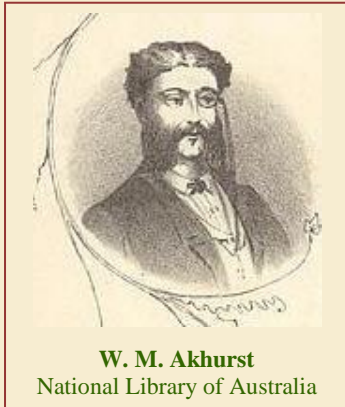


PARIS THE PRINCE AND HELEN THE FAIR; OR, THE GIANT HORSE AND THE SIEGE OF TROY: [burlesque] Txt. W. M. Akhurst; Mus incl. Julius Siede

Bell, 1869



W. M. Akhurst
National Library of Australia

Also known as *The Siege of Troy*, and described as a "classical burlesque extravaganza on the theme of the Trojan War," the story begins with Cupid and Hymen arranging the fate of Helen amidst the splendor of the Spartan King's palace. Helen then appears with Paris and they decide to elope, making their way to a Phrygian galley moored off the Eurotas - with the "traviata-singing Cassandra's prophecies of doom [going] unheeded." The voyage scene that follows, staged in representation of "the Duke of Edinburgh's outward voyage" (including comments by several characters), allowed John Hennings, the original scenic artist, to create a number of exquisite panoramic views, notably the Rock of Gibraltar, the peak of Teneriffe, Rio De Janeiro, Tristan da Achuna and the Cape of Good Hope, the last of which gave way to a scenic representation of Helen and Paris being welcomed into Troy by Priam and the Trojans. A later scene played out the well-known story of the Trojan horse, from which the Greek soldiers emerge to open the gates of the city. This was followed by the triumphant entry of the army, the capture of Ilium, followed by the finale, a grand tableaux set amidst the ruins of the burning city (*Argus* 13 Apr. 1868, 5).

The music was of both of an operatic and popular nature, and included accompaniment for the ballet scenes. The overture was composed by Julius Siede. Nellie Stewart, her autobiography *My Life's Story*, records that "Akhurst was responsible for the introduction of all the latest comic opera successes from Paris and London in *The Siege of Troy* long before the operas were staged in Australia" (22).

1868: Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 11-25 Apr., 25 May - 13 June [28 pfms]
- **Lse.** Charles Vincent, Henry R. Harwood, Richard Stewart and John Hennings; **S Mngr.** Charles Vincent; **Ast Mngr.** Henry R. Harwood; **M Arr.** B. Levy; **S Art.** John Hennings, Alfred Clint and Richard Liddle; **Cost.** Mde Jager.

- **Troupe:** Royal Star Company.
- **Cast** incl. Marion Dunn (Paris), Margie Chester (Helen), Maggie Stewart (Hymen), Docy Stewart (Cupid), C. Warde (Menelaus), Miss McFarlane (Archilles), Alice Bray (Ajax Telamon), Richard Stewart (Patrocious), John Dunn (Priam), Henry R. Harwood (Cassandra), Mrs Woolridge (Hecuba), Blanche Bray, Miss Lester, Miss Maughan, Miss Sinclair, Miss Dick, Mr Gladstone.

1868: Alfred Hall, Ballarat (Victoria); 7 June
- Cast and production mostly as for previous Melbourne season.

1868: Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 18-29 Aug. [11 pfms]

- **Prod.** George Coppin, Henry R. Harwood, John Hennings and Richard Stewart; **S Art.** John Hennings.
- Cast and production mostly as for previous Melbourne season.

1868: Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 12-19 Dec.

- **Prod.** George Coppin, Henry R Harwood, John Hennings and Richard Stewart; **S Art.** John Hennings.
- **Troupe:** Royal Star Company.
- **Cast** incl. Marion Dunn, Docy Stewart, Maggie Stewart, Margie Chester, Mrs Woolridge, Henry R. Harwood, R. Dunn, Con Ward, George Darrell.

1869: Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 1 Feb., 6 Mar. [benefits]

- **Prod/Lse.** George Coppin, Henry R. Harwood, John Hennings and Richard Stewart; **S Art.** John Hennings.
- **Troupe:** Royal Star Company.

- **Cast** incl. Docy Stewart, Henry R. Harwood.

