1873

Australia Felix or Harlequin Laughing Jackass and the Magic Bat

Garnet Walch

Young Australia Felix

AUSTRALIA FELIX,
OR,
Harlequin Laughing Jackass and the Magic Bat:

A Pantomime by Garnet Walch.

Edited by Veronica Kelly

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This edition of *Australia Felix* is inspired by and dedicated to

ERIC IRVIN

W.S. Lyster's Opera House in Melbourne, is an outstanding example of this submerged but vital area of our theatrical heritage; a moment where literary skill and freshness of vision combined with a strongly traditional form to produce something new: an original Australian pantomime.

Readers of today may be intrigued by the literary features of the text; by mythic elements woven into Walch's comic parable of that always-under-construction entity, the Australian self-image. Some of these motifs are comfortably familiar to us, some may be more unexpected. Yet whatever the literary values of a pantomime text — and these can vary in quality from routine to brilliant — it must be remembered that pantomime, a highly spectacular and performer-oriented art, relied even more than most forms of theatre on its aliveness. Its strength lay in immediate rapport with the audience whose needs and opinions it endeavoured to faithfully service, and in the skills of its practitioners: the performers, scenic artists, ballet instructors, mask-makers, musicians, carpenters, costumiers, and hosts of others who laboured to make the pantomime an annual success — *the* success — of the theatrical year. Stripped of this performance element, a libretto gives only part of the picture of pantomime's vitality and its long-held pre-eminence in the affections of audiences of all ages and classes, a pre-eminence which lasted for two centuries.

As Richard Dyer has pointed out in his study of the musical comedy film, Utopian expression lies not alone in literary elements but most vitally in performance values; which he identifies as energy, abundance, intensity, transparency and community.[1] It is these visual, musical and kinetic elements — realised through scenery, colour, costuming, dance and music, and articulated in lavish displays of glittering material abundance and massed troupes of women, children and even non-human characters (objects, plants and animals) — which created for the pantomime audience the Utopian vision of 'peace, abundance, leisure, equality, consonance of men and their environment.'[2] Pantomime, being the management's annual financial goldmine, was not stinted in its repeated articulation of these effects, and reached broader audiences than any other form of nineteenth-century Australian theatre.

It is well to stress these non-verbal elements of theatre, as they exist alongside of, and in frequent contradiction with, the literary values of the libretti. *Australia Felix* is above all a *comic* Utopia, and a strong vein of admonitary satire — typical of a form which by the 1860s developed also a strong pedagogical streak — punctures its romantic and communal messages. Although the dystopic Demon scenes present an 'England'

consisting of political and literary repression, the alternative 'sunny south', besides being a land of communal effort and mirthful fellowship, is rife also with swindlers, idlers and proponents of the get-rich-quick philosophy. The combined efforts of the good genius and the 'Australian' characters of course eventually thwart diabolical scheming, as is proper to the form. The 'English' demons of dulness are defeated, but Walch's wry satire prevents us reading this too simplistically, as a complacent patriotic spectacle, on the level of the Crimean and Boer War tableaux of other pantomimes.

The intense topicality of pantomime practice guaranteed that its specifically political satire would be personalised and merciless. The people, symbolised by their sportsmen and entertainers, may be capable of forming a community for a limited object, but offical political life is seen by the pantomime writers as a parade mostly of rogues and fools. Yet by looking more deeply below the verbal surface of the initially unfamiliar topical jokes, one can discern in *Australia Felix* the basic conflicts of an emergent colonial society. Overt dramatic conflicts are happily resolved as per comic formulae, but the social difficulties are endemic and persist. The real themes underpinning Walch's fable, emerging as throwaway jokes whose importance could easily be overlooked, are the failures of the Land Acts; the Education Act of 1872; and the clash between capital and labour which resulted in such diverse phenomena as the Eight-hour Movement, the kidnapping of Pacific Islanders for forced labour and the anti-Chinese miners' riot at Clunes.[3] Furthermore, all of these events or issues symptomatic of contradictions within the underlying economic and social structure of colonial Victoria can themselves be seen as expressions of various Utopian social visions: land for all in a yeoman society; free and secular education breeding an enlightened 'Young Australia'; harmony between master and man in the 'Working Man's Paradise.'[4] If these projects were compromised or problematical offstage, onstage they retained their visionary popular enchantment — pantomime would see to that.

How are these innate contradictions of the public life of growing colony to be dealt with? Local victories and defeats occurred simultaneously, all being of equal interest to the popular stage: if Rosier's workmen were dismissed for joining a union (II, i, 37), the bakers' strike had gained a victory for organised labour (II, iv 56). The interest of Walch's script lies in its wrestling with such diverse perceptions within a self-consciously celebratory, rather than an overtly critical, theatrical form. In the intensely urban, even metropolitan world of pantomime, full of town talk

'Old friends and young faces', *Australian Sketcher*, 16 January 1884. (Courtesy Mitchell Library)

INTRODUCTION

i. THE PANTOMIME UTOPIA

Since the advent of the naturalistic and socially-oriented drama of Zola, Ibsen, Shaw and Gorky a century ago, theatre has inherited the expectation that it should hold up a critical mirror to its audience: that it should seek out the flaws in its society and the great communal questions of the time; it should analyse, warn, or utter prophetic visions. However, visions of Utopia and community are of equal significance to projections of the dystopic or critical intelligence. Just as revealing of the nature of a society as its dramatised problems are those performances which audiences laugh at and enjoy. In order to extend our comprehension of Australian colonial culture, examples of popular comic theatre should be considered, complementing knowledge of more privileged, 'serious' literary and dramatic activity.

For Australian audiences of last century there existed a theatrical form admirably suited to projections of Utopia — the pantomime: a gloriously opportunistic ragbag of theatrical traditions which had evolved and adapted from the early years of the eighteenth century, and whose inheritance survives in the Australian theatre of today. Comedy, satire, music, acrobatics, female glamour, dancing, scenic spectacle, fantasy, keen topicality and fascination with the contemporary are the constant features of pantomime. In it may be discerned a mediated but colourful reflection of both the passing fascinations and the deep underlying concerns of its audiences. The inclusiveness of pantomime's appeal allows us, through the examination of one outstanding text, to recapture a finely conserved moment of Australia's theatrical and social past: its fears, needs, aversions, self-admonishments, jokes and dreams.

By the time the Tasmanian-born author and journalist Garnet Walch began working in Sydney theatre in the late 1860s there already existed a good tradition of native writing in pantomime dating from before the 1850s gold rushes. More pantomime libretti have survived than the scripts of any other form of early Australian-written theatre, affording a unique opportunity of studying the evolution of a quintessentially English theatrical entertainment into a recognisably Australian one. Of these surviving texts, those by W.M. Akhurst, Marcus Clarke, and Garnet Walch are the most 'localised', where the evolution may be traced not only a protean theatrical form but of an emergent Australian consciousness. *Australia Felix*, Walch's 1873 script for

high above the stage ensured that the risk remained. The harlequinade scenery itself portrayed a street of shop-fronts upon which local tradesmen could pay to advertise themselves and wares — the close association of theatre and the urban business community is evident too in the 'plugging' of name products in the opening, like Carlton Beer in *Australia Felix*.

