

# 1866

**Crohoore Na Biloge; Or, The Pride of Clarah**, a play with music adapted by Francis Belfield from Michael Banim's short story *Crohoore of the Bill-Hook*, was staged by the Australian Star Company at the Royal Victoria Theatre (Melb) beginning 14 November. The story concerns Pierce Shea and Alley Dooling, at whose wedding the hunchback Crohoore vows vengeance on the bride's family. When the family is found murdered with Crohoore's bill hook and Alley abducted, suspicion falls on the hunchback. John Doran, a rejected lover of Alley's suggests that Pierce join the Whiteboys and attempt to save his bride. Pierce is later arrested and tried for treason. Crohoore arrives and denounces Doran as the abductor and reveals that he is Alley's brother. The cast included: Harriet Gordon [Hyde], James Hasker, Charles Young, and J. P. West. Original music for the premiere production, which included songs and dance in the wedding scene, was written by C. Rice. The play was revived in 1867, with new music by Edward King (Princess's Theatre, Melb; 30 Mar.).

## **COPPIN IN CALIFORNIA:** [farce with music] **Txt/Mus.** [n/e]

Advertised as a farce, the plot, according to the *Argus* was "founded on [George Selth] Coppin's experiences in California as business manager to the Kearns." On his arrival in California, he finds that Australians are ill regarded as "Sydney Ducks," so he impersonates a major from Kentucky. Coppin eventually reveals his true identity and is able to vindicate Australians in American eyes (Editorial, 5).

The music element includes song and dance sequences.

- 1866:** Royal Haymarket Theatre, Melbourne; 3-9 Feb.
- **Lse.** William Hoskins; **M Arr.** Frederick Coppin (overture).
  - **Cast** incl. Maggie Stewart, Adelaide Stoneham, Mrs E. Holloway, George Coppin, Richard Stewart, James Milne, Mr Howell, E. Holloway, Mr Hall, Mr Maynard, J. H. Flexmore, Mr Stoneham, C. Wilson, Walter Hill, Mr Johnston, Mr Bradley, Mr Manley, Mr Watkins.

*Argus* 3 Feb. (1866), 8. Advert.

Cutter, Christopher. "**Coppin on America: To the Editor of the Age.**" *Age* 5 Feb. (1866), 5.

**Editorial.** *Argus* 5 Feb. (1866), 5.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia:*

*1850-1869.* (1995), v. pags.

"**News of the Day.**" *Age* 5 Feb. (1866), 5.

Mr. C O P P I N.  
THIS EVENING,  
And Every Evening until Further Notice,  
Will be presented a novel and original dramatic sketch  
(founded on facts) entitled  
**COPPIN IN CALIFORNIA.**  
Mr. Coppin (Australian comedian and business  
manager for the Kearns) ... By Himself.  
Major Jonathan Jonah Goliath Bang (a Kentuckian)  
Mr. George Coppin.  
Charlie Marshall (agent for the manager of the theatre  
and mining speculator) ... Mr. R. Stewart.  
Judge Tipmee (mayor of San Francisco, and chairman  
of the Anti-Long Skirts' Obstruction Crinoline  
Waterfall Society) ... Mr. Milne.  
Judge Skedaddle (ex-mayor of San Francisco.) ... Mr.  
Howell.

*Argus* 3 Feb. (1866), 8.

## **BLACK-EY'D SUSAN:** [burlesque] **Txt Adapt.** Mr Bayly; **Mus.** [n/e]

# Caxton, 1866

Staged as a benefit for the Sydney Female Refuge, *Black Ey'd Susan* was adapted and localised by Mr Bayly (an officer of H.M.S. Curacoa) from Douglas Jerrold's famous play. The *Sydney Morning Herald* described the production as "a very sparkling little piece, interlarded with 'taking' music, and spiced with plenty of good puns. There is a due infusion of absurdity in the affair; it is boisterous and jolly as all burlesques ought to be" ("Prince of Wales," 4). The cast and musicians comprised officers and crew from the ship.

Advertisements announce that the libretto was published by Caxton's.