1869: Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 7-19 Aug. [11 pfms]

- **Prod/Lse.** George Coppin, Henry R. Harwood, John Hennings and Richard Stewart; **S Art.** John Hennings, Mr Douglas and Richard Little; **M Arr.** Frederick Coppin; **Cost.** Mde Jager.

- **Troupe:** Royal Star Company.

- **Cast** incl. Maggie Stewart (Paris), Margie Chester (Helen), Docy Stewart (Cupid), Miss McFarlane (Archilles), Alice Bray (Ajax), Mrs Woolridge (Hecuba), Richard Stewart (Patrocious), C. Warde (Menelaus), John Dunn (Priam), Henry R. Harwood (Cassandra).

1870: Theatre Royal, Adelaide; 16 Feb. - 4 Mar. [as *The Siege of Troy*]

- **Prod/Lse.** George Coppin, Henry R. Harwood, John Hennings and Richard Stewart; **S Art.** John Hennings, Mr Douglas and Richard Little; **M Arr.** Frederick Coppin; **Cost.** Mde Jager.

- Cast incl. Trojans - Maggie Stewart (Paris), Harry Sefton (Priam), H. R. Harwood (Cassandra), Lizzy Bushe (Hecuba); Immortals - Frances Bentley (Hymen), Docy Stewart (Cupid), Greeks - Charles Coutts (Agamemnon), George Collier (Menelaus), Alice Bray (Achilles), Blanche Bray (Ajax Telamon), Louisa Coppin (Ajax Oileus), Kate Douglas (Idomeneus); Greeks - Ellen Douglas (Diomedes), Agnes Benison (Ulysses), Jessie Newman (Nestor), Richard Stewart (Patroclus), Margie Chester (Helen).

T H E A T R E R O Y A L
Lessee and Stage Manager, Mr. Charles Vincent.
Acting Manager, Mr. H. R. Harwood.
Doors open at 7, to commence at half-past 7; the performance will terminate at 11.
GREAT ATTRACTION FOR EASTER.
THIS EVENING (EASTER EVE),
EASTER MONDAY,
And
Every evening until further notice,
An entirely new and original Grand Classical Burlesque Extravaganza, written expressly for the Theatre Royal by Mr. W. M. Akhurst, the author of so many successful burlesques and pantomimes, entitled
PARIS the PRINCE,
And
HELEN the FAIR;
Or, the
GIANT HORSE
And the
S I E G E of T R O Y .

Argus 11 Apr. (1868), 8.

"**Burlesque Company, The.**" *South Australian Register* 17 Feb. (1870), 4.

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

"**Siege of Troy at the Royal, The.**" *Age* 13 Apr. (1868), 5.

Stewart, Nellie. *My Life's Story*. (1923), 21-22.

"**Theatre Royal: Re-appearance of Mr Harwood.**" *Argus* 9 Aug. (1869), 5.

"**Theatre Royal: The Easter Burlesque.**" *Argus* 13 Apr. (1868), 5.

Williams, Margaret. *Australia on the Popular Stage*. (1983), 77-8.

THE PILGRIM OF LOVE; OR, THE PARROT AND THE PRINCESS: [burlesque]

Txt Adapt/Mus. [n/e]

A burlesque most probably adapted from H. J. Byron's extravaganza *The Pilgrim of Love* (1860), it contained allusions to local events, as well as a balloon scene in front of a diorama and a scene in which the "Galatea" entered Sydney Heads.

[NB: See also two similarly titled versions in 1860.]

1868: Royal Victoria Theatre, Sydney; 27 June - 8 July

- **Mngr/Dir.** William Hoskins; **M Arr.** John Gibbs; **S Mngr.** Stuart O'Brien; **S Art.** Henry Holmes; **Cost.** Mrs Stapleton.

- **Troupe:** Victoria Star Company.

- **Cast** incl. Julia Harland, Rosa Cooper, Mrs Jones, Clara Stephenson, Mr Burford, Stuart O'Brien, Mr Leonard, Mr Rainford.

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

KING ARTHUR; OR, LANCELOT THE LOOSE, GIN-EVER THE SQUARE, AND THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE AND OTHER FURNITURE: [burlesque] **Txt.** W. M.