Thus, in this highly metropolitan ambiance, Harlequin leapt through walls, windows or clock faces; Clown stole and consumed gargantuan quantities of food, belaboured shopkeepers and chased innocent passers-by; policemen were flattened in mangles or behind doors; old ladies tripped; babies tossed unconcernedly around or squashed; corpses boiled up for soup; objects weirdly transformed into other objects and fake food stolen and hurled riotously around the stage while live animals and birds added to the confusion or flew among the audience. The culmination was the 'spill and pelt,' or rally, an extended custard-pie sequence where a mob of extras ran around the stage while Clown and Pantaloon — now Clown's senile accomplice — pelted them with a shower of objects. Above all, Clown is associated with his characteristic prop the red-hot poker, a ready weapon for chastising and eluding the forces of respectability and authority.[7]

The strong counter-hegemonic flavour of the harlequinade — its violence, dismemberment and anti-authoritarian tone — is an interesting theatrical presence in an age of growing gentrification of theatre audiences and concomitant increasing respectability. Middle-commentators of the Victorian age, when there were few commentators of any other class, worried about its suitability for children: would the violence frighten them, or the anarchy sow the seeds of antisocial ideas? Yet in the harlequinade's black comedy, stylised violence, metamorphic fantasy, and scenarios of threat and survival we can recognise the outlines of continuing juvenile entertainment preferences. It is the cartoon world of Tom and Jerry — or of Samuel Beckett. In 1896 Alfred Jarry reintroduced the puppet and clown figures of traditional popular theatre to elite Parisian audiences in his scandalous *Ubu Roi*, which so inspired the visionary director Antonin Artaud and through him significant currents of modern theatre; while writers from Brecht to Ionesco are fascinated by the comic arts as the most appropriate expression in our century of a tragic vision. Michael Booth offers an analysis of the tradition which holds as good for our own computerised and nuclear age as for the industrialising early nineteenth century:

> In the Regency harlequinade man's plight is often created by the transformation, misbehaviour, and relentless hostility of objects and mechanical devices; things are not what they seem to be, or rather they are, but then they change frighteningly into something else. Nothing can be relied on; the very ground itself dissolves under the feet of the helpless characters. Such comedy is almost cosmic in its implications; audiences were really laughing at the yawning gulfs in man's own life. As is usual in extreme forms of comic theatre, a terrible seriousness underlies the jollity and 'animal spirit' of pantomime that Leigh Hunt so admired.[8]

Nineteenth-century commentators were prepared to tolerate this eruption of ancient popular comic traditions into their respectable world under the excuse of holiday licence — Saturnalia being the ancient time of the inversion of social norms — but pantomime's anomalous treatment of stage morality did not go unremarked:

> The tyrannical baron, the abominable uncle, the uxorious miser ... get punished — but how? By being changed into two fellows [Clown and Pantaloon] who enjoy themselves through every variety of scene, who annoy and rob everybody, who jump through laws and first-floor windows, who pop down trapdoors and over the ten commandments with perfect impunity, and who end all this wicked life in a perfect blaze of triumph, promising too, to continue their existence as long as the laughing audience like to see them. ... Censor of the stage, can such things be?[9]

Being an unscripted performance — but, given the singing and jokes, not a mute one — the harlequinade leaves few literary traces besides the sometimes extensive scene plots which give a fleeting idea of the locales and business. *Australia Felix* was devised at a time of transition for the pantomime form: the shrinking of the harlequinade and expansion and dominance of the spoken opening. The scenario of its comic scenes is not even given in the printed libretto, but bare scene headings survive in newspaper advertisements. Nonetheless, in pantomimes of the Seventies this section of the performance still occupied half an hour out of the nearly four hour's playing time. It was the children's favourite; even if they had dozed through the rather adult jokes of the opening the Harlequinade had them wide awake. Clown would address them particularly, and they would respond to his attention and to the cast's antics with noisy enthusiasm.[10]

(2) *Extravaganza and Burlesque Invade Pantomime*

It is this elaboration and mutation of the rhymed, spoken opening which afforded the writers such as Walch an opportunity to adapt, create, plunder, hack and generally show what they could

and fashionable public fads, *Australia Felix* presents images not only of the proud civic momuments to communication and leisure — the Melbourne Post Office and Cricket Ground — but also scenery of the backblock dwellers and the bush. The smooth street-smart Demons and their allies, fast players on the fringes of capitalism's manic main spectacle, may temporarily dazzle and swindle Young Australia, but the pioneer characters Mr and Mrs Old Australia recover in the nick of time the magic talisman of 'fair play'. Overall, in dance, song and choreographic display, the show orchestrates a glittering celebration of an emergent colonial community, the snake in this eden being routed at the last by the native spirit of place: a Kookaburra. It is a comic and ultimately appropriate finale. If problems remain not neatly smoothed over, it indicates that these difficulties persisted in the community which supported the spectacle. The wry self- deprecating humour of the writing and the Utopian energy in performance of demon, fairy and mortal characters alike, prevent the allegory taking itself with blinding seriousness. Entertainment, says Dyer, 'works' validly not because it merely dazzles, but because it responds to real historical needs — if not the sole needs — created by the inadequacies of its society: it lies but does not lie.[5]

ii THE DEVELOPMENT OF PANTOMIME

(1) *Formal Structures and Theatrical Characteristics*

Pantomime at any one moment was either enjoying a golden age or on its last legs, according to the age of the observer. Childhood theatrical memories always acquire a retrospective aura, and in such an adaptable and cannibalistic form innovation is frequently seen as decadence. Pantomime, as understood in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, began in an entertainment presented at London's Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre by the actor who created the English Harlequin, John Rich. His *The Magician; or, Harlequin a Director* (1721) is generally distinguished as the first pantomime.[6] These early pantomimes consisted of alternating serious and comic scenes, the latter using Commedia dell'Arte characters, where young lovers overcome obstacles and are united. The plots came from high literature and legend, the classics, or historical narratives; the narrowed use of fairy-tale or nursery fables was a much later development, consolidated in the decade of *Australia Felix*, the 1870s. As created by Rich, it was Harlequin who dominated the pantomime; during the mute comic scenes his escape with Columbine from the wrath of Pantaloon and his assistant Clown afforded opportunities for acrobatic display and trick transformations of objects and scenery by means of his 'magic' bat.

A significant alteration of structure was effected by R.B. Sheridan's 1781 piece *Robinson Crusoe; or, Harlequin Friday*. Now the serious spoken scenes occupied the first part of the show, following the fortunes of the hero and heroine until a crisis point, when by the intervention of the good fairy or some (usually female) benevolent agent the characters were transformed into the traditional figures of what now became the harlequinade: Harlequin, Columbine, Pantaloon and Clown. Now the 'comic business' began. In the harlequinade the transformed characters continue the thrust of the main plot, with the lovers still pursued by Pantaloon's parental wrath with Clown's anarchic assistance. But Harlequin had the magic bat (a slapstick) bestowed upon him by the Fairy, and with its aid he eluded capture by transforming objects and scenery by striking them, the noise being the signal to the stage hands to effect the changes. Slapstick — in its original sense — physical comedy in the Commedia tradition, split-second timing and daring and dangerous acrobatics were the elements of this portion of the pantomime. But during the mayhem the plot was being advanced, since the transformed characters were being put through a task, or learning experience, which would produce an appropriately happy ending. At last the lovers are caught in a situation where Harlequin's bat is captured and they are at the mercy of their pursuers. When all seems lost the Fairy intervenes and procures the desired reconciliation, and the environment changes in the 'last scene' to an idyllic vision of joy and beauty. For much of the eighteenth century the harlequinade occupied most of the hour's performance time: the opening scenes were to gradually expand to occupy the largest part of the show and eventually reduce the harlequinade to a few tacked-on knockabout scenes, their original purpose forgotten. After the first World War it disappeared altogether.

