

The Magic Lantern

SOMETHING TO DO

Alexia Lazou

I picked up this book in a junk shop towards the end of last year and had no idea how appropriate it would be to the current situation! Unfortunately it is in a terrible condition and the title page is missing, so I cannot be sure of the publication details. A handwritten dedication in the front is dated September 1919. The book looks very similar to some published by Henry Frowde and Hodder & Stoughton around 1911, later re-issued by

Humphrey Milford circa 1920. However, these

were miniature books whereas *Something To Do* is 23.5cm by 18.5cm. Interestingly, the front cover illustration is by Dorothy E. Braham who is credited for being Art Director on the 1930 film *The Squeaker*.



While the lantern show instructions may be unnecessary for MLS members, we might take heed of the suggestion: "Chocolates or something of the sort should be provided for the audience. Otherwise they might get rather bored if there are any 'waits' between the changing of the slides."

In my experience, only Jan and Richard Rigby have ever gone to this much effort. The image typically shows a boy presenting the slides. Another boy turns round, intrigued by the lantern; or perhaps he's keen on the girl assistant (maybe she has the chocolates?). The rest of the book provides guidance on a variety of activities such as shadow portraits and conjuring tricks. 'Eating Candles Before Audience' "doesn't sound attractive" but "will cause a tremendous sensation" (think I prefer the chocs, thanks). The illustration for acting out 'A Little Play' features children in a curious mix of costumes – Elizabethan, Regency, Mediaeval – and a 'Votes For Women' Banner!

If anyone else has a complete copy of this book, I would be very pleased to know the publication details, and you will be duly rewarded with a bar of Montezuma's finest (other cocoa-based confectionery products are available)!



There are always hours in holiday-time when you seem to have used up everything. There's nothing left in the way of occupation, that you can think of: you have tried all you knew and got tired of it. You mope about miserably, bored to death, or you fidget until you become insufferable in the eyes of grown-ups, and in the end you wish you were back at school again.

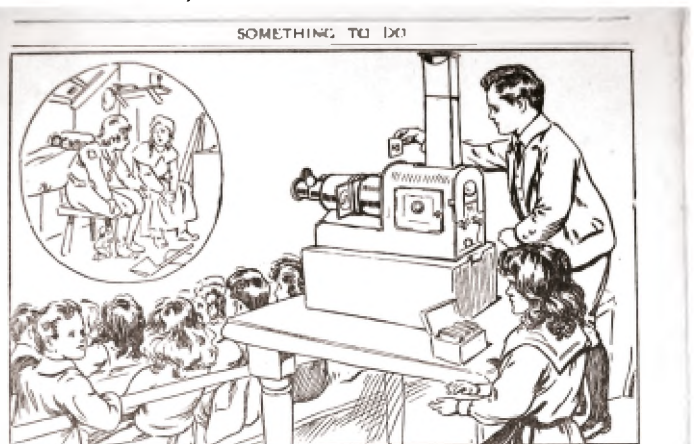
Well, here are some suggestions as to ways in which you might fill up your time: some you may have tackled already, but certainly not all, because though some of these hints are about well-known employments, many are absolutely new. And in carrying out these, you are sure to invent and to discover other things for yourself. One idea leads on to another. So don't despair, however down-in-the-mouth and nothing-to-do-ish you may have been

feeling. There are still a few things to be achieved or attempted! Cheer up and start fair.

THE MAGIC LANTERN

You can buy—or persuade your parents to buy—such cheap little lanterns, that an evening's amusement may be had at a very small cost. And slides can also be had more cheaply than you could make them: so I shall only give you a hint or two about the management of a magic lantern.

1. Keep your oil lamps well cleaned, and the wick or wicks well cleaned, because a smoky smelly lamp will spoil the whole thing.
2. Only use the best petroleum, cheap oil is dangerous as well as inefficient.
3. Fill your oil-reservoir with a penny tin funnel, so that no oil gets spilt.



4. For the screen, upon which the pictures are to be thrown—which, I take it, will be hung on the wall, and not a translucent one between you and the spectators—a very large piece of cardboard will do, if your lantern be a small one. It hangs straighter than a sheet.

there are any "waits" between the changing of the slides.

5. Have the lantern placed quite square with the screen, so that a line drawn from one to the other makes a right angle.
6. Keep the room as dark as possible.
7. Chocolates or something of the sort should be provided for the audience. Otherwise they may get rather bored if



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