Akhurst; **Mus.** [n/e]

Bell, 1868

T. H. Lacey [ca. 1871]

Presented in six scenes this burlesque on the Arthurian theme, Akhurst founded his version partly on Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' and partly on Sir Thomas Mallory's collection of ancient metrical romances. The production typically featured local allusions and topical issues throughout, including Collins Street, the Jones vs Randell case (which saw the Commissioner of Railways triumph over Constitutional Association, led by Mr Jones), and personalities like Fenians and Bismarck. The *Age* theatre critic writes of Akhurst's treatment: "The dialogue is smartly written, and abounds (as all burlesques must necessarily do) in puns, good, bad and indifferent... It is not on his puns alone, however, that Mr Akhurst depends for the success of his pieces. He is exceedingly happy in his selection of music and *King Arthur* is replete with melodic gems of great beauty" (2 Nov. 1868, 3). The critic also notes that the production contained a number of amusing comic songs, several of which were written to (or had their lyrics re-written) satirise well-known personalities. Notable here were "The Late Lamented Jones" (sung by Henry R. Harwood), "Beautiful Nell" (duet between Marian Dunn and Docy Stewart), and "The Canterng Cad of Collins Street" (sung by Richard Stewart).

THEATRE ROYAL
Linces - Messrs. HARWOOD, STEWART, HENNING, and COPPIN.

THIS EVENING (SATURDAY), MARCH 5,
AND UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.
GRAND PRODUCTION
Of Mr. W. M. Akhurst's Great and Most Successful Burlesque Extravaganza,
KING ARTHUR,
OR, LANCELOT THE LOOSE, GIN-EVER THE SQUARE, AND
THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE,
AND OTHER FURNITURE.

The entirely New and Beautiful Scenery
Painted by Mr. JOHN HENNINGS, Mr. Charles Fry, and Assistants.

THE ROYAL BURLESQUE COMPANY.

The musical element included ballets, and songs of operatic style and popular styles. 'Popular London airs of the day' were : "Pull, Pull Together Boys," "Riding on the Donkey," "Bold Burgundy Ben," "The Five O'clock Bus," "Smart Isobella," "Pretty Polly, Do Say Yes," "Tootal, Tootal on the Cornet," and "The Galloping Snob." Other songs included : "La Polka Des Sabots" (Varney), "Couplets of the King" (from *La Belle Helene*), "Valse Song, Joyous Life," "Voici le Sabre" (from the *Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*), "Volta la Terres" (from *Un Ballo in Maschere*), "Valse Song" (from Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*), "Come Home, Father" and a Grand Plantation Walk-around (Age 6 Nov. 1868, 4). Advertising in the *South Australian Register* in March 1870 indicates that a new "local" song, "That's What They Say About It," had been introduced into the production (8 Mar. 1870, 1).

Nellie Stewart, in her autobiography *My Life's Story*, records that "the music of *The Grand Duchess* was used, almost in its entirety in [the] burlesque of *King Arthur*" (22).

South Australian Register 5 Mar. (1870), 1.

1868: Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 31 Oct. - 19 Dec. [30 pfms]

- **Prod/Lse.** George Coppin, Henry R. Harwood, John Hennings and Richard Stewart; **M Arr.** Frederick Coppin; **S Art.** John Hennings, Alfred Clint, Mr Robins and Richard Little; **Cost.** Mde Jager.

- **Troupe:** Royal Star Company.

- **Cast** incl. Marian Dunn (Arthur), Docy Stewart (Sir Lancelot), Con Warde (Merlin), Richard Stewart (Sir Kay), Margie Chester (Vivian), Henry R. Harwood (Sir Modred), Maggie Stewart (Sir Antour), John Dunn (Guenever, otherwise Gin-ever), Anna Forde (Elaine), George Darrell (King Lot of Lothian), Mr Lewis (King Ganters of Merlot), Mr Dias (King Uriun of Reged), Mr Compton (King Carodas of Strangore), Mr Batesen (King Ider of the Marches),

Mr Wyatt (King Anguisant of Scotland), Alice Bray (Sir Burb), Blanche Bray (Sir Cuss), Miss L. Coppin (Sir Cumlocution), Annie Collins (Sir Geon), Lizzie Collins (Sir Gery), Miss Grainger (Sir Pose), Miss Newman (Sir Mount), Miss Benson (Sir Vant), Miss O'Donnell (Sir Prise), Miss Crawford (Sir Tainly Not), Miss Caulson (Sir Cuiteous), Miss Lester (Sir Pent), Miss Hogan (Sir Cingle), Mdlle. Therese (dancer), Mons. Schmidt, Bros. Wieland (dancers).