The heyday of the earlier form of pantomime, the Regency period, is associated with the genius of another innovative performer, Joseph Grimaldi. In 1806 Covent Garden staged *Harlequin Mother Goose; or, The Golden Egg*, where Grimaldi as Clown ensured both the dominance of the fifteen-scene harlequinade over the four-scene opening, and the eclipse of Harlequin as the centre of the comic action. Subsequent Clowns were to model themselves on the character as created by Grimaldi, emulating his greed, rapacity, bullying, slyness, cowardice and delightful childlike innocence. Above all, they needed to emulate his formidable performance skills, as pantomime was an exciting and dangerous form in a time when life and labour were cheap and theatre retained the gladiatorial scent of real peril. Although the trick props and team work were magnificent, blind leaps through trapped scenery and sprung devices catapulting the actors

do. This came about because around the 1840s, after the age of Grimaldi, pantomime became influenced by, and itself influenced, two contemporary comic and musical forms; burlesque and extravaganza, which themselves became interchangeable in their practices. Walch's title-page description of *Australia Felix* is 'an original extravaganza'. Extravaganza, as the name suggests, stressed scenic and spectacular elements, using a whimsical treatment of an extant, not necessarily comic, fable. Its creater was J.R. Planché, who in 1833 wrote *High, Low, Jack and the Game* for Madame Vestris's Olympic Theatre, with characters costumed as playing cards who enact a complicated love story.[11] His earlier *Olympic Revels* (1831) used the Orpheus legend, as Offenbach was to do in his famous *Orphée aux Enfers* of 1858. Classical motifs were popular in nineteenth-century extravaganza reworkings. But *Riquet with the Tuft* (1836), Planché's first fairy extravaganza (written with Charles Dance) was the forerunner of what was to be by the end of the century the sole subject of pantomime: the fairy tale. Rhymed couplets, supernatural characters, comedy, scenery and displays of female charm were common to both forms; as were the plots from legend and literature. Many writers — William and Robert Brough, Planché, H.J. Byron, F.C. Burnand, E.L. Blanchard and W.S. Gilbert — wrote extravaganzas, burlesques and pantomimes.

Nineteenth-century burlesque shared the legendary subject matter of these other forms, and also loved parody — of serious forms like opera, tragedy and melodrama and of specific plays. Parody and incorporation are kindred impulses; and as they went along the new spectacular forms absorbed and transformed successive theatrical innovations: the blackface minstrel shows of the 1840s, grand opera, opera-bouffe, the new sensation drama with its mechanical advances in scenic realism, speciality acts from circus, magic shows and music hall.[12] A significant innovation in these entertainments was the display of more of the female form than was generally publicly visible. Dancers wore short skirts and tights, and the male heroes were played by women; the old eighteenth-century breeches parts became pantomime's principal boy. In 1860, too, H.J. Byron's *Cinderella* pantomime had the Ugly Sisters played by the low comedians *en travesti*: traditional comic practice in burlesque appears in pantomime in its 'Dame' roles. As Booth says of the 1860s burlesques, they were 'a compound of music hall, minstrel show, extravaganza, legs and limelight, puns, topical songs and gaudy irreverence — the lightest, frothiest, most loved and most detested of Victorian light entertainments.'[13] The pantomime opening became, in effect, a burlesque extravaganza plus harlequinade.

The effect of extravaganza on the traditional pantomime was a readjustment of its internal structure and its performance priorities. The organic plot relationship between opening and harlequinade was severed, and the element of scenic transformation relocated and redefined. In the days of Grimaldi, the 'transformation scene' was the moment where the deity or fairy transformed the characters of the opening into the harlequinade figures. This was effected by means of 'big heads' and large loose costumes worn during the opening. The big heads were enormous *papier-mâché* character head-masks familiar from many contemporary illustrations; Tenniel's for *Alice in Wonderland* show their influence. At the moment of transformation the overclothes would be whisked down a trap and the heads removed, revealing the harlequinade costumes underneath. Then the comic chase would persist until the dark scene, when the fairy would again transform, this time, the scene itself, into a dazzling ideal world. In the newer pantomimes of the 1850s, it was not the characters but the scenery which was transformed, and a different set of performers, frequently dancers, took over the acrobatic comic business from the specialist burlesque singers and comic actors who now sustained the opening. The new and glorious transformation scene now came, as it does in *Australia Felix*, between opening and harlequinade.

In his *Recollections and Reflections* Planché credits, or blames, the art of such scene painters as William Beverley for ousting the efforts of the librettist. As stage machinery and lighting techniques increased in sophistication, the transformation scene showcased the stage itself as a star in its own right. As Planché puts it, 'the *last* scene became the first in the estimation of the management' with Dutch metal and all manner of glitter in the ascendant.[14] *Australia Felix* is dedicated to the Danish-born scenic artist Alexander Christian Habbe, with whom Walch had worked in Sydney, and who created for *Australia Felix* an admired transformation scene. This revamped 'first scene', thanks to the scenic artist, carpenters, lighting men and stage hands who created it, ran for up to twenty minutes. It began slowly and mysteriously, with scenery rising and sinking and gauzes being slowly removed by the light of coloured fires and to increasingly triumphant music. Ballet girls as nymphs and fairies floated 'suspended' in graceful attitudes, and an allegorical and patriotic tableau ended all.[15] Walch's slightly parodic invention from his *On the Cards* of a Habbe transformation scenario, replete with Australasian national sentiment and progressivist symbolism, is reproduced in Appendix I of this edition.

After this resplendant sequence of marvels had culminated,

the new set of pantomimists danced on as the harlequinade figures, and an abbreviated harlequinade would be performed, which became increasingly isolated since the quest-narrative had already terminated and the vision of harmony displayed. The finale of *Australia Felix* does however retain a significant recollection of the older style of character transformation; when the defeated Kantankeros changes *himself*, not into the sour elderly Pantaloon, as may once have happened, but into a snake — to his cost.

(3) *Legs and Limelight*

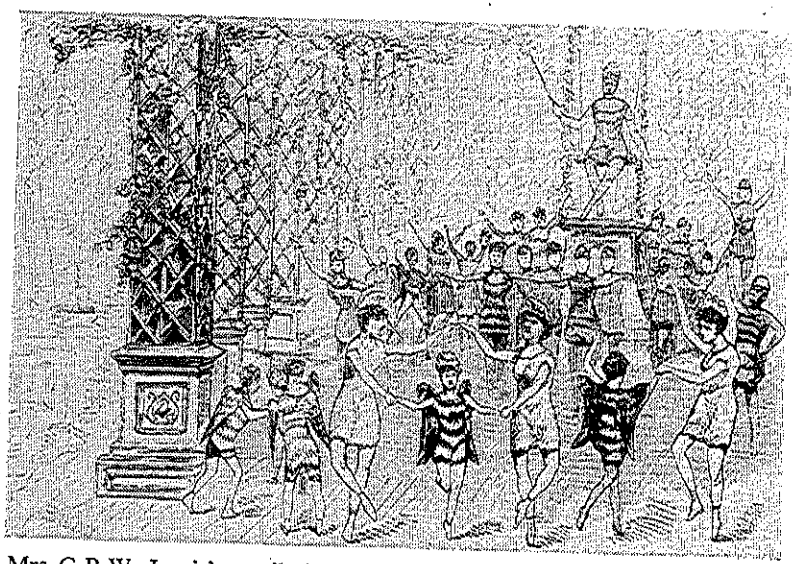
Besides the iconographic fantasia of scenic transformation, pantomime provided additional elements of visual display. Panoramas were early incorporated. Ancestors of the cinema, these were series of painted scenes wound from side to side of the stage on canvas rollers, which were toured worldwide as educational spectacles in their own right. Australian audiences were treated to unrolling pictures of contemporary wars; journeys across the Alps, North America, or the London-Australia sea voyage; and, increasingly, to views of their own environment, urban and rural. Panoramas, and scene painting generally, were important vehicles for the dissemination of nationalist imagery, reaching considerably more spectators than the salon art of the day. *Australia Felix*, typically in a pantomime where so much of the expected is subverted, presented not the standard solemn 'newsreel' panorama but a burlesqued one. This seems to have been Walch's and Habbe's way of making a joke out of their theatre's comparatively straitened budget.

