth pulled.

Ventriloquist: How is that?

Figure: I'm glad it's out.

Ventriloquist: What, the tooth?

Figure. No, the song.

Ventriloquist: Did my dog bite you down in the dressing room a while ago?

Figure: Nope, he was going to but I told him it was Friday.

Ventriloquist: Very clever of you, you blockhead.

Figure: So Ignatz, they've been feeding you meat again, eh?

Ventriloquist: Have you ever seen my wife? She's as pretty as a picture.

Figure: Has she got a good frame?

Ventriloquist: I honor and respect the ladies. Look, Tom, even on our ten cent pieces there is a woman's head.

Figure: Oh!! (FRIGHTENED).

Ventriloquist: Why, what is the matter?

Figure: I—I thought you were going to flash a dime!

Ventriloquist: Can you tell me why they put a woman's head on a ten cent piece?

Figure: Because money always talks.

Ventriloquist: Now, women, generally speaking—

Figure (interrupts): As they usually are.

Ventriloquist: I ask you, Tom, where do they stand?

Figure: In the street cars. Ain't I right?

Ventriloquist: In Asia a man can get a wife for thirty cents.

Figure: Well, a good wife's worth it! Next. Say, who was made first, man or woman?

Ventriloquist: Why, man of course. Adam was made first. He was a man according to the Bible.

Figure: You're wrong. The Bible says Adam was the first made. (Maid) Deep? Say, how can you make ice water without ice?

Ventriloquist: That's impossible.

Figure: No it ain't. Skin an onion. That will make your eyes water.

Ventriloquist: Did you see the girl I was talking to yesterday?

Figure: Ya ha.

Ventriloquist: September Morn has nothing on her.

Figure: September Morn has nothing on herself?

Ventriloquist: I suppose that's a joke.

Figure: Nope. That's a fact. Ask the married men. Say Lorraine, why do the little birds look so sad in the morning?

Ventriloquist: Why do the little birds look so sad in the morning? I'm sure I don't know. Why?

Figure: Because their bills are all over dew (due). To the river for you!

Ventriloquist: Where was the first game of base ball played?

Figure: In the garden of Eden.

Ventriloquist: How do you make that out?

Figure: When the devil scored first on Eve's error.

Ventriloquist: What is it we need most and can't hold onto?

Figure: A handleless umbrella.

Ventriloquist: (Takes out Watch, tells time.)

Figure: (Looks at watch). Where did you get that second hand watch?

Ventriloquist: That's brand new.

Figure: Anybody can see it's second hand. That went big in England, eh?

Ventriloquist: Say Tom, Dave dropped his watch on the floor the other night. Did it stop?

Figure: Of course—Did you think it went through?

Ventriloquist: Ladies and Gentleman as I am—

Figure: (Sees box on table). Say, what's that?

Ventriloquist: Oh, you mean that relic?

Figure: No—that box.

Ventriloquist: That isn't a box. That's an ancient relic of prehistoric times when you and I were dust.

Figure: Maybe you, but not I.

Ventriloquist: We were both dust then.

Figure: Oh no, I was part of a tree then.

Ventriloquist: That's so, too.

Figure: What's it for, eh?

Ventriloquist: That is a Pandoramtomaticko.

Figure: And I'll have a beer!

Ventriloquist: I found that while touring Egypt.

Figure: Where did you find it?

Ventriloquist: If you'll be quiet I'll tell you all about it. Several years ago I was walking through the streets of Cairo—

Figure: Walking?

Ventriloquist: That's what I said, walking.

Figure: Why didn't you ride?

Ventriloquist: I didn't want too.

Figure: You mean you didn't have car fare.

Ventriloquist: Stop this nonsense. I said as I was walking through the streets of—

Figure: Still walking—must have been a long walk.

Ventriloquist: I was walking through the streets of Cairo—

Figure: Did you see the (strains of 'Hootchie Coochie') (figure sings) Tum te, da, da da.

Ventriloquist: Stop! (Music stops).

Figure: Go. We're safe.

Ventriloquist: I saw no such dancers. I was not in that section of the city.

Figure: Mama's boy.

Ventriloquist: But in one of the bazaars—

Figure: Who?

Ventriloquist: Bazaars, I said.

Figure: I don't know him.

Ventriloquist: Who?

Figure: The czar.

Ventriloquist: Neither do I.

Figure: But we know the King, eh?

Ventriloquist: A bazaar is a—of course you know what a bazaar is.

Figure: Sure I do—do you?

Ventriloquist: Of course I do.

Figure: What is it?

Ventriloquist: A bazaar is a shop in the Orient.

Figure: I thought in Cairo.