1870: Theatre Royal, Adelaide; 5-17 Mar.

- **Prod/Lse.** George Coppin, Henry R. Harwood, John Hennings and Richard Stewart; **S Art.** John Hennings, Charles Fry and Assistants.

- **Troupe:** Royal Burlesque Company

- **Cast** incl. Maggie Stewart (King Arthur), George Collier (Merlin), Docy Stewart (Sir Launcelot), Ellen Douglas (Vivien), Richard Stewart (Sir Kay), H. R. Harwood (Sir Mordred), Lizzie Busche (Sir Antour), Charles Coutts (Guenever), Frances Bentley (Elaine), Blanche Bray, Alice Bray, Louisa Coppin. Teresa Collins, Lizzie Collins, Miss Grainger, Jessie Newman, Kate Douglas, Agnes Benison, Miss O'Donnell, Miss Crawford, Miss Coulson, Miss Hogan, Miss Lester.

1870: Princess's Theatre, Melbourne; 18-23 Apr.

- **Prod/Lse.** George Coppin, Henry R. Harwood, John Hennings and Richard Stewart; **S Art.** John Hennings and Mr Freburger.

- **Troupe:** Royal Burlesque Company.

- **Cast** incl. Docy Stewart, H. R. Harwood, Richard Stewart, G. H. Rogers, Maggie Stewart, Rosalie and Heloise Duvalli, Francis Bentley.

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

"*King Arthur at the Royal*." *South Australian Register* 7 Mar. (1870), 5.

Lynch, Andrew. "Marvellous Melbourne's Middle Ages: The Burlesque Extravanzas of W. M. Akhurst." *Australian Literary Studies* 26.3-4 (Oct-Nov. 2011), 36-53.

"*Princess's Theatre*." *Argus* 19 Apr. (1870), 6.

Stewart, Nellie. *My Life's Story*. (1923), 21-22.

"*Theatres: The Theatre Royal - Mr Akhurst's New Burlesque, The*." *Age* 2 Nov. (1868), 3.

▶ **King Arthur, Or, Launcelot the Loose:** Digital copy of original manuscript published by The Camelot Project at The University of Rochester [Edited by Rosemary Paprocki from the 1868 R. Bell edition]

▶ **King Arthur; Or, The Knights of the Round Table:** Digital copy of original manuscript published by The Camelot Project at The University of Rochester [Edited by Rosemary Paprocki from the 1871 Thomas Hales Lacey edition]

WRONG SIDE OF THE DOOR: [operetta] **Lib/Adapt.** W. M. Akhurst; **Mus** incl. Jaques Offenbach

Adapted by Akhurst from the 1859 operetta *Un Mari Á La Porte* by Offenbach (libretto by A. Delacour and L. Morand). The production was advertised for performance on 7 Oct. 1868, but there is no record of this occurring on that date.

1868: Duke of Edinburgh Theatre, Melbourne; 7 - 19 Nov., 5 Dec. [12 pfms]

- **Mngr.** Gilbert Roberts; **M Dir.** Stephen Hale Marsh.

- **Cast** incl. Kate Ryder, Milly Parker, E. Reeves.

"*Duke of Edinburgh Theatre*." *Argus* 9 Nov. (1868), 6.

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

LORD LOVEL AND LADY NANCY BELL: [burlesque] **Txt Adapt/Mus.** [n/e]

Advertised in the *Argus* as "a profusely localised burlesque by a well-known resident of Emerald Hill" (3), it was very likely adapted from F. C. Burnand's extravaganza *Lord Lovel and Lady Nancy Bell; Or, The Bounding Brigade of the Bakum-Boilum* (1856).

This was an amateur production.

1868: Mechanics Institute, Emerald Hill (Melbourne); 1 Dec.