- 1866:** Prince of Wales Opera House, Sydney; 10 Aug.
- **Troupe:** Officers and crew of HMS Curacoa.
  - **Cast** incl. Henry Rogers (William), H. Wyatt (Admiral Cupola), James Clark (Captain Crosstree), B. Dickenson (Dwindellesius Dedgrass), Lt. T. Cockcroft (Simon Seaweed), George Witty (Ben Blowhard), Sydney Hill (Jacob Twig), Lt. Yonge (Susan).
  - Presented along with *Urgent Private Affairs* (farce) and *A Frolic of Fortune* (comedy)

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869.* (1995), v. pags.

"**Prince of Wales Theatre.**" *Sydney Morning Herald* 11 Aug. (1865), 4. Advert. [see also advert. 10 Aug. 1866, 8]

## **L'AFRICAINNE; OR, THE FICKLE GEOGRAPHER AND THE FAIR ABORIGINAL:**

[burlesque] **Txt Adapt.** W. M. Akhurst; **Mus.** [n/e]

Written expressly for the touring Christy's Minstrels troupe, this operatic burlesque is based on A. E. Scribe and G. Meyerbeer's opera *L'Africaine* ("The African Girl") depicting fictional events in the life of the explorer Vasco da Gama. The opera itself had been staged in Sydney for the first time in May that year (Prince of Wales Theatre), and had been given a Melbourne season prior to the Christy's burlesque production in that city.

In critiquing Akhurst's role in adapting the work the *Age* theatre critic writes: "The local hits were racy and pungent.... [and] the music of the opera has, in some instances, been adhered to" ("News," 5). The *Bell's Life in Victoria* critic agreed, noting: "The new burlesque is almost too faithful a copy of the original and it is little short of sacrilege to smuggle the music of Meyerbeer into such a laughable travesty. The adapter has shown great talent in being able to present such a grand work in such comical guise... The dialogue sparkles with local witticisms" ("Metropolitan," 2).

The character of Sélíka is portrayed in the burlesque as an Aboriginal woman

**1866:** Polytechnic Hall, Melbourne; 11-24 Aug., 1 Sept.

- **Troupe:** Christy's Minstrels.

- **Cast** incl. Geraldine Warden, Sig. R. Abecco, Thomas H. Rainford, E. Harvey, R. Sandford, H. Raynor, H. Leslie.

**Editorial.** *Argus* 13 Aug. (1866), 5.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869*. (1995), v. pags.

"Metropolitan Stage, The." *Bell's Life in Victoria and Sporting Chronicle* 18 Aug. (1866), 5.

"**News of the Day.**" *Age* 13 Aug. (1866), 5. ["News of the Day" section continued from page 4]

**MARITANA:** [burlesque] **Txt Adapt.** W. M. Akhurst; **Mus.** [n/e]

*Maritana* is a grand opera in three acts, composed by William Vincent Wallace (1812-1865) with a libretto by Edward Fitzball (1792-1873). It was adapted expressly for Christy's Minstrels by W. M. Akhurst and was described in the *Argus* as 'the nigger opera of *Mary Tanner*' (Editorial, 5).

**1866:** Polytechnic Hall, Melbourne; 25 Aug. - 1 Sept.

- **M Dir.** Linley Norman.

- **Troupe:** Christy's Minstrels.

- **Cast** incl. Geraldine Warden, Sig. R. Abecco, Thomas H. Rainford, E. Harvey, R. Sandford, H. Raynor, H. Leslie.

*Age* 28 Aug. (1866). **Advert.**

Covell, Roger. "**Weakening Force of Origin: Reputations and Allegiances of Musicians in Colonial Australia, The.**" *Australian Studies* 2 (2010).

**Editorial.** *Argus* 27 Aug. (1866), 5.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869*. (1995), v. pags.

See also W. H. Waters in *Harry Emmett's Theatrical Holiday Book*. (1885), 17.