Spectacular imagery was complemented by choreography. In an age where the presentation of ballet as such was rare in Australia, opera, burlesque and pantomime provided refuges for, and incubators of, dancers.[16] Typical of a family dynasty of dancers at a time when stage children performed at an early age is the Leopold family who worked in *Australia Felix*, including the young children of Henry and Fraulein Fannie Leopold, Albert and Blanche. Nativist imagery in the costuming of dancers became evident in the Australian pantomimes of the 1860s, with a 'Ballet of the Australian Flowers' occurring in Walch's 1871 *Trookulentos*: precursors of May Gibbs' illustrations.

But for those of more adult tastes there was no question that the favourite scene was the March of the Amazons. These were the ballet ladies again 'fascinatingly clad in blonde wigs, pink tights, and Birmingham armour, together with a sufficiency of satin drapery to meet the approval of the Australian substitute for a Lord Chamberlain - public taste.'[17] Public taste was definitely

in favour of the Amazons, portraying the army of the good genius, whose march was a series of geometrical evolutions while coloured limelights played on their gold and silver armour and dazzling mirror shields. Images of Utopian intensity and abundance were created by the startling brilliance of limelight in the gas-lit theatre, and by the sheer mass of shapely women; a tradition known to us from Hollywood. The marchers would number fifty or sixty in a lavish Australian pantomime in this time, but rose to hundreds in the Drury Lane shows of Augustus Harris in the 1880s and 1890s, which were emulated here by J.C. Williamson.[18] The fashion for 'leg pieces' had been set in Australia by Akhurst's 1868 burlesque *The Seige of Troy*, and the management of the Melbourne Theatre Royal was anxious thereafter to capitalise on the drawing capacity of female glamour, let the moralists mutter as they would.[19]

More Utopian abundance was displayed by processions of the retinues of the opposing forces of the demon and fairy. These were costumed with all the fantastic realism which the marks the visual style of the age; as imps, flowers, or indeed any kind of inanimate object or creature of legend. Animal characters, of course, have survived as a hallmark of pantomime in our own time: Puss in Boots, Whittington's Cat and Priscilla the Goose.



Mrs G.B.W. Lewis's pupils in a 'Ballet of Birds of Australia' in Walch's *Gulliver; or, Harlequin King Liliput*, at the Bijou, Melbourne, 1881. *Australasian Sketcher*, 14 January 1882. (Courtesy National Library of Australia)

These however were not like the procession characters who were played by children and extras in big heads — the principal characters of the opening were unmasked by the seventies — but specialty 'skin parts' played by adult actors. *Australia Felix* has two such parts, characteristically of native animals: the 'Laughing Jackass' and Mosquito. The adaptability of the pantomime form thus allowed friendly images of native fauna to be displayed to urban audiences, and in a land-hungry age may have aided the growth of the liberal conservationist sentiment later evident in Ethel Pedley's *Dot and the Kangaroo*. The Aboriginal too was included in pantomimic generosity as a benevolent local inhabitant, but while Walch's *Trookulentos* has a significant comic role for 'Bulgurroo,' there is none such in the largely urban world of *Australia Felix*. This articulation of the Aboriginal should be judged by the practice of the age, and the stage's imagery compared with the contemptuous denigration of many more lofty organs. Aboriginal stage characters appear in pantomimes as a species of helpful imp, which is explicable by the conventions of a form where this function was already in place. In the melodramas of the 1880s and 1890s its working is still in evidence, and in fact the Aboriginal comic characters utterly dominate these plays.[20]

(4) *The Triumph of Rhyme Over Reason*

Modern readers of *Australia Felix* may be struck — perhaps with horror — by the puns and wordplay with which the libretto is sprinkled. Kantankeros, the demon, starts this trend in the first scene even while objecting to the puns of other characters. This playful dismantling of language appears to be part of the holiday licence, as well as a characteristic of the genre and of the Victorian age generally. Burlesques, extravaganzas and pantomimes were written in rhymed iambic pentameters couplets, and the frequently highly-educated writers were expected to recirculate favourite old puns and invent new ones. In case the point was missed, audience members could buy a printed libretto where the jokes were italicised, for readier delectation during the performance or in later reading. Language before the time of Cubism, Dada or Saussure still held a kind of immanent aura, and the comic theatre delighted in deconstructing its logic and authority by Lewis Carroll-like flights of sound-play; subversive fantasy picks at language to expose its limits. The obverse of the pantomime is the lofty rhetoric of official life and learning, as exemplified by the editorials in the quality colonial press — the authority of the one guaranteed the persistence of its carnivalesque mirror-image.

A specific literary feature endemic to pantomime allowed of its colonisation by Australian reality before any other theatrical form: pantomime was expected to be both local and topical. London ones were localised for the English provinces, and so inevitably for Australian audiences. The writer was thus adapting a text which was itself parasitic on other literature. Sometimes he might write a new treatment of an old story along the general lines laid down by traditional practice. *Australia Felix* goes further in knocking away the support of a familiar plot, while keeping the pantomime conventions and traditions. That even the more routine form of localisation was doubly necessary in the Australian colonies was increaslingly perceived. A reviewer in 1860 observed that English allusions were meaningless in Melbourne, and should be attended to.[21] Other commentators found local allusions tedious, calling them 'the triumph of rhyme over reason.' 'Why shriek with laughter at the utterance of Eagar, Parkes, Surry Hills, the One O'Clock Gun etc?' a Sydney journalist demanded.[22] The critic misses the point. Audiences, than as now, delighted in the sight and sound of their own reality on the stage, the interests and class perspectives of critics and audiences being in any case not completely congruous. What seems flat on the page can be electric in a theatre, and the mention of the One O'Clock Gun assured the audience that their world was also valid.

In the 1880s and later, the subject matter of pantomime contracted to the half-dozen or so familiar stories of today; an impoverished repertory if one considers the amplitude of narrative available to earlier writers. Theatrically, however, the form continued to flourish and mutate, adopting skills of the great music hall artistes and sharing the *fin de siècle* taste for vast patriotic, and sometimes bellicose, spectacle. *Australia Felix* was neither the first nor the last 'Australian' pantomime, but the forces which incessently penetrated and altered this hospitable form also compromised the chance of the allegorical unity of Walch's script becoming the norm. Adaptability and hospitality to theatrical fads and innovations were pantomime's strengths and ensured its centuries of survival, but these virtues make a particular moment of dramatic cohesion a precious but vulnerable achievement. It is futile to lament the forces of change in theatre: vitality, topicality and formal experiment are the essential virtues of live performance art: without these restless energies theatre stagnates and dies. Walch's last pantomime, *Sinbad the Sailor* at the Melbourne Royal in 1893, is a far blander piece than *Australia Felix* in the literary sense, though it shone with fairies in electrically-lit costumes and had spectacle and procession galore.[23]

By then a new generation had come to majority, while the Depression produced the usual 'war-time' need for sumptuous reassurance. If the 1890s were a golden age of realist short fiction for Australia, it was in the late 1860s and 1870s when nativist fables and images were first centrally celebrated upon the popular stage.

