(No Model.)

E. LYTTON.

TABLEAUX CURTAIN.

No. 574,552. Patented Jan. 5, 1897.

FIG. 1.

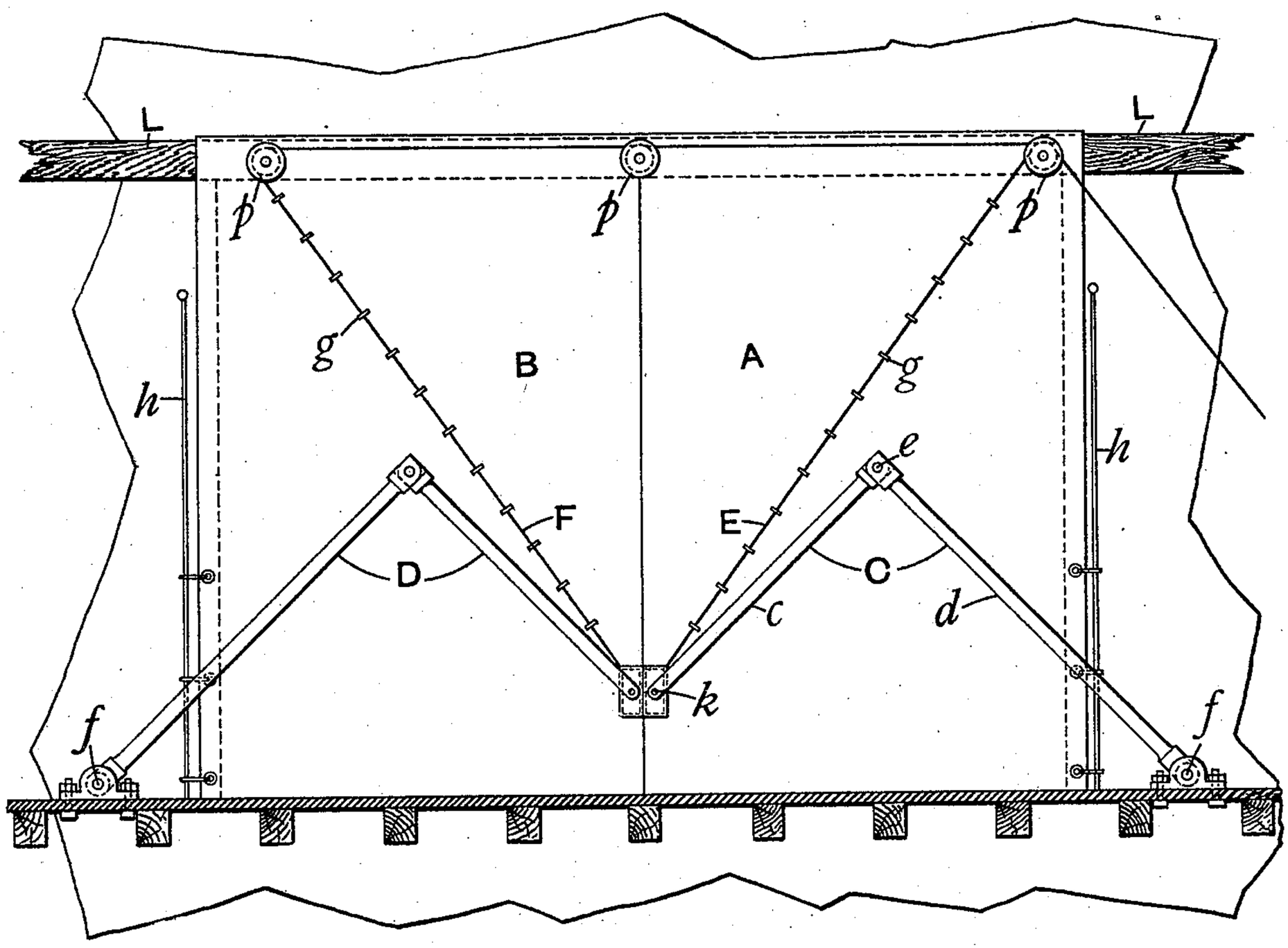


FIG. 2.