**FAUST D. D. D; OR, THE DEMON THE DOCTOR AND THE DAMSEL:** [burlesque]

**Txt Adapt.** John L. Hall; **Mus.** [n/e]

Adapted from Gounod's opera *Faust* as an operatic burlesque by Hall. It is believed that the Princess Theatre production was a revival, having been staged previously, as claimed by the *Age* ("News of the Day," 5) and *Bell's Life in Victoria* ("Theatrical," 2), at the Theatre Royal, with Mr Hall as the principle character. It was advertised in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as an operatic burlesque and "a colonial production" (8).

**1866:** Princess's Theatre, Melbourne; 15-21 Sept.

- **Mngr/Lse.** John L. Hall; **Ast Mngr.** John Bryan.

- **Cast** incl. Emily Wiseman, Tilly Earl [Mrs John Edouin], Julia Edouin, Alice Wiseman, Mrs Lyons, Miss A. Bray, John L. Hall, Master Morris, Mr Keogh, Mr Woolfe, Mr Anslow, Mr Smith, John Dunn.

**1867:** Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 8-14 June

- **Lse.** J. C. Lambert; **S Mngr.** C. Vincent; **Ast Mngr.** Henry R. Harwood.

- **Cast** incl. Docy Stewart, Emily Wiseman [Mrs John L. Hall], Miss Mortimer, Miss Forde, John L. Hall, Walter Hill.

**1867:** Victoria Theatre, Sydney; 21-23 Aug.

- **Prod/Dir/Lse.** George Coppin; **S Mngr.** J. R. Greville.

- **Cast** incl. Emily Wiseman [Mrs John L. Hall] and John L. Hall.

**1867:** Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 18-20 Nov.

- **Lse.** J. C. Lambert; **S Mngr.** C. Vincent; **Ast Mngr.** Henry R. Harwood.

- **Cast** incl. Emily Wiseman [Mrs John L. Hall], John L. Hall, Henry R. Harwood.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869*. (1995), v. pags.

"**News of the Day.**" *Age* 17 Sept. (1866), 5.

*Sydney Morning Herald* 21 Aug. (1867), 8. **Advert.**

"**Theatrical: The Metropolitan Stage.**" *Bell's Life in Victoria and Sporting Chronicle* 15 Sept. (1866), 2.

**IXION; OR, THE MAN AT THE WHEEL:**

[burlesque] **Txt Adapt.** W. M. Akhurst; **Mus.** [n/e]

Adapted from F. C. Burnand's 1863 extravaganza of the same name, with a large number of localisms (including several aimed at a recent festive event), *Ixion* is based on the Greek legend of the son of Phlegyan and father of the Centaurs. The *Age* theatre critic draws attention to the 'usual quantum of songs and dances' as a feature ("Theatres" 5), although the *Bell's Life in Victoria* critic questioned the advantage of substituting one number, the old song of 'St Agnus Well', for that written especially for the character Bacchus ("Theatrical," 2).

**1866:** Princess's Theatre, Melbourne; 22 Sept. - 8 Nov., 5-7 Dec. [46 pfms]

*Argus* 22 Sept. (1866), 8.

**PRINCESS'S THEATRE.**  
Lessee and Manager, Mr. J. L. Hall.  
Acting Manager, Mr. John Bryan.  
**THIS EVENING,**  
At 7.30,  
**THE WRECK ASHORE.**  
To conclude with, for the first time, a grand mythological burlesque, by F. C. Burnard, Esq., entitled  
**I X I O N;**  
Or,  
**THE MAN AT THE WHEEL,**  
The manager begs to submit the following powerful cast :—  
Miss Emily Wiseman as Ixion.  
Miss Louise Arnot as Juno.  
Miss Tilly Earl as Cupid.  
Miss Alice Wiseman as Apollo.  
Miss Julia Edouin as Venus.  
Mr. J. L. Hall as Minerva.  
Mr. John Dunn as Ganymede.  
Mr. W. B. Gill as Mercury.  
Mr. J. J. Welsh as Jupiter.  
Mr. J. Milne as Mars.

- **Mngr/Lse.** John L. Hall; **Ast Mngr.** John Bryan; **S Art.** Charles Fry.
- **Cast** incl. Emily Wiseman [Mrs John L. Hall] (Ixion), Louise Arnott (Juno), John L. Hall (Minerva), John Dunn (Ganymede), Tilly Earl [Mrs John Edouin] (Cupid), Alice Wiseman (Apollo), Julia Edouin (Venus), W. B. Gill (Mercury), J. J. Welsh (Jupiter), James Milne (Bacchus), Mr Keogh (Mars).