The end of the nineteenth-century pantomime, as Walch, Lyster, Coppin or Holt would understand it, was caused basically by the concurrent demise of the nineteenth-century theatre as it had been practised for the past century. The first World War and the introduction of film put paid to these huge labour-intensive spectacles. But the practices, skills and traditions of pantomime are far from dead, merely fragmented and flourishing under new names. The 'leg piece' element and romance of the opening transferred to musical comedy, an 1890s innovation which was pantomime's sternest competitor. The Grevilles, Harwoods, Bland Holts and Nellie Stewarts of the colonial stage became the Roy Renes or Gladys Moncrieffs of a later age, and musical artistes of our time continue that tradition of comic musical theatre which was the first favourite of early Australian audiences. The lunacy of the harlequinade lives on in film comedy, circus, mime and clowning, while from the 1930s onwards the New Theatre and Philip Street revues kept topical satire vigorously alive up to the cabaret explosion and *Gillies Reports* of the 1980s. Various forms of Australianist sentiment flourish in the film industry; the mass form which inherits the rich traditions of the popular colonial stage and duplicates its consensual authority. The spirit of Harlequin lives on in Australia, as is appropriate for a character whose distinguishing features are agility, disguise, and cunning transformations.

iii THE MAKING OF AN AUSTRALIAN PANTOMIME

(1) *Old England; Christmas and W.G. Grace*

It is ironic that the production of what contemporaries unanimously discerned both as a theatrical innovation and a truly indigenous script should have emerged from the conjunction of three items universally hailed in the colonies as symbolising the essence of Britishness: pantomime, Christmas and cricket. Although in their early days pantomimes had occupied part of a long evening's bill of entertainment and been played at any time of the year, they were confined by mid-century to Christmas and occasionally Easter. By the 1870s it was basically a Christmas performance. Pantomime was considered by the English themselves as an annual manifestation of something racially

The All-England Eleven, from the *Australasian Sketcher*, 27 December 1873. (Courtesy La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria)

unique, like Shakespeare. Foreigners may lay claim, if they would, to wit or humour, but '*fun* is essentially English.'[24] In the colonies however, the organic connection became eroded between what was dutifully hailed as an English cultural event and the content and themes of the performances. The Clown still dressed

in Grimaldi's costume and uttered the time-honoured greeting 'Here we are again!' but the jokes, scenery and costuming took on a hybrid flavour, with the English libretti bizarrely diluted with local allusions, until, with such shows as *Trookulentos* and *Australia Felix*, the form could be considered thoroughly colonised.

Christmas itself, with its ubiquitous symbolism of snow, robins and fur-clad revellers, was in the Australian colonies an annual group affirmation of an essential Englishness, and for many migrants, a festival of homesickness. The incongruity of a European midwinter festival being held in the height of blazing summer did not escape sharp observers who had experienced both. 'Christmas in Australia is a giant mistake,' Marcus Clarke believed, 'Mankind cannot be hilarious with the thermometer at 120° in the shade.'[25] However by the 1870s the native-born gold-rush children formed a large part of the population and were making their presence felt. Christmas did not mean to them what it did to their parents; it was a summer holiday of picnicing and vigorous group outdoor games in that heat which, observers began to note, the young seemed actually to enjoy.[26] Except for those people who saw any deviation from strict English practice as treasonable, the gathering of gum boughs and wattle blossoms replaced that of holly, and outdoor picnics the digestive horrors of a rich midday dinner. The 1870s appear to mark one of Australia's recurrent eras of 'gumnut nationalism', a preference for the local as visual symbol and decorative motif. Native flora and fauna were enjoyed by many for their own sake rather than being seen as inferior echoes of English ideal originals. So kookaburras, cockatoos, emus and kangaroos hopped about the stage, and even Christmas became 'colonial.'[27]

But did being 'colonial' mean thus being less 'English'? Just as in our times the presence of a large population of European and Asian migrants causes fears in some quarters that 'Australian' values are under threat, so a century ago the inevitable processes of cultural transformation were viewed with mixed pride and alarm. Sport provided a public arena where such British-identified values as 'manliness' and 'fair play' were displayed and their continued existence evaluated. The year of *Australia Felix*, 1873, saw these anxieties brought to crisis point and subsequently alleviated by the tour of the Australian colonies of the greatest cricketer of the time, W.G. Grace, and his All-England Eleven. Melbourne was the first point of call; the judgement on the manliness of the colonials in this conflict of definitions of Englishness would be first pronounced there. Walch, capitalising on the cricketing craze and the heightened patriotic expectations,

both led and followed the popular mood by having his pantomime hero Felix as one of the aspirants to the local team, and the great match itself integrated as an off-stage event in the action of the pantomime. Not that the Victorians dared openly to expect a win against 'Achilles and his myrmidons,' but the build-up of excitement provided the chief sensation of the latter part of 1873. By November, with the English cricketers approaching on the *Nubia* '... the young Victorian mind, plus that of children of larger growth, was already in a ferment of expectancy.'[28] On 13 December the team arrived. Would the long sea voyage, the hot winds and brilliant light, the flowing colonial hospitality or the underarm bowling affect the visitors' prowess? The Melburnians dared hardly hope.

Grace's was not the first English team to tour Australia, being preceded by an 1862 Eleven and one in 1864. These were basically commercial undertakings, the caterers Spiers and Pond funding the 1862 and 1873 tours, a fact which contemporaries noted sorted oddly with the 'gentleman amateur' status of the visitors.[29] In Melbourne a lengthy and frequently acrimonious selection process for the Victorian team got under way, with the sports writers of the press (frequently themselves players and thus scarcely disinterested observers) crying up their favourites and slandering rivals.[30] At length on 15 December twenty-two players were chosen to practice as the pool from which the eighteen Victorians would be selected, and on 25 December the final team for the morrow's match was announced.[31] *Australia Felix* and the long-awaited Grace match thus premiered simultaneously on 26 December. In the jam-packed house every reference to the match was greeted with a 'round of cheers', given extra piquancy by the presence in the theatre of several members of the English team who appeared to enjoy the jokes, though many of these were in favour of the Australians. They must certainly have enjoyed the 'March of the Juvenile Cricketers' (eleven small boys) who represented their team, especially their tiny captain 'impersonating Grace himself with huge black beard and moustache.'[32]

In a few days there was even more reason for happy theatre-goers to cheer and applaud the pantomime, for the match was won by Victoria. The *Australasian*, in a glow of relief, editorialised on the subtle change in feeling which had occurred since the 1862 Spiers and Pond match, when 'the sympathies of the great bulk of the population were with our English visitors ... But during the last decade all this has obviously undergone a striking change. The imperial feeling has not been weakened, we would fain believe, but there has grown up by the side of it a healing and vigorous Australian feeling.'[33]