- **Prod.** Emerald Hill Amateur Dramatic Club

Age 30 Nov. (1868), 3. **Advert.**

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

HARLEQUIN LITTLE BO-PEEP; OR, KING SING A SONG OF SIXPENCE; OR THE WITCH, THE GIANT, AND THE GOOD LITTLE FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN VALLEY:

[pantomime] **Lib.** J. P. West and "Waif Wander, Esq." [Mary Fortune]; **Mus.** [n/e]

Advertised in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as a "local Christmas extravaganza [with] all the local institutions and absurd incidents of the day, popular and otherwise" (23 Dec. 1868, 2). Advertising in *Freemans Journal* 26 December 1868 also reads: "Clarke's Varieties and People's Theatre, York Street. On Thursday evening 24 and until further notice, will be produced a grand, gay and gorgeous glittering, great and glorious, Christmas Local Extravaganza, glowing with glimmering, through gleaming gleanings from all the local institutions of the day, popular and otherwise. The joint production of J. P. West and Waif Wander, Esq. and written expressly for this theatre, entitled *Harlequin Little Bo Peep, King Sing a Song of Sixpence; Or, The Witch, The Giant, and The Good Little Fairy of the Golden Valley*." A brief article published in the same journal a week after *Little Bo-Peep's*

premiere further indicates that the "piece [was] replete with local hits, and was placed upon the stage in a manner that could scarcely be credited in a theatre where the price of admission are fixed for the accommodation of the million" (2 Jan. 1869, 15).

[NB: The pantomime's full title is advertised in *Freeman's Journal* 26 Dec. 1868, 15]

1868: Clarke's Varieties and People's Theatre, Sydney; 24 Dec. 1868 - 11 Jan. 1869

- **Prod.** Mr Clarke; **S Mngr.** J. P. West.

Freeman's Journal 26 Dec. (1868), 15. **Advert.**

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

Sydney Morning Herald 23 Dec. (1868), 2. **Advert.**

HARLEQUIN LITTLE JACK HORNER; OR, THE CHRISTMAS PIE AND THE FAIRIES OF THE SILVER FERNS: [1868] **Lib Adapt.** Walter H. Cooper; **Mus.** [n/e]

The *Sydney Morning Herald* notes that while this pantomime, founded on the well-known nursery rhyme, was an adaptation of W. M. Akhurst's *Little Jack Horner; The Original Hero of the Corner* (1860), it had been "almost entirely changed to suit present topics of interest in Sydney, and these are introduced with a droll piquancy and unflagging humour that are sustained throughout the pantomime" ("Christmas," 4). A critic writing for *Bell's Life in Sydney* similarly notes: "The witty and telling dialogue of the opening is being continually enriched by new local 'hits' which form no inconsiderable feature in the attractiveness of the piece. Among these may be specially mentioned a new parody on Billy Barlow, written by Mr W. Cooper, and excellently well rendered by Mr Stuart O'Brien" (9 Jan. 1869, 3). The paper reports the following week: "Continual novelties are being produced in the comic scenes, and the local allusions in the opening are frequently changed and brought up to date, so that each performance, to some extent differs from its predecessor" (16 Jan. 1869, 3).

The pantomime begins with a grand ballet in the Dell of Silver Ferns, after which the fairies Progressa and Retrogressa argue as to who has the most influence over Jack Horner. The scene switches to Jack's cottage where he is seen learning his letters. His 'suit' to Myozoe is coolly received because he has no learning. Retrogressa promises to give him poetic fire, however, and he is able to shortly after sing the songs "The Grenadier," "Hickory Dickory Dock." Later while continuing his learning a pie is brought in, and he proceeds to describe to Old Proverbs the ideas represented in the plums, each of which has a political significance. Old Proverbs declines a slice of pie and advises Jack that knowledge is power. He then presents him with the Sword of Perseverance (which allows a scene in which Jack parodies the sword song from the *Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*).

One of the highlights of the production is said to have revolved around Alphabet Castle and an army of juvenile soldiers led by Commanders Blanch and Master Albert Leopold. Other songs incorporated into the pantomime included: "La Donna e Mobile" (sung by Jack), "She's No Pal of Mine" (Fairy Progressa and Fairy Retrogressa), "John Robertson My Jo John" [sic] (Jack's mother) and "Little Jack Horner sat in the Corner" (chorus).

1868: Prince of Wales Opera House, Sydney; 24 Dec. - 26 Jan. 1869 [31 pfms]

- **Mngr/Dir.** William Hoskins; **M Arr.** W. Rice; **Com Sc.** Tom and George Leopold; **S Art.** Andrew Torning and J. R. Setright; **Cost.** Mrs Stapleton; **Chor.** Henry Leopold.