**Editorial.** *Argus* 24 Sept. (1866), 5.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869.* (1995), v. pags.

"**Theatrical: The Metropolitan Stage.**" *Bell's Life in Victoria and Sporting Chronicle* 29 Sept. (1866), 2.

"**Theatres: The Princess, The.**" *Age* 24 Sept. (1866), 5.

## **BURLESQUE OPERATIQUE:** [burlesque] **Txt.** W. C. [sic]; **Mus.** [n/e]

Advertised in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as having been expressly for the occasion by W. C. (2 Oct. 1866, 2). This was an amateur production.

**1866:** School of Arts, Sydney; 2 Oct.

- **Troupe:** Kingslake Amateur Minstrels.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869.* (1995), v. pags.

*Sydney Morning Herald* 2 Oct. (1866), 2. Advert.

## **PARIS; OR, VIVE LEMPRIERE:** [burlesque] **Txt Adapt/Mus.** [n/e]

Adapted from F. C. Burnand's extravaganza of the same name (1866) with "new local subjects liberally treated" (*Argus* 3 Nov. 1866, 8).

**1866:** Royal Haymarket Theatre, Melbourne; 3-16 Nov.

- **Prod/Dir.** George Coppin; **Dir.** J. R. Greville; **S Art.** Henry Holmes and Charles Fry; **M Arr.** Frederick Coppin; **Cost.** Mrs Hancock.
- **Troupe:** Coppin's Star Company.
- **Cast** incl. Miss Milne, Adelaide Stoneham, Mrs Woolridge, Carry George, Mrs Greville, Miss Bush, Miss Fagin, Miss Dixon, Miss Bray, Nelly Montague, Louise Bray, Blanche Bray, Miss Holland, Julia Matthews, W. B. Gibb, Mr Stanley, J. R. Greville, Mr Noble, Mr Daniels, G. H. Rogers, F. Merton, The Original Minstrel Troupe.

*Argus* 3 Nov. (1866), 8. Advert.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869.* (1995), v. pags.

"**Theatres: The Haymarket, The.**" *Age* 5 Nov. (1866), 5.

## **THE FOUR CHAMPIONS; OR, HARLEQUIN OF THE CRYSTAL GLOBE AND THE SPIRITS OF THE DEMON DELL:** [pantomime] **Lib Adapt/Mus.** [n/e]

Adapted from Henry Bellingham and William Best's burlesque *Princess Primrose and the Four Pretty Princes*, which had been staged in London for the first time in January the same year. *The Four Champions* is recorded in the *Argus* as having had 'local subjects plentifully interspersed and liberally treated by everybody' (24 Dec. 1866, 8), while the *Age* critic writes: 'The local hits introduced, and their name was legion, were generally smart and pungent. Mr Greville's song is not, however, framed so as to hit the most polite taste' (24 Dec. 1866, 5).

The story concerns Princess Primrose, the daughter of King Ninnyhammer, who was abducted as an infant by the Fairy Queen, Beatee. Now seventeen, the princess is to be escorted back to her father on the Fairy Queens; orders and the company of seven champions - Amrus (devoted to the fairer sex), Turfi (a sporting man), Hassard (a gambler) and Pecki (a gourmand). In the meantime, however, the ruffian Dubbuldeye conceives a plan to foist his daughter Redwig on the king and claim that she is his missing daughter. In order to carry out his plan he entreats the aid of the Demon Uglee and his attendant spirits of the Demon Dell. Thus Princess Primrose and her four champions are waylaid by Dubbuldeye and his supernatural associates. To further complicate matters the champions are lured from their task during their sleep by other spirits. Left unprotected the princess and the champions' valet Zimon are abducted by Uglee and sent to a distant land where the young girl is to be offered for sale as a slave. With the real princess out of the way Dudduldeye presents his daughter to the king. The champions by this time have escaped and arrive at the court to announce Redwig as a fake. The king demands they prove their allegation and holds two of the champions (Pecki and Hassard) as hostages. His command is that the other two must return within 12 months or their friends will lose their heads. The princess is saved from slavery through the Fairy Queen's inexhaustible purse and she arrives back at her father's palace just in time to save her friends.