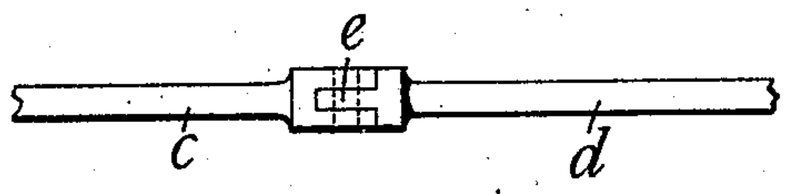


FIG. 3.

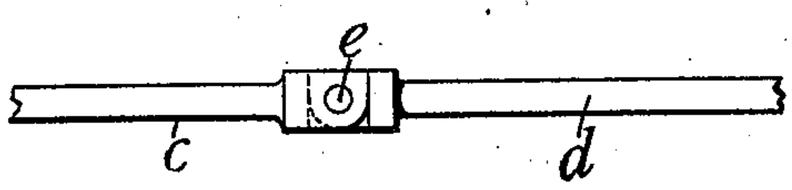
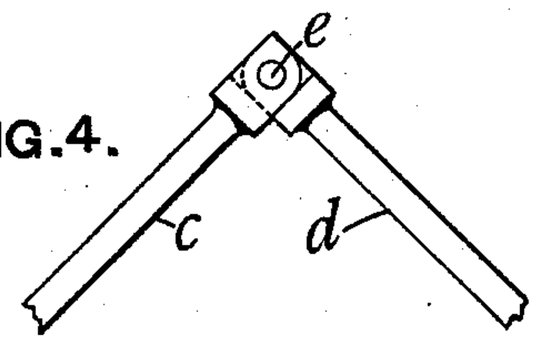


FIG. 4.



Witnesses
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

EDWARD LYTTON, OF LONDON, ENGLAND.

TABLEAU-CURTAIN.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 574,552, dated January 5, 1897.

Application filed September 29, 1896. Serial No. 607,308. (No model.) Patented in England February 13, 1896, No. 3,249, and in France August 13, 1896.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, EDWARD LYTTON, a citizen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, residing at Bedford Street, Strand, London, in the county of Middlesex, England, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Tableau-Curtains, (for which I have received British patent, No. 3,249, dated February 13, 1896, and French patent, dated August 13, 1896,) of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to theatrical stage-curtains of the kind generally known as "tableau-curtains;" and its chief object is to provide means to insure that the curtains will completely meet or slightly overlap, no matter at what speed they are closed or are allowed to close. In carrying these improvements into effect the two parts which form the complete curtain are suspended from their upper edges in the usual or any suitable manner. To a convenient part of each curtain, preferably at or near the inner lower corner, is attached one end of a jointed rod or arm, the other end of which is hinged or pivoted to the side of the proscenium or to the stage. A cord, chain, or the like is attached to the end of each arm or to the curtain at or near the point where they are connected and passes over suitable guide-pulleys to the wing, where it is operated to raise and lower the curtain.

I will more particularly describe my said invention with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 represents my improvements applied to a pair of tableau-curtains as seen from the stage. Fig. 2 is a plan view, and Figs. 3 and 4 are side elevations of the joint in the arms.

The curtain consists, as usual, of two parts A and B, suspended along their top edges from the top of the proscenium. In their closed position they actually meet or slightly overlap. Two jointed arms or rods C D are respectively pivoted or hinged each at one end to the stage or to the proscenium at or near *f*, and at the other end they are attached to the curtains at or near the inner edges and the bottoms, as indicated.

At or near the point of connection of each arm with its curtain there is attached one end of a cord E or F, each of which passes diagonally through guide-rings *g*, sewed on the curtains, to guide-pulleys *p* at the back of the proscenium over the wings. Each of these cords may be operated separately to open and close the curtains; but it is preferred to lead one of them around its guide-pulley to the opposite wing, where it is connected to the other, as shown in the figures, so that both curtains are simultaneously operated by the connected cords at one wing. At the operating end the pendent cord or cords may be weighted to balance the weight of the curtains as nearly as may be.

In describing the action of the jointed rods I will refer to one curtain only, it being understood that the other curtain is simultaneously operated in precisely the same way.

For the curtain A the jointed arm C consists of two links *c d*, hinged together at *e*. The wing end of the part *d* is hinged, preferably, to the stage at *f*. The other end of the part *c* is connected to the curtain close to its edge and near the bottom at *k*. When the curtain is down, if the cord be pulled the jointed arm begins to move upon its pivot, thus raising the inner lower corner of the curtain. During the first part of the movement the part *c* acts principally as a link to transmit the motion of the cord to the part *d*. When the latter has reached or approached a vertical position, as may be governed by the relative lengths of the parts *c* and *d*, the continued lift of the cord causes the part *c* also to turn upon the hinge *e*, thus completing the lift of the curtain, which at the end of the lift will be gracefully draped.