- **Cast incl.** (Jack Horner), Frau. Fannie [Mrs Tom Leopold], Blanche Leopold, Kate Corcoran (Fairy Retrogressa), Eleanor Carey (Fairy Progressa), Blanche Clifton (Myozoe), Nelly Montague, Miss Morgan, Nelly Murphy, Louisa Hughes, Lizzie Dixon, Lizzie Morgan, Carry Cassell, Fanny Tibury, Eliza O'Brien, Harriet Hughes, Mary Ford, Jane Williams, Sarah Lake, Agnes Mayo, Agnes Forsham, Annie Lyle, Nelly Hill, Ada Ford, Minnie Summerfield, Mary Watt, Jessie Dixon, Eliza Ford, Fanny Ferris, Stuart O'Brien, J. J. Welsh (Old Proverb), Mr Milner, James Hasker, Master Henry Simpson, Master C. Carmody, Master J. Ryan, Mr Latham, Mr Dupelle, F. Ede, Henry, Tom and George Leopold; **Harlequinade** - Henry Leopold (Harlequin), George Leopold (Clown), Frau. Fanny (Columbine), Tom Leopold (Pantaloon).

THIS EVENING, a new grand comic Christmas Pantomime, founded on an old nursery tale, and arranged for this theatre, called
HARLEQUIN LITTLE JACK HORNER,
Or The Christmas Pie,
And The Fairies of the Silver Ferns.

GRAND TRANSFORMATION SCENE.
Harlequinade—Florist, Toy Shop, and Corn Chandlers.
Trip—Tarantella Harlequin and Columbine.
WYNWARD-SQUARE AND POST OFFICE.
Trip—Mazourka Imperial..... Harlequin and Columbine.
Grand Duet. Night Refuge and Soup Kitchen.
Trip—Espagnola..... Harlequin and Columbine
Saline Hornpipe, by Albert Leopold.

Scene the last—
THE FANTASTIC HAUNT
of the Christmas Fairies in the Crystal Bower of Jewels.
The audience are particularly requested to keep their seats during the working of this scene, as it will take some minutes to fully develop it.

The performance will commence with
WOODCOCK'S LITTLE GAME!

Sydney Morning Herald 24 Dec. (1868), 8.

"**Christmas Pantomime.**" *Sydney Morning Herald* 25 Dec. 1868, 4.

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

"**Prince of Wales.**" *Bell's Life in Sydney and Sporting Chronicle* 9 Jan. 1869, 3. [see also - 16 Jan. 1869, 3; 23 Jan. 1869, 3; and 30 Jan. 1869, 3]

HARLEQUIN ROBINSON CRUSOE; OR, THE NIMBLE NAIAD, THE LONELY SQUATTER AND THE LIVELY ABORIGINAL: [pantomime] **Lib.** W. M. Akhurst; **Mus.** [n/e]

Bell, 1868

A pantomime in five scenes, the story begins in the submarine world ruled by Ichthyologia who causes a storm which wrecks Robinson Crusoe on an island. After falling asleep on a bank Crusoe is discovered by Coralline, a water nymph, who falls in love with him. She subsequently has him carried off to a romantic dell in the island. This displeases Ichthyologia and he threatens to turn Coralline into water if she persists in loving Crusoe. Complications set in, however, when Crusoe meets the octoroon Zoe,

who inhabits the island with Friday and a company of Christy-style negro minstrels. It is with her that he falls in love not knowing that she is married to Friday. This relationship is a burlesque on Dion Boucicault's *The Octoroon*, while the Crusoe/Coralline relationship comments on the Pageant of British Worthies - including Shakespeare, Drake, Dickens and Punch etc.

Containing a number of local references, the pantomime also includes songs of operatic style and other forms. The *Argus* critic notes that the production is treated in a thoroughly burlesque style - particularly the negro minstrel scenes. 'To make the thing still more incongruous', writes the critic, 'Friday... before his capture makes a stump speech in which allusions to Victorian politics and all sorts of events, occurs. The end of it all is that Crusoe is changed into Harlequin, Zoe into Columbine, Ichthyologia into Pantaloon and Friday into Clown, after which comes the transformation scene' ("Theatre," 5).