**1866:** Royal Haymarket Theatre, Melbourne; 22 Dec. 1866 - 11 Jan. 1867 [17 pfms]

- **Prod/Dir.** George Coppin; **M Arr.** Frederick Coppin; **S Art.** J. H. Flexmore and Henry Holmes; **S Mngr.** J. R. Greville; **Cost.** Mrs Hancock and Mrs Crouch; **Chor.** Mr Samwells and J. H. Flexmore.
- **Cast** incl. Mrs J. R. Greville (Prince Amrus), Miss Montague (Prince Turfi), Kate Corcoran (Prince Pecki), Miss Bush (Prince Hassard), Garry George (Queen Beatee), G. H. Rogers (King Ninnyhammer), Julia Milne (Princess Primrose), H. Daniels (Dubbuldeye), W. B. Gill (Zimple Zimon); **Spritis of the Demon Dell:** J. R. Greville (Uglee), Mr Williams

**ROYAL HAYMARKET THEATRE.**  
 Manager, Mr. G. Coppin.  
 Stage Manager, Mr. J. R. Greville.  
**THIS EVENING,**  
 And  
 Every Evening until Further Notice,  
 The Entertainments will Commence with  
**FREDERICK OF PRUSSIA.**  
 Supported by  
 Messrs. Coppin, Rogers, Greville, Ireland, Stanley,  
 Mesdames Greville and Wooldridge.  
 To be followed by a Characteristic Rehearsal of the  
 Grand  
**CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME,**  
 Entitled the  
**FOUR CHAMPIONS;**  
 Or,  
**HARLEQUIN OF THE CRYSTAL GLOBE AND  
 THE SPIRITS OF THE DEMON DELL.**  
 The overture and music arranged from the original, by  
 Mr. Fredk. Coppin.

*Argus* 22 Dec. (1866), 8.

(Squint), Mr Thompson (Fright), Mr McIver (Face) and Mr Clare (Pimple); Master Herbert (Spirit of the Ring), Fred Leotard (Spirit of Love), R. H. Nelson (Spirit of the Table), John Lauri (Spirit of Specs); Attendant Fairies: Miss Noble (Brunette), Blanche Bray (Golden Blonde), Miss Rogers (Lovely Black), Louisa Bray (Pretty Blue), Miss Carey (Merry Eye), Alice Bray (Roguish Twinkler), Mrs Woolridge (Redwig); King Ninnyhammer's Court: Mr Merton (Marquis Whine), Mr Train (Lord Grumble), Richard Stewart (Justice Sniff), Mr Phillips (Duke of Snivel), Mr Dybold (The Honourable Mr Groan), Mr Clarke (Count Whimper), T. Noble (Caliph Roli Poli), Mr Granati, Mr Newton, Mr Burns, Mr Finch; Harlequinade - J. H. Flexmore (Harlequin), H. Stanley (Pantaloon), Leon Samwells (Clown), Kate Corcoran (Harlequina), Julia Milne (Columbine).

"**Haymarket Theatre: The Christmas Pantomime**" *Argus* 24 Dec. (1866), 5. [see also advert. - 22 Dec. (1866), 8]

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869*. (1995), v. pags.

"**Pantomime at the Haymarket, The.**" *Age* 24 Dec. (1866), 5-6.

## **HARLEQUIN BOMBASTES FURIOSO:** [pantomime] **Lib Adapt/Mus.** [n/e]

Adapted from the W. B. Rhodes burlesque of the same name (1810), *Harlequin Bomastes Furioso* was advertised as the "first pantomime ever produced in Brisbane." The storyline incorporated numerous "local hits" (*Brisbane Courier* 25 Dec. 1866, 1).

**1866:** Royal Alexandra Theatre, Brisbane; 25 Dec. 1866 - 4, 16 Jan. 1867

- **Prop.** James Dinsdale; **S Mngr.** Henry N. Douglas.