(2) *'Essentially dramatic': the allegory of* Australia Felix

The writing of *Australia Felix* itself could be said to have begun in 1871, when Walch devised 'an original fairy extravaganza' on local themes for George Darrell as the Christmas pantomime for Sydney's Royal Victoria Theatre. This was *Trookulentos, the Tempter; or, Harlequin Cockatoo, the Demon of Discontent, the Good Fairy of Contentment, and Four-leaved Shamrock of Australia*. Although Walch had worked as a localiser in Sydney from 1869 onwards, adapting burlesques by English authors, *Trookulentos* was his first attempt to an original libretto, and as such drew favourable comment and good houses. The pantomime has a helpful cockatoo and an Aboriginal who joins the police, old-Australian bush-dwelling parents of the hero (consensually named Patrick John Angus Cornstalk O'Brien), and the theme of the lures of the town overcoming a young country lad who is all too willing to be seduced. The Demons' lair under the Blue Mountains is invaded by the noise of the Zigzag Railway rumbling overhead, and the finale is a prolonged burlesque of Shakespearean battle-scenes done with 'armies' of a few over-worked actors, as indeed was frequently the case in more serious productions. Walch recycled many lines and some of the tunes of *Trookulentos* in *Australia Felix*, remaking the characters and ideas into a tighter and more focussed script than its delightful but eccentric original.[34]

James Edward Neild, writing as 'Tahite' in the *Australasian*, put his finger on the literary element which distinguished *Australia Felix* from other pantomimes of the period:

> The prominent merit in this piece is its ingenious consistency. It is essentially dramatic, and its parts are not merely connected patchwork ... The local points, moreoever, are harmoniously brought in; they are not lugged in ... the allegorical character is well preserved and thus there is a certain quality of poetry not always to be found in this class of dramatic composition.[35]

The pantomime is in fact 'dramatic' in a way that most specimens of the genre had no ambition to be, in that it borrowed the time-lock mechanism and suspense plot of melodrama. If the magic bat is not recovered by midnight, Victoria falls victim to the Demon of Dulness; thus the situation is set for a nick-of-time rescue of the colony from this fate. The rescue of the hero by the comic characters, standard in melodrama, shows Walch's essentially dramatic imagination which his later career with Dampier bears out. The refreshingly organic use of local references (Neild's 'allegorical character') first used in *Trookulentos*, interwoven with

the rescue and talisman motifs for (bat, substituted for key) which Walch had used in his 1872 Melbourne pantomime *True Blue Beard*, gave *Australia Felix* a genuine originality which was commented upon by all contemporary observers.

What then can be made of the 'allegory' of *Australia Felix*? As is traditional in pantomime, the first scene shows the haunts of the Demon King, who with the Fairy forms the highest stratum of supernatural characters whose opposition is played out through the adventures of the mortals. Kantankeros reigns over the Kingdom of Dulness, which is not merely the name of his particular infernal region but comes to mean England itself. Kantankeros is aided by the earthly ministrations of Boblo (Robert Lowe, the British Colonial Secretary), who arrives in the cave with an ally of his, the Lord Chamberlain, whose censorious acts against the English stage made him a fitting ally in the task of prosecuting levity and satire. Boblo announces his intention of revisiting Australia on a revenge mission to end the reign of Mirth in that land; Kantankeros agrees to join him in this project. As a preview of their destination the Demon, lecture-style, explains the panorama images of the Lord Chamberlain's daydreams, thus providing jibes at some of Melbourne's stock comic butts. The last of these images however is 'bold Captain Grace' whose manly features, and the bubble of excitement his visit was causing even then in Victoria, displease the Demon. Forthwith Kantankeros and Boblo 'descend' to Australia to put their schemes into action, thus altering their dramatic status to that of new-chum emigrants trying their luck in the Eldorado of the South. Walch cleverly anchors his parable in colonial literary conventions and social reality, setting up the familiar fictional situation where immigrants seek their fortunes, with the action commencing in England and transferring to Australia for a series of empire-founding or wealth-getting adventures.

The next scene, as was usual, shows the pastoral world of the Demon's antagonist. Walch's determination to bend the pantomime conventions to his theme is evident in that the good genius, Mirth, while played by a woman, is male, thus replacing the usual fairy queen. After a ballet expressive of harmony and of the orderly succession of the new from the old, Mirth announces his resolve to break the traditional alliance between Mirth and Mischief which has banished Mirth to the nocturnal world, and to rule alone. His erstwhile ally, King Mischief, expresses fury at this decision, when a telegram arrives from Kantankeros and Boblo inviting him to join them on the stage of the Melbourne Opera House for a star engagement. Mischief immediately fancies himself as the newest sensation of the Melbourne theatre, which

had seen many such sensations of variable quality over the years. Mirth resolves to emigrate there himself and so save the Australians from the forces of dulness and mischief. To this end he conjures up a powerful talisman: a cricket bat. This cleverly adapts the traditional magic bat given by the good genius to Harlequin in the old-style transformation scene, the power of which saved the lovers from their pursuers. The cricket bat shows Walch's linking of Mirth with the 'manly' game of cricket, which was seen as the epitome of disinterested fair play — unlike racing, with its endemic corruption and organised gambling. Thus, a quintessentially 'English' game, with the English hero Grace's tour as catalyst, is the force which will rid Australia of its mischief.

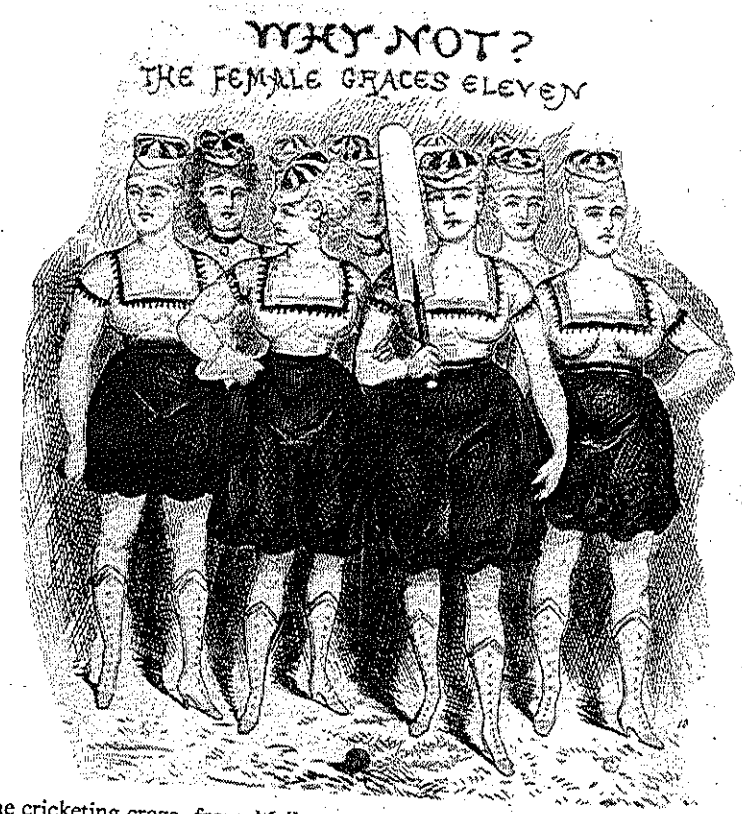
The next scene shows the evil trio in the (for them) unusual surroundings of a 'cockatoo-squatter's mansion in the Bungaree Forest.' There they relate their 'colonial experience,' consisting of malevolent interventions in Victorian political life — which in reality required no such favours to evince sufficient discord and enmity to please the most fastidious demon. Kantankeros's plan is to counteract Mirth's power by seducing Young Australia Felix from the straight path. Here Walch draws on another dramatic and literary motif; the 'Tom and Jerry' plot of the naive lad plucked clean by the fast city life.[36] Although this may appear an early variant of the Australian mythic siting of all virtue and authenticity in the bush, remote from the tainted cities, it is a metropolitan rendering of the pastoral myth and subversive to its values. Drawing on eighteenth-century ideas of the city as the hub of life, and the country as a wilderness, there is evident in *Australia Felix* little of that romantic pastoral nostalgia caused by the industrial revolution. Although the bush scenery and vigorous pioneer characters of the 'Bungaree Forest' may have pleased the country visitors, and given immigrants to the city a taste of sanitised nostalgia, there would be few in the audience who would, purely on grounds of national sentiment, have preferred bush life to the meanest suburb of Marvellous Melbourne. Mirth was metropolitan and urban. Therefore the prospect of Felix's removal from his bush home to the big city would have been anticipated with relish by the audience: 'Life *is* like Life, I say, down here, in Melbourne' (I, iv, 47).