Ventriloquist: Cairo is a city in the Orient—The front of these bazaars have no windows, the shopkeeper or as they are called there, Bazaar owners sit cross-legged among their goods on the counter peddling their wares.

Figure: (To Audience) I guess he's right.

Ventriloquist: I bought this pre-historic relic from an Egyptian named Hassan.

Figure: Cigarettes? What's it for?

Ventriloquist: In the years gone by, the ancient seers in the temples owned several of these Pandoramtomatickos. They are very valuable treasures. When they wanted to see or converse with anyone that had been dead for a long time, they would set the lever at the front of this wonderful machine to whatever century the person lived. Now say, you wanted to see Bill Shakespeare who lived in the seventeenth century. I turn the lever to 17, you look into the machine and there you see Shakespeare.

Figure: Don't he look old? Looks like Rip Van Winkie, don't he, eh?

Ventriloquist: Anything else you would like to see?

Figure: Turn to 20.

Ventriloquist: Look in—Turn lever to 20—That's a 20th Century scene.

Figure: (LOOKS IN—STARTS TO LAUGH—TURNS TOWARD AUDIENCE WINKS EYE—LOOKS INTO MACHINE ONCE MORE) —I thought so!

Ventriloquist: Why, what do you see?

Figure: Your home—And—Your wife sitting on another man's knee!!!

Ventriloquist: Stop this at once.

Figure: Gowan! (Angrily).

Ventriloquist: Silence or I'll forget myself.

Figure: But don't forget my salary.

Ventriloquist: Enough of this.

Figure: Yaw—Wah! !

Ventriloquist: If you don't stop—I'll send for your case!

Figure: Judge passed it—

Ventriloquist: Why?

Figure: Only nine bottles and the judge couldn't make a case.

Ventriloquist: Very funny.

Figure: Say Lorraine, in Cairo, did you see any sights, eh?

Ventriloquist: I saw lots of them.

Figure: As I was turning the corner the other day I saw one.

Ventriloquist: What was it?

Figure: Your wife!—She's some picture and some frame to the picture.

Ventriloquist: (PUSHES DUMMY AGAINST TABLE) Be careful of that relic. I don't want to have it destroyed. Why my boy, that prehistoric relic will last for hundreds of years, many years after you and I have passed away.

Figure: Maybe it will last longer than you but not me.

Ventriloquist: Why?

Figure: Wood lasts a long while.

Ventriloquist: (TAKES UP PAPER) They say that (LOCAL TOWN) is in a dirty condition.

Figure: (NAMES TOWN PLAYING IN)—is in the same state.

Ventriloquist: You have a good head but there's nothing in it.

Figure: My head is like the (NAMES LOCAL PAPER) nothing in it, eh?

Ventriloquist: You're right.

Figure: Is there anything in yours, eh?

Ventriloquist: Of course there is—

Figure: Why don't you kill them?

Ventriloquist: Do you sing?

Figure: You bet I do.

Ventriloquist: Good!

Figure: Sounds like four bawls, three men on basses and Baker up at the bat!  
FINISH WITH A TOPICAL NUMBER OR BALLAD.



## VAUDEVILLE VENTRILOQUIAL ACT

Written and arranged and used in season of 1914-1915 in vaudeville by

DAVID J. LUSTIG (La Vellma)

Vaudevillians cannot use this act unless written permission is obtained from David J. Lustig (La Vellma), care of National Vaudeville Artists, New York City, or care of 1207 Main Street, Bridgeport, Conn.

PROPS—Smoking set on table with cigarettes and cigars, decanter and glasses, newspapers and telephone.

SCENE—Interior or Garden Drop in "One."

OPENING—Music brings performer on from R. I. E.

WHEN SEATED AT TABLE—Music stops.

AFTER MUSIC STOPS\*

Ventriloquist: How is it you are never on time?

Figure: Hello George. (Looking around at audience).

Ventriloquist: It seems to be a habit with you too—

Figure: (Interrupting) Hello Sam.

Ventriloquist: The very next time you don't show up on time I'll—

Figure: Hello Bill.

Ventriloquist: Remember now, I won't stand waiting for you—

Figure: How-de do, Adam.

Ventriloquist: Are you listening to me?

Figure: Hello Tom.

Ventriloquist: Are you listening to me?

Figure: Cock-a-doodle-doo. (IMITATES A ROOSTER).

Ventriloquist: Are you addressing that young lady?

Figure: Sure.

Ventriloquist: You're addressing her as a rooster would.

Figure: Ain't she a chicken? (WINKS EYE)

Ventriloquist: Did you hear what I said before?

Figure: (SINGS) How dry I am.