- **Cast** incl. Julia Hudson, Miss Wilson, J. L. Byers, W. J. Holloway, A. Webster, Tom Ford, Sam Poole, J. H. Ramsay.

*Brisbane Courier* 25 Dec. (1866), 1. Advert.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869*. (1995), v. pags.

## **HARLEQUIN TU-MUT-CHU, PRINCE OF WIVING-HOE; OR CHOW-COW-PA, SKIDAMALINK AND JEEMA-MA-TEN:** [pantomime] **Lib Adapt/Mus.** [n/e]

Adapted from an English burlesque *Harlequin Tu-Mut-Chu, Prince of Wiving-Hoe* was advertised in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as a "new burlesque and pantomime, being a free and easy edition of an Arabian Nights dream cunningly spiced up to fit the political atmosphere by Two Stars (at present under a cloud)" (8). The story is based on the Cameralzaman and Badoura tale, with characters corresponding to Charles Cowper, James Martin, Geoffrey Eager, David Buchanan, and R.M. Isaacs. *Sydney Punch* described it as a "thoroughly localised version of a burlesque lately produced at one of the leading London theatres" (29 Dec. 1866, n. pag.).

The scenic settings were: Sc 1. Fairy Bower on the Banks of lake Lovely (incl. A dreadful shock caused by a *Sydney Morning Herald* report); Sc 2. Court of Chow-Cow-Pa; Sc 3. Bush near Botany; Sc 4. Dungeon in the Court of the Haunted Well (anywhere); Sc 5. A Wood Near Parramatta; Sc 6. Palace of Jeemi-Ma-ten, Emperor of Parramatta); Sc 7. Haunted Dell by Moonlight (dance with Will O' the Wisp); Sc 8. View in the Blax-Land (incl. King Skidamalink and his black-guards, cannibalism, connubialities and the capture of a bushranger); Sc 9. Interior of Skidamalink's Hut; Sc 10. Fairy Realms of True Love and the Abode of Bliss.

**1866:** Royal Victoria Theatre, Sydney; 26 Dec. 1866 - 9 Jan. 1867 [13 pfms]

- **Dir.** J. P. Hyde; **S Art.** Mr Burbury and J. R. Setright.

- **Cast** incl. Charles Young (Chow-Cow-Pa, King of Wiving-Hoe), Harriet Gordon [Hyde] (Camaralzaman), James Hasker (Thingami, Grand Vizier), J. P. West (Jeemi-Ma-ten, Emperor of Parramatta), Mrs C. Jones (Yusetowoz, King Chow-Cow-Pa's Royal consort), Mrs Moore (Badoura, the Flower of Beauty), Mr Selwyn (Jeh Feegah), Mr Chandler (Bewk-Anna, a political beadle), Mr Manley (Sarem Mizaahz, and old woman), Miss Murphy (Cupid), Mrs Andrews (Maimounie, Queen of the Fairies), Miss Brown (Glow-worm, the Queen's aid), Charles Walsh (Skidamalink, King of the Isle of Ebony), Mr Miran (Sheepskin), Mr Mason (Beeswax), Mr Renno, Mr Edwards; Harlequinade - Young Ranno (Clown), Mr Edwards (Harlequin), J. J. Hasker (Pantaloon), Miss McKeown (Columbine), Miss Murphy (Harlequina).

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869*. (1995), v. pags.

*Sydney Morning Herald* 26 Dec. (1866), 8. **Advert.** Incl. comprehensive scene synopsis.

*Sunday Press* (Sydney) 29 Dec. (1866), n. pag.

"**Theatres, The.**" *Sydney Morning Herald* 27 Dec. (1866), 5.