The love plot gets under way with the entry of Miss Victoria, who loves her presumed brother Felix with frank passion. The obvious obstacle to her love is removed when her parents, the Irish Old Australia and The Missus, inform her that she is in fact a foundling, discovered in the bush and reared because of a recommendation from some unnamed power that she would do them credit: an interesting expression of colonial ideas of the

origins of British civilisation in Victoria. Mirth informs Victoria that the bat will aid Felix to gain sporting eminence locally and so be selected for the Victorian team, and thus she will win his love. On Felix's entrance it becomes clear that he is in need of a firm hand to keep him from the lure of city dissipation. His breezy style and pet kookaburra appear the kind of bush-nativist iconography which Bland Holt melodramas were later to bestow so generously on their 'Australian' heroes, but Felix already longs to be a townie. He is persuaded to accept the bat, with which he can defeat even the great W. G. Grace himself. To counteract this move Mischief produces a suitable familiar in Mosquito, whose introductory song expounds his experience of Melbourne night life, public and private. It is clear into what sort of world Felix is about to move.

The central scene of the pantomime is placed at the Melbourne Cricket Club Ground on the day itself of the start of the England-Victoria match, 26 December 1873, which was also the day of the premiere of *Australia Felix* at the Opera House. The All-England Eleven are represented by children and the Victorian Eighteen by the ballet ladies, who sing an appropriate song to the tune of Offenbach's 'Gendarmes' Duet'. The plot to bamboozle Felix gets under way, with the demons disguised as those fairground conmen whose rigged games of 'chance' have fleeced holiday-makers for generations. Mirth's assistant, the bibulous Grog Blossom, is easily decoyed by Mischief to the drinks tent, leaving the coast clear for Kantankeros and Boblo to set up an under-and-over game for the destruction of Felix. After warning him against dissipation and false love, Mirth leaves Felix, who is rapidly taken over by Kantankeros and introduced to a suitable friend, Miss Collyns Treeter, a fashionable gold-digger who is easily persuaded that Felix is a good marital catch. Victoria is soon forgotten; lamenting her lost love she joins forces with his parents to find him. They in turn enlist the aid of Wooroohoohoo, who indicates Felix's direction but is thwarted by Kantankeros, who succeeds in putting the rescuers on the wrong track. The under-and-over game begins, and Felix at Miss Collyns Treeter's urging loses all his money to Boblo until all that remains is the bat. This too is gambled away, just as Felix's turn to play in the cricket game is announced. Without the bat, Felix loses the game. Mirth has the satisfaction of having Mischief arrested for illegal gambling, but the bat is removed by Mosquito to a far destination. Kantankeros issues his ultimatum: unless the bat is recovered by midnight on the next day Mirth must abandon Australia to the tyranny of dulness. A prolonged and spirited musical medley unites all characters for the first-act finale.

The second act shows the endeavours of the good characters to discover the bat's whereabouts. Wooroohoohoo proves his worth again by reporting that Mosquito has taken the bat to the Isle of Monkeys — although the bird is mute except for his laugh, his more educated friend Cockatoo has sent a note! Old Australia and his feisty consort are sent on a rescue mission by means of seven-league boots, and Felix and Victoria repair their romance. The Monkeys scene is a pantomime set-piece, the 'monkeys' being played by small boys who enact sight gags in a series of mimed business; the tastes of the youngest audience members are now being catered for.[37] The Monkeys bamboozle the comic pair who must be rescued by Mirth's army — this leads into the March of the Amazons without which no pantomime would be complete. A scene which looks flat and even dispensable on the page thus contained what for many would have been the highlights of the performance.



The cricketing craze, from *Melbourne Punch*, 25 December 1873. (Courtesy La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria)

The penultimate scene shows the good characters in a gothicised version of bush scenery: 'Breakneck Gully, and Road to Hangman's Flat': the 'dark scene' where they experience the lowest ebb of their collective fortunes. In the version followed in this edition the gloomy surroundings are brightened by two solo character songs, for Miss Collyns Treeter and for Boblo, before Kantankeros enters to gloat over his coming victory. Confident of success, he casually exterminates his creature Mosquito by means of a 'large extinguisher' which descends from the flies. Wooroohoohoo's offstage laughter causes the demon a momentary tremor, which he stills as his adversaries gather for the 'Great Curse Scene'. Here the demon quails under the barrage of dire predictions of his likely fate 'If [he] should gain the day and rule this land' (II, iii, 59). From these imprecations it appears that being King of Victoria was not a job to be lightly undertaken.

At last the characters, including the ever-thirsty Grog Blossom, meet at eight minutes to midnight, as shown on the illuminated dial of the Melbourne Post Office clock. Mirth bids Australia a sad farewell and the malevolent party anticipates success, when at the last moment Old Australia and The Missus appear with the bat. The vanquished Kantankeros attempts to elude capture by changing himself into a snake, that animal most feared by colonists, but reckons without Australia's vigilant enemy of his kind.[38] Wooroohoohoo pounces on the unfortunate demon, and on the stroke of midnight the transformation scene commences.

The pantomime shows the cohesive forces which Walch presents as constituting the bases of the ideal community. Mirth, sportsmanship, constancy and fair play are seen as the characteristics which will unite the young nation, with the off-stage presence of the English cricketers providing inspiration rather than rivalry. Drinking, gambling, social-climbing and irresponsibility are the dangers that must be overcome, though these are presented in such a rollicking comic mode that it is difficult to see them as merely condemned. Walch was no wowser, and Mirth has Grog Blossom as his squire. The demons are far from dull, but centres of comic energy, and the censorious tyranny of their allegorical function must be suggested in performance by the traditional lurid authority assumed by demonic characters. The romantic union of 'the idealised Master and Miss Victoria'[39] figures the young 'nation' emerging into maturity, having survived the perils of youthful recklessness and naivety and the far more insidious temptations of urban capitalism.[40] The vital role of the older generation in the rescue of the magic talisman announces Walch's desire to include past

and present, city and country, in this national community; an eden without a snake. But while the Demon is labelled 'dulness', with the knowledge of the subjects of the topical jokes we can discern the underlying obsessions. The real snake in the colonial paradise is the essential condition itself of its existence: individualism and economic competition create society not as a unified 'team' but as a carnival of crooks and hustlers. Yet, in *Australia Felix* the guardian spirit of place at the last moment vanquishes the endemic evils of white capitalist civilisation; showing Walch's faith, despite his intimate knowledge of the workings of his society, that youth and time were yet on Australia's side.