Ventriloquist: Remember if you're late again I'll—

Figure: Pull your left rein you're running wild.

Ventriloquist: Are you going to listen to me or not?

Figure: Steer for land you're sea-sick.

Ventriloquist: Say what became of your lady love?

Figure: The one over in— (Name small town nearby).

Ventriloquist: Yes.

Figure: She's gone with a burlesque show.

Ventriloquist: Getting good salary?

Figure: Yep. Forty-five dollars a week.

Ventriloquist: What does she do?

Figure: Says only three words. Hip hip hooray!

Ventriloquist: And gets 45 dollars a week for just saying, Hip, hip hooray?

Figure: Nope, five for the hooray and forty for the hip!

Ventriloquist: What did she do before joining the burlesque show?

Figure: Used to be a Salome dancer. You know. (SHAKES) (MUSIC:

#### HOOTCHIE CHOOTSHIE)

Ventriloquist: Stop it.

Figure: We won't get pinched.

Ventriloquist: (LOOKS AT WATCH) (TELLS TIME)

Figure: (LOOKS AT WATCH) Where did you get that second-hand watch?

Ventriloquist: Second hand. That's a new watch.

Figure: Anybody can see it's second hand. See it there?

Ventriloquist: I saw you drop your watch last night. Did it stop when it struck the floor.

Figure: Kiss me before I kill you!

Ventriloquist: That watch will still be going, years after you and I have passed from this earth.

Figure: Maybe after you pass but not me.

Ventriloquist: Why?

Wood lasts a long while.

(VENTRILQUIST LIGHTS MATCH AFTER PUTTING CIGAR IN MOUTH. FIGURE BLOWS IT OUT AS PERFORMER RUNS TOWARD TABLE.)

Ventriloquist: I'd like to hear you recite.

Figure: (LOCALIZE)

Norwalk is a dirty place

This I've heard of late;

But who can blame the poor old town

When Bridgeport's in the same state.

Ventriloquist: Now let us hear another.

Figure: (LOCALIZE)

Bridgeport's industries may hum,  
But still the city's on the bum.

Ventriloquist: You're quite a poet.

Figure: Yes. How do you feel?

Ventriloquist: Pretty well but I have a slight headache.

Figure: Headache?

Ventriloquist: That's what I said.

Figure: Only people with brains have headaches.

Ventriloquist: Behave. I suppose you don't think I have any brains.

Figure: No—I don't think!

Ventriloquist: Enough! You are quite beside yourself.

Figure: No—I'm beside you.

Ventriloquist (angrily): You're a smart young man, aren't you?

Figure: He's got a headache!!

Ventriloquist: Of course I have a headache.

Figure: How could you, George!

Ventriloquist: Stop—you're aggravating me abominably.

Figure (sissified): My God—she's provoked!

Ventriloquist: Don't try my patience too far!

Figure: Go way, dearie! You're half gone now!

Ventriloquist (putting hand to head): You are causing my head to ache more.

Figure: You aint got a headache—cause where there's no sense there's no feeling.

Ventriloquist: I must see a doctor. He may give me something to rid me of this pain.

Figure: Yep. Doctors do fix up pain. Who are you going to?

Ventriloquist: Dr. "X." He set an arm I broke once painlessly.

Figure: That's nothing. You know my brother Jack?

Ventriloquist: Certainly.

Figure: Well, Dr. "N" took 5 bones out of his right hand, painlessly.

Ventriloquist: Didn't your brother feel it?

Figure: You bet he did. He didn't stop talking about what a robber that doctor was for two months.

Ventriloquist: Doctors have their uses.

Figure: Yep. But a doctor is the meanest man in the world.

Ventriloquist: Why is a doctor the meanest man in the world?

Figure: Because they treat you and make you pay for it.

Ventriloquist (picks up decanter)—(Figure watches him)—(sees decanter): H'm, H'm (noise to attract attention).

Ventriloquist (drinks a sip).

Figure (coughs).

Ventriloquist (wipes Figure's mouth with handkerchief).

Figure (as performer goes to drink): Ahem, I say.

Ventriloquist (drinks glass of wine).

Figure (as performer is drinking, hollers out different things, ad lib. such as "Where do I come in?" "Give me some," etc., etc. After wine is down dummy hollers out, facing the audience—Dummy has been watching performer—"What the H—!")

Ventriloquist: Oh, I forgot (again wipes dummy's mouth with handkerchief).

Figure (looks from performer to audience): What the hell do you—(performer puts hand over dummy's mouth) (Ad Lib as hand is taken away) (use distant voice).

Ventriloquist: What do you mean by swearing in front of these ladies and gentlemen?