## **LADY BELLE-BELLE; OR, HARLEQUIN FORTUNIO AND THE SEVEN CHAMPION MAGIC MEN, THE:** [pantomime] **Lib Adapt.** [n/e]; **Mus.** incl. Edward King

Adapted from H.J. Byron's extravaganza *Lady Belle-Belle; Or, Fortunio and his Seven Magic Men* (1863), this version is said to have been more in the vein of burlesque. The *Argus* theatre critic also writes: It "is not decidedly new except in so far as it has been improved (?) by the introduction of local allusions – for the most part rubbish. The management has, however, gone to considerable expense in the production of the piece and shown good taste in the outlay... the scenery of course calls for first notice on such an occasion, and it may be remarked that the transformation scene [which depicted Paddy's Market and major emporiums] and the concluding tableau, 'The Crystal Lake in the Valley of Ferns' have scarcely ever been exceeded in effect upon the colonial stage" (27 Dec. 1866, 5).

The story of Lady Belle-Belle begins with Count Collywobbol, a nobleman in very embarrassed circumstances, who has been called upon by King Courtly to supply a contingent of soldiers to serve in a war he is currently waging. The Count's three

daughters, Flimsietta, Fritterina and Belle-Belle volunteer to assume masculine attire and serve in the war under the king. However, the unamiable conduct of Flimsietta and Fritterina causes offence to a very powerful fairy disguised as an old lady, while their sister creates a good impression. The fairy rewards Belle-Belle by allowing her to take the form of Fortunio, a captivating young hero who wins the approval of the king. Meanwhile, the king's half sister, a princess of the virago type, makes advances upon Fortunio but is repelled with disdain. This creates resentment in her mother, the Dowager Queen, and she manages to have Fortunio sent on a dangerous mission to kill a formidable dragon. Fortunio manages to trick the dragon with a magic potion, however. After slaying it he goes on to encounter other adventures before resuming his original feminine aspect and attire. The pantomime ends with Lady Belle-Belle winning the affection of the king. He subsequently asks for her hand in marriage, which leads to the glorious transformation scene.

The local references included the introduction of a number of quasi Ethiopian cricketers, in compliment to the aboriginal cricketers who were there. The harlequinade also featured a cricket match with "Lilliputian darkies" ("Theatrical," 2). One of the songs incorporated into the production was popular "Hot Codlins" (sung by J. L. Hall).

**1866:** Princess's Theatre, Melbourne; 26 Dec. 1866 - 15, 19 Jan. 1867 [22 pfms]

- **Lse/Mngr/Dir.** J. L. Hall; **Ast Mngr.** John Bryon; **M Arr.** Edward King; **S Art.** B. Tannett and Mr Murphy; **Cost.** Mrs Calvert; **Chor.** John Edouin.

- **Cast** incl. Emily Wiseman [Mrs John L. Hall] (Belle-Belle/Fortunio), John Dunn (The Dowager Queen), Tilly Earl [Mrs John Edouin], Mrs Gladstone, Louise Arnott, Fanny Wiseman [Mrs South], Miss Roberts, Mrs Rivers, Miss Downey, James Milne, W. South, Joe Downey, Mr Targett, Mr Williams, Mr Bartlett, Mr Alleyne, Mr Falk, Master Morris, Mr Gladstone, Mr Small, Mr Alexander, Mr Wilkins, John Edouin (Harlequin), Julia Edouin (Columbine), John L. Hall (Clown), J. J. Welsh (Pantaloone), Bedouin Troupe, Corps de Ballet.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869*. (1995), v. pages.

"Pantomime at the Princess's." *Age* 27 Dec. (1866), 6.

"Princess's Theatre." *Argus* 27 Dec. (1866), 5.

"Theatrical: The Metropolitan Stage." *Bell's Life in Victoria and Sporting Chronicle* 22 Dec. (1866), 2.

## GULLIVER ON HIS TRAVELS; OR, HARLEQUIN AND FATHER CHRISTMAS AND THE FAIRY QUEEN OF THE SILVER ACACIAS: [pantomime] **Lib Adapt.** W. M. Akhurst; **Mus** incl.