The edges of the curtains next the wings may be provided with rings to slide upon the cord or rod *h* as they lift, or equivalent devices may be used for preventing those edges of the curtains from moving toward the center.

The jointed arms or rods may be variously proportioned and constructed; but I have found the form illustrated to produce most satisfactory results. The hinged part of one of these rods is separately shown on an enlarged scale in plan and elevation, respectively, by Figs. 2 and 3. With the shown construction the rod cannot fold to less than

about a right angle, as shown by Fig. 4. The precise angle below which the rod cannot fold is not of very great importance and will be determined by the relative lengths of the two parts *c d*. The object is that whenever the curtain is lowered the part *c* inclines upward from the point of its connection with the curtain to the joint *e*, as thus a kind of lock is set up, and the center edges of the curtains cannot be laterally displaced except by means of the cord. The weight of the arm C tends to straighten it and to maintain the lock. I wish it to be understood, however, that I may use jointed rods with ordinary hinges and of such lengths that when the curtain is lowered they will lie nearly horizontally. If, however, there is not, when the curtain is lowered, a slight upward bend or knee at the joint *e*, there may be trouble in raising the curtain.

The curtains may be arranged to just meet each other when lowered; but usually they will slightly overlap, and for this purpose the jointed arms on the respective curtains may be arranged with their ends slightly out of line with each other to permit the overlap.

It is important that the jointed arms should be able to move in a vertical plane only, and for this purpose the hinges and joints may be made long and strong.

If it be desired to replace the curtains by an ordinary drop-curtain at times, their top edges may be attached to a batten L, which can, when required, be lifted with the curtains into the flies.

While I have described and shown my invention as applied to a curtain having two parts meeting at a central line, yet it is evident that a single curtain can be operated equally well, if desired.

Having now particularly described and ascertained the nature of my said invention and in what manner the same is to be performed, I declare that what I claim is—

1. The combination with a tableau-curtain, of a jointed arm pivotally attached to the curtain at or near its inner edge, the other end of the arm being pivotally attached to a stationary support, substantially as described.

2. The combination with a tableau-curtain, of a jointed arm pivotally attached to the curtain at or near its inner lower corner, the other end of the arm being pivotally attached to a stationary support at one side of the stage, substantially as described.

3. The combination with a tableau-curtain, of an arm composed of two links hinged together, one link being pivotally attached to the curtain, and the other to a stationary support, said links being arranged to move in an upright plane only, substantially as described.

4. The combination with a tableau-curtain, of an arm composed of two links hinged together, one link being pivotally attached to the curtain, and the other to a stationary support, said links being of such a length as to stand at an angle to each other when the curtain is down, substantially as described.

5. The combination with a tableau-curtain, of an arm composed of two links, one pivotally attached to the curtain, and the other to a stationary support, said links being hinged together by a joint which prevents them from folding together beyond a predetermined angle, substantially as described.

6. The combination with a tableau-curtain, of a jointed arm having one end pivotally attached to the curtain and the other end pivotally attached to a stationary support, and a lifting-cord attached at or near the inner end of the arm and running diagonally toward the upper outer corner of the curtain, substantially as described.

7. The combination with a tableau-curtain, of a jointed arm pivotally attached to the curtain and to a stationary support, a cord for lifting the inner end of said arm, and means for retaining the outer edge of the curtain in a given upright position, substantially as described.

8. In tableau-curtains, the combination with the parts A, B, thereof, of the arms C, D, composed of links *c d* hinged together at *e* and pivotally attached to the parts A B at *k* and to the stage at *f*, the rings *g* on the parts A, B, the cords E F attached to the parts A B at *k* and running through the rings *g*, the upright rods *h* to which the outer edges of the parts A B are loosely attached, and the batten L to which the upper edges of the parts A B are attached, substantially as described.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my invention I have signed my name, in presence of two witnesses, this 2d day of September, 1896.

EDWARD LYTTON.

Witnesses:
JOHN WILLIAM MALLETT,
FREDERICK STOCKTON.