Figure: What do you mean by drinking and not giving me any?

Ventriloquist: You don't deserve any.

Figure (sobbing): You—you—wait—you and—and I have been good—good friends for a long time—aint we?—Ans—answer me n-n-now—aint—we?

Ventriloquist: Yes.

Figure: I've hel—helped you—you to—to—earn a lot—of—of money, haven't I?

Ventriloquist: That's true.

Figure: Then why do you—you treat—m-m-me like—like this?

Ventriloquist: You can't have any wine.

Figure: All right. I'm—I'm through with you. Through for good. You—you don't care if I leave you, do you?

Ventriloquist: Well—what must be—must.

Figure (tremelo voice, dramatic): All right, then. I'm going away—far, far away. Pack—pack up my old rubber collars and my red undershirt—cause—cause I'm going away.

Ventriloquist: Ah—don't feel like that. Let's make up and remember—you and I have had a lot of fun together in our time—

Figure: (sobs).

Ventriloquist: Come now—it's true we've always been good friends—even pals—and Johnny, I'm sorry—far sorer than words can explain—that I spoke to you as I did.

Figure: (continues to sob).

Ventriloquist: I'm sorry, old pal. Let's let bygones be bygones. We want to be friends. What can I do to square things up?

Figure: Gimme a drink! (Vent gives dummy a drink). Dave—now that they have taken that stuff away, what will become of you and me and Bill Doidge? (music stops)

Ventriloquist (laughs): If the ladies will not object, I'll light my cigar.

Figure: Some cigar.

Ventriloquist: That's a good cigar.

Figure: What's its name?

Ventriloquist: Why, that's a Rotten cigar, I believe.

Figure: Rotten?

Ventriloquist: That's its name. (Lights cigar). Rotten cigar.

Figure (smells cigar—coughs; spits): Rotten—that's no name for it.

Ventriloquist (Ad Libs. quickly with dummy and himself in argument). (Then)—Now keep quiet, or I'll show you who's boss around here.

Figure: You're going to show me.

Ventriloquist: Yes, I am. Now be quiet.

Figure: Look what's going to show me.

Ventriloquist: Be still!

Figure: And if I talk?

Ventriloquist: Out the window you'll go!

Figure (sings): Out the window I will go, I will go—I will go! Say, out that window?

Ventriloquist: Yes, that window!

Figure: Sure?

Ventriloquist: Yes, sure. Now do be still. (Looks at newspaper).

Figure: Are you really going to throw me out that window?

Ventriloquist: Yes.  
Figure: Sure there's a window there?  
Ventriloquist: Sure.  
Figure: Is it high from the ground?  
Ventriloquist: Yes.  
Figure: How high?  
Ventriloquist (rattles paper angrily): About 60 feet above the ground.  
Figure: If you throw me out that window, how will you get me back?  
Ventriloquist: I'll not get you back; I'll leave you there.  
Figure: Where will you leave me?  
Ventriloquist: Down in the street.  
Figure: Couldn't you get a clothesline to haul me up?  
Ventriloquist: I could if I wanted to.  
Figure: How long would the line have to be?  
Ventriloquist: As long as the window is high.  
Figure: Some line. (lieing).  
Ventriloquist: Now keep quiet!  
Figure (to audience): I'm getting his goat. Can you read?  
Ventriloquist: Yes—shut up!  
Figure: Going to throw me out the window!—Sixty feet high!—big boob—Throw me out the window!—some line!—throw me out the window!  
Ventriloquist: Now see here. If you don't keep quiet I'll have to hit you. I want to read the (localize) paper.  
Figure: It's like your head—nothing in it!  
Ventriloquist: I'll have to hit you.  
Figure: You don't have to if you don't want to! Going to throw me out the window! Going to hit me! You big simp! Hit me—go ahead. I'd like to see you hit me. Going to throw me out the window! Go on, hit me—you're afraid to hit me!—Throw me out the window!  
Ventriloquist: Open your mouth again and you'll get hurt!  
Figure: (Opens mouth, saying mama) Go ahead!—You don't dare to hit me!  
Ventriloquist: (Hits him). (Dummy jumps, etc.).  
Figure: (To audience) He did it!! You hit me, but you didn't throw me out the window!  
Figure: (Telephone rings). He rings that himself.  
Ventriloquist: (Takes off receiver). Hello?—Yes—How are you?  
Figure: Going to throw me out the window.  
Ventriloquist: He's very bad. Wait, I'll lift him to the phone. The agent wants to speak to you.  
Figure: About the rent?  
Ventriloquist: No—about some bookings.  
Figure: (In phone). Hello Al, how are you?  
Voice: (Muffled distant voice in phone). How are you?  
Figure: All right. How are you?  
Voice: I'm fine. Hello.  
Figure: Hello.  
Voice: Are you there?  
Figure: Yep. Sixty feet above the ground, near a window.  
Ventriloquist: Keep quiet.