Julius Siede

# Abbott, 1866

Adapted from Jonathon Swift's novel *Gulliver's Travels*, the plot begins with Argentilla the Fairy Queen of the Silver Acacias awaiting the arrival of Old Father Christmas. Unbeknownst to the Queen her law officer Topsyturvey has conspired with Prime Minister Cantankeros to usurp her position. In the meanwhile Father Christmas arrives, bringing all manner of presents which the conspirators render valueless in the eyes of the Queen (the latest fashions are represented by the last new bonnet while a 'parcel' of politicians is turned into a pack of stuff). The last of the boxes to be opened contains an edition of the renowned Gulliver - who has already appeared favourably in the dreams of the Queen. She immediately declares herself his protector, causing Cantankeros and Topsyturvey to plot his downfall and so demonstrate that they have greater powers than her. The narrative then shifts to London where Gulliver has become bored with his surgery and is feeling set upon by his wife and howling infants. In order to escape he takes up an offer from Captain Bumptous Blowhard to become his ship's doctor. Gulliver's adventure begins when his ship is wrecked in a storm and he is thrown into the sea. Argentilla, who has only just learned of the schemes of her treacherous Minister sends a dolphin to save Gulliver and carry him to the shore of an island. It is here that Gulliver is captured by the Lilliputians and the plot briefly follows the original storyline until Cantankeros and Topsyturvey arrive, disguised as seamen, in order to complete their plan to destroy Gulliver.

The pantomime unfolds over six scenes. The original production featured several long mime sequences and contained numerous topical references. The music saw a good deal of operatic burlesque introduced, especially extracts from Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine*.

**1866:** Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 26 Dec. 1866 - 19 Jan. 1867 [24 pfms]

- **Mngr/Lse.** Mr Hoskins, **M Arr.** Julius Siede and B. Levy; **S Art.** John Hennings, William Pitt, Mr Freyberger (comic scenes) and Mr Watts (comic scenes); **Cost.** Mrs Bennett; **Com Sc.** Leopold Brothers; **Chor.** Henry Leopold and Richard Stewart.

- **Cast** incl. Docy Stewart, Miss Mortimer, Maggie Stewart, Anna Ford, Miss McFarlane, Miss K. Ford, Miss Kaye, Miss Waghorn, Miss L. Howard, Miss E Collins, Miss J. Collins, Miss A. Collins, Miss O'Neill, Miss Levy, Miss S. Daniels, Miss L. Daniels, Miss K. Roberts, Miss A. Roberts, Miss E. Egerton, Nelly Egerton, Flora, Fanny and L. Cushla, Elinor Forde, Lydia Leopold, Miss Melville, Frau. Fannie [Mrs Tom Leopold], C. Warde, K. Stewart, C. Hall, Master Pap, Mr Stoneham, Mr Keogh, Mr Howell, Henry and Tom Leopold, Master Warde, Master Albert Leopold, Mr Johnson, Mr Jones, Mr Smith, Mr Collins, Mr Loman, Henry R. Harwood.

**T H E A T R E R O Y A L .**  
 Lessee and Manager, Mr. Hoskins.  
 Real Old English Pantomime.  
**BOXING-NIGHT, DECEMBER 26,**  
 And Every Evening until Further Notice,  
 Will be presented  
 An original, grand, romantic, musical, spectacular,  
 laughable, comic  
**CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME,**  
 Entitled  
**GULLIVER ON HIS TRAVELS ;**  
 Or,  
**HARLEQUIN OLD FATHER CHRISTMAS**  
 And the  
**FAIRY QUEEN OF THE SILVER ACACIAS.**  
 The Opening written expressly for this theatre by Mr.  
 W. M. Akhurst.  
 The Overture composed and arranged by Mr. Siede.  
 The Incidental Music arranged by Mr. B. Levy.  
 The Scenery by Messrs. Hennings, Pitt, Freyberger,  
 and Assistants.  
 The Scenery of the Opening by Mr. John Hennings.  
 The Comic Scenes by Messrs. Freyberger and Watts.  
 The gorgeous Last Scene Designed and Painted by  
 Mr. Wm. Pitt.

*Argus* 26 Dec. (1866), 8.

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"Pantomime at the Royal, The." *Age* 27 Dec. (1866), 5-6.  
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Last updated: 14/05/2016

Expanded and updated from Clay Djubal, "What Oh Tonight" (Appendix C), Ph D Diss (2005) U of Qld.

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