- 1868:** Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 24 Dec. 1868 - 30 Jan. 1869 [33 pfms]
- **Prod/Lse.** George Coppin, Henry R. Harwood, John Hennings and Richard Stewart; **M Arr.** Frederick Coppin; **S Art.** John Hennings, Alfred Clint, and Richard Little; **Cost.** Mde Jager.
- **Cast** incl. John Dunn (Ichthyologia, the Fish King), Henry R. Harwood (Robinson Crusoe), Richard Stewart (Friday), Anna Forde (Zoe), Docy Stewart (Coralline), Mde Vieuxulles (Mrs Crusoe), Kate Ryder, Laura Wiseman, Maggie Stewart (Sammunella), G.R. Ireland, Mdle Therese (Columbine), M. Schmidt (Harlequin), T. and J. Wieland (Sprites), Tom Lewis (Pantaloon), Harry Stanley (Clown), Corps de Ballet.
- 1869:** Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 25 Mar. [benefit]
- Cast and production team mostly as for previous Theatre Royal season.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869*. (1995), v. pags.
"Pantomime at the Royal - Harlequin Robinson Crusoe, The" *Age* 26 Dec. (1868), 3.
"Theatre Royal: Pantomime of Robinson Crusoe." *Argus* 25 Dec. (1868), 5.

THE NYMPH OF THE BOTANY SWAMPS; OR THE KNIGHT AND THE NAIADS:

[burlesque] **Txt Adapt/Mus.** [n/e]

Possibly adapted from H. J. Byron's burlesque *The Nymph of the Lurleyburg; Or, The Knight and the Naiads* (1859). The story is founded on the legend of "Lurline," and contained references to a number of contemporary local issues and personalities - notably "members of the present or late Government" and Parkes' *Kiama Mystery* ("Royal," 15).

- 1868:** Royal Victoria Theatre, Sydney; 26 Dec. 1868 - 5 Jan. 1869
- **Dir.** Rosa Cooper; **S Mngr.** Lionel Harding.
- **Cast** incl. Rosa Cooper (Rupert), W. Andrews (Senesehad), Miss Novello, Kate Hayes, Miss Foley, Mrs Moore, Mr Watt, Mr Alexander, Mr West, Mr Taylor, Frederick Younge, Mr Beaumont.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869*. (1995), v. pags.
"Royal Victoria Theatre." *Freeman's Journal* 2 Jan. (1869), 15.

HARLEQUIN SINBAD THE SAILOR; OR, THE GIANT ROC OF THE DIAMOND

VALLEY: [pantomime] **Lib Adapt.** James Eville; **Mus** incl. B. Levy

Especially localised for the Duke of Edinburgh Theatre from E. L. Blanchard's pantomime *Harlequin Sinbad the Sailor; Or, The Great Roc of the Diamond Valley* the *Age* records that Eville's additions "appear to consist [of] three new scenes which precede the action proper of the burlesque, and a variety of localisms and songs scattered throughout" (28 Dec. 1868, 3). The critics writing for the two major Melbourne newspapers were divided in their appreciation of Eville's introduction, however. The unimpressed *Age* critic records, for example: "The first scene, which treats the audience to a resurrection of King Cheops and a lot of mummies, is pure irrelevancy and ought to be excised. It's only redeeming features were figures of the Sphinx and a gigantic Egyptian idol, which amused the audience somewhat by opening its mouth, rolling its eyes and apparently joining in a chorus. The next scene, representing the Mountains of the Moon, was a vile daub; and the action being totally unconnected with the plot, the whole should be cut out with the first.... The third scene is described as an Elysian Grove, and presented a very pretty tableau when disclosed. A cascade of real water (and no mistake) tumbled at the back of the stage, being however covered for the comfort of the performers and audience with glass. Down each side of the scene there were ranged half a dozen ornamental pedestals upon each of which ranged a very elegant young lady in white and gentlemen in red, attired al la Watteau. The effect was remarkably striking...we have to remark [however] that it is a pure excrescence, but still too beautiful and novel to be done away with... When the Watteau business had concluded, the burlesque opening of the pantomime commenced" (3). The *Argus* review, on the other hand, focuses its critique on the artistic settings (described as 'charming'), while providing a brief synopsis of the introductory plotline. These introductory scenes concern Young Victoria, a youth who smokes, says 'my word' and takes credit for being particularly knowing, is on his way to discover the source of the Nile. He meets up with King Cheops, the Spirit of the Nile and the Spirit of the Past - 'who represents the Victorian past of some fifteen years ago; and is habited as a gold-digger who sings of the times when men were fined 40s and taken away' ("Duke," 6). The Spirit of the Nile refuses to comply with Young Victoria's request to see the source of the Nile and undertakes instead to present him with a faithful picture of Sinbad's adventures.