Figure: (In phone). He wants me to keep quiet.

Voice: Why?

Figure: Because, and if I don't he's going to throw me out a window.

Ventriloquist: That's enough. (Hangs up receiver).

Figure: Abusing me again, eh?

Ventriloquist: Don't be foolish. Want to hear a good story about a gun?

Figure: Shoot!

Ventriloquist: I wish you'd learn to behave and speak like a gentleman. I've treated you up to now with all kindness—in fact, do you know people, they say, can be killed by kindness.

Figure: Gee—how I love my mother-in-law.

Ventriloquist: You told me the other day your eyesight was going back on you.

Figure: Yep!

Ventriloquist: Why don't you try glasses?

Figure: I did. I took six glasses and when I came out I saw double.

Ventriloquist: You seem to be one of those fellows who don't know what they want and won't be satisfied until they get it. Say, if you had but twenty-four hours more to live how would you spend them?

Figure: One at a time.

Ventriloquist: Someone once said it takes seven tailors two months to make a man and a woman can make a monkey out of a man in one hour.

Figure: But think of that hour!!

Ventriloquist: I heard my wife's brother insulted you the other day.

Figure: So he did.

Ventriloquist: How did he insult you?

Figure: He offered me a mixed drink.

Ventriloquist: And what did you do?

Figure: I swallowed the insult.

Ventriloquist: Let me hear you sing.

Figure: There's a lady down there getting ready to go out.

Ventriloquist: What's the idea?

Figure: She must have heard me sing before.

Dummy sings one verse and one chorus. At close of verse performer carries figure toward L. first entrance.

After exit orchestra repeats chorus ff., for bows.

(Suggested encore: Some good recitation done by performer without figure. If performer uses figure let performer speak every other line in natural voice and figure speaks other line in ventriloquial voice.)

**Curtain**

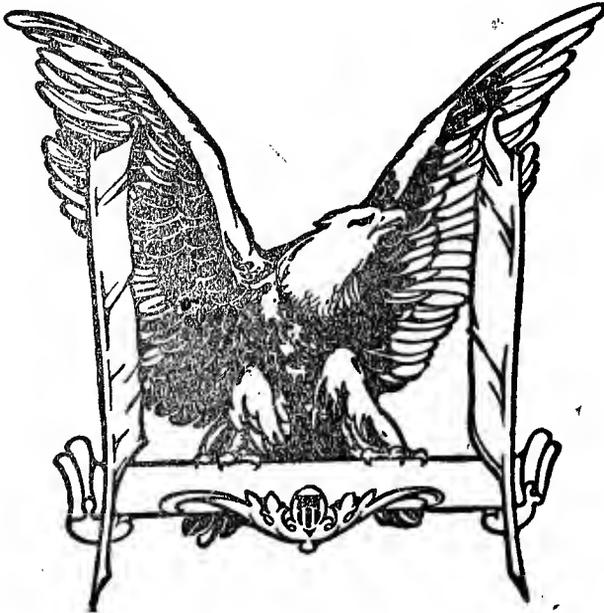


## VENTRILOQUISM BY MECHANICAL MEANS

To have a friend who is known to possess absolutely no ventriloquistic ability step out upon a stage and carry on a performance is a simple matter. All that is necessary is to place a loud-speaking receiver in the body of the manikin with the horn or large mouthpiece directed toward the audience, the receiver being, in turn, connected to a special transmitter in a dressing or anteroom some distance away; conceal an ordinary operator's breast transmitter in the body, so that anything said by the "fake" ventriloquist can be heard by the assistant, and arrange a number of electromagnets for the movement of the jaw, head, and arms.

The idea was successfully carried out recently in Chicago. The "fake ventriloquist" stands several feet away from the manikin and simply asks questions or makes requests, the assistant behind the scenes doing the work. The assistant, who should also be a singer, so as to respond to the request for songs, is provided with a list of answers to the various questions. While speaking or singing into the special transmitter, the assistant also manipulates a telegrapher's key controlling an electromagnet which causes the manikin's jaw to move. By the use of additional electromagnets and keys, the manikin's head can be made to turn from side to side, and the arm be raised in a salute.

The Magnavox Co. 2701 East Fourteenth street, Oakland, California; J. Skinder-viken, 335 Broadway, New York City, and G. Boissonnault, 26 Courtland street, New York City, make apparatus that could be used in perfecting the effect described.



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