The burlesque section of the pantomime, which more or less follows Blanchard's original (with occasional localisms and topicalities introduced) sees the poor but honest Sinbad being helped by the Spirit of Enterprise. He subsequently sets out on a voyage but is wrecked on an island. This leads to a series of wonderful adventures that include finding the valley of Diamonds and encountering pygmies, a princess and the Old Man of the Sea. While this is all happening the wicked merchant, Ali Ben Rumphiz, comes across Sinbad's wrecked boat and attempts to sell all his goods to the tyrannical and needy old Monarch, King of Nottatallsobad. Sinbad eventually ascends into the clouds in the clutches of the gigantic roc (a mythical bird found in many Arabian legends).

The *Age* and *Argus* critics also disagreed in their opinion of the topical hits and local allusions. The *Age* review indicates that most were poor and could be cut with no disadvantage. "The factors of these puerilities seem to image that it is only necessary to mention the name of a public man in an absurd style in order to bring down a guffaw," writes the critic. "What earthly amusement can be afforded by Miss Gougenheim inquiring of a puny child with a big crown on his head whether he is Mr Bindon, and then remarking that he is too small for Higinbotham? This pointless wit fell flat upon the audience, and had better be confined to *Melbourne Punch*." The same critic was much more impressed by the overall scenic art and transformation scene (The Home of the Peris), the latter being described as "a brilliant piece of variegated tracery" ("Theatres, 3). Again taking the alternative view, the *Argus* critic reports that Eville's localisms were "very good and some of them extremely apt. They also possess the merit, not always a characteristic of such allusions, of not being in the least degree offensive." One of the highlights, according the same critic, was King Notatallsobad's marching army, which comprised some sixty to seventy supernumeraries - half of whom were children. The army 'marched and countermarched, and performed the most intricate and complicated movements with perfect correctness, the children leading the whole way. At the conclusion of the evolutions the audience were loud in their expressions of approval' ("Duke," 6).

The pantomime contained popular songs and operatic airs, along with original incidental music for a number of ballet sequences, opening choruses and overture.

1868: Duke of Edinburgh Theatre, Melbourne; 26 Dec. 1868 - 15 Jan. 1869 [18 pfms]

- **Mngr/Dir.** Gilbert Roberts; **M Arr.** B. Levy; **S Art.** Henry Holmes, Mr Richardson, Mr Perkins; **Cost.** Mrs Hancock and Perrequier Higgenbotham; **S Mngr.** Lachlan McGowan; **Chor.** Mons. Massartic.
- **Cast** incl. Miss Joey Gougenheim (Sinbad), Lachlan McGowan (Ali Ben Rumphiz, a Turkish merchant), T. Noble (King Cheops), Jenny Bryce (Spirit of the Nile), Frau. Fanny [Mrs Tom Leopold] (dancer), Milly Wilmore, Miss Stanley (the Princess), Fanny Harding, Sally Lloyd, Hans Phillips (Spirit of the Past), Mons. Massartic (dancer), Mrs Lachlan McGowan (Young Victoria), Mr Musgrave (King Notatallsobad), J. Batsen, Willy Kenno, Charley Warde, W. Morrison, E. Leotard, Mr Benson, William Andrews, John Munro, Master Ronald (The Old Man of the Sea), J. B. Steele, The Leotard Bros.
- **NB:** *The Argus* records that the premiere suffered from numerous technical problems, brought on by a lack of pre-production time. "The workmen in fact were so pressed for time," writes the paper's critic, "that the preparations for the descent of the gigantic bird which carries Sinbad off, were going on during the progress of the piece, and were completed just about half an hour too late for the representation of this scene" ("Duke," 6).
- A farcical sketch, "The Bonnycastles" (starring Mr and Mrs McGowan) preceded the pantomime.

"**Duke of Edinburgh Theatre - *Sinbad the Sailor*."** *Argus* 28 Dec. (1868), 6.

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

"**Theatres: The Duke of Edinburgh Pantomime - *Sinbad the Sailor, The*."** *Age* 28 Dec. (1868), 3.

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