iv GARNET WALCH; A CAREER IN AUSTRALIAN THEATRE

Garnet Walch, journalist, publisher and dramatist, was born in Broadmarsh, Tasmania, on 1 October 1843. His father was Major James William Henry Walch of the 54th Regiment, who arrived in Tasmania the year before Garnet's birth. In 1845 Major Walch bought the Hobart branch of the bookselling firm of Samuel Tegg, which under the enterprise of Garnet's brothers James and Charles became the respected firm of J. Walch and Son, publishers of *Walch's Literary Intelligencer* and *Walch's Tasmanian Almanac*. Garnet had printer's ink in his blood, although unfortunately for his financial status his tastes ran to the creative and bohemian side of the literary business. A fiction writer, dramatist, journalist, advertisement writer and hopeful founder of newspapers, Walch never achieved the civic respectability and commercial solidity of his brothers, who developed the family bookselling interest over lengthy and honorable careers. He was however to achieve the affection and respect of his literary colleagues; to live a varied life at the centre of the colonial bohemia of press and stage; and to leave a lengthy and creditable legacy of light fiction and of dramatic works ranging from panorama lectures to burlesques, pantomimes, comedies and melodramas.[41]

When Garnet was nine years old his father died, and the young boy was sent abroad to be placed in the care of relations. For five years in London he attended Denmark Hill Grammar School, and his formal education was completed in a private college in Hameln, the town of the legendary Pied Piper. Walch never forgot his two years of student life in Germany, which allowed him leisure for the taste in amateur theatricals which he had already shown while a boarder at Denmark Hill.[42] In later journalism and drama he displayed his continuing affection for German culture, declaring that if 'we Englishmen' were half as

Garnet Walch. (Courtesy La Trobe University, State Library of Victoria)

educated, if our laws, literature and leisure were half as good as the Germans' we would be healthier and happier.'[43] As secretary to the Melbourne Athenaeum he forged close links with the Metropolitan Leidertafel, and in his comedy-drama *Her Evil Star* (1881) he created the polymath Doctor Kroppengiesser, a sort of Baron von Mueller character.[44] Germany appears to have provided for Walch a window to a larger world than the stuffy Anglophilia of official culture allowed — he was also part of the Melbourne circle of Francophiles led by James Smith.[45] French

civilisation seems to have performed a similar service for Walch's friend Marcus Clarke, yet while the more volatile Clarke remained ambivalent about his colonial status, it suited the native-born Walch perfectly. Although he spent forty years of his life in Melbourne, Walch lived also in Tasmania and New South Wales, and by the 1880s his political ideas were federationist. While aware that the British model of civilisation was neither the last nor only word on the subject, he easily adjusted his British racial identity, which he valued and celebrated, to the emerging federal model of colonial public life. In this sense he was by sentiment and political conviction an Australian patriot, as understood by most at the time. In his literary politics, however, he was nativist through and through: a more economically vulnerable and certainly less prevalent conviction in an age of increasing cultural imperialism. Nonetheless, despite these ideological ambivalences and constant material difficulties, writers like Walch survived their professional hazards to create an unassuming but solid tradition of native literature and drama.

His schooling finished, Walch returned at the age of seventeen to Hobart, where he failed to last long as a clerk, first to a merchant, then to a law firm. While lacking neither industry nor initiative, the dutiful and unvarying application of his brothers was not his by temperament. He set off for Sydney and by 1865 his talent for light satirical verse caught the notice of George Ross Morton, the editor of *Sydney Punch*, and Walch soon became a regular contributor. 1867 finds him in Parramatta, where his editorship of a local paper, the *Cumberland Mercury*, induced him to set up his own newspaper, the *Cumberland Times*. In that year too his first fictional publication, *The Fireflash*, saw the light.[46] In the 1878 Introduction to a reprinting of his first book, Walch gives an entertaining account of the tasks of the editor of a small country weekly, when each Friday he took the copy to Sydney for printing, a sleepless all-night process which terminated with his catching the earliest train back to Parramatta Junction. Since the station was a mile short of the town itself, '...labourers returning to work before six o'clock were gratified by the sight of a meek, care-worn young man, in bell-topper and spectacles, plodding, not to say staggering, along between the rails, with a 70-lb load of moist *Mercuries* on his devoted back.'[47] These experiences led Walch to venture into proprietorship, and so the *Cumberland Times* was born: the first of Walch's infatuations with what he would later, in a wiser hour, call the 'will-o-the-wisp' of newspaper ownership, 'offering gigantic terms to all and sundry who choose to follow it through bog and mire to the ultimate slough of bankruptcy.'[48] However the *Cumberland Times* avoided this slough, because after a period of

running the paper from his front drawing-room Walch sold it, as he ironically proclaimed, 'for a large sum which laid the foundation of the fortune wherein now he revels'.[49] For much of his life, which appears an ingenious and spirited battle for security, Walch was not to 'revel' in much financial abundance, but if he never made a handsome living, at least the distressful poverty of a Henry Kendall was not to be his. In 1867 he married Ada Kate Sophie Mullen, daughter of a public servant in the Sydney Lands Department, and before long a growing family added to his joys and responsibilities, shadowed by the infant deaths of three of their eight children.[50]

The years 1867-1868 saw a boom period for theatre in Sydney. Thanks to the visits of Queen Victoria's peripatetic naval son, the Duke of Edinburgh, entertainment was in demand, and not even the ubiquitous Shakespearean actor Walter Montgomery, who faithfully followed the Duke's itinerary, could provide it all. Local writers were able to exploit the need for a supply of novel and topical material. Walch thus began his theatrical career by localising English burlesques for Australian conditions; a humble if routine literary task undertaken by most colonial journalists at some stage of their careers. That, and pantomime writing, provided both valuable theatrical experience and some financial remuneration, in a task which could be done well or badly. Walch's first identifiable theatre work is one of these localisations, *Love's Silver Dream*, which he provided for the renovated Adelphi Theatre under the directorship of the actor Rosa Cooper at Christmas 1869. This was so successful that it was speedily followed by *Conrad the Corsair*, from an original by William Brough, in February, and *Prometheus* (from Robert Reece) in May 1870. His chief collaborators, besides Cooper and her husband Lionel Harding, were the burlesque comedian Charles Young and the scene painters W.J. Wilson and Alexander Christian Habbe, the self- taught Danish artist who worked extensively with Walch and joined him in Melbourne when Walch moved to that city in 1872.[51] By temperament Walch was ideally suited to write for the popular stage. He took his task lightly enough to contribute his own genial irony and sense of the fantastic, and seriously enough never to patronise popular taste or feel the work beneath him. His view of the writer's social role was pragmatic and compassionate. As stated in 1880, when opera-bouffe and comedy appeared to be ousting the old romantic drama, he saw the situation in sociological terms: in a world lacking 'heart' in daily dealings audiences yearn at sunset for simulated jollity 'in exchange for the money we have striven so hard, so grabbingly, and so soul-wearyingly to gather' — and political life itself now appeared merely another such spectacle.[52]

The apprentice work of localisation paid dividends when George Darrell, recently lessee of the Royal Victoria Theatre, was looking for a Christmas show for 1871. Walch wrote for him, not another localisation, but an all-original pantomime script titled *Trookulentos, the Tempter*; with Darrell playing the title role of the 'demon of discontent' Trookulentos. This all-Australian pantomime is the forerunner, not only of the more accomplished *Australia Felix*, but of Walch's considerable body of theatre writing which was to endure until 1894 and embrace practically all the contemporary dramatic genres except tragedy. *Trookulentos* made Walch's name in Sydney, and Darrell too revived it in Wellington in 1875. In April 1872 Walch localised Planché's *Orpheus* for the Royal Victoria, using Lydia Howarde, his leading lady in *Trookulentos* and later *Australia Felix*. In the middle of the year he met up with one of the theatrical personalities of the age, Harry Rickards, later founder of the great Tivoli variety circuit but in 1872 touring his considerable comedy talent around the world in Enderby Jackson's London Star Comique Combination. Walch appears adaptable and musical enough to turn out for Rickards an 'entertainment comique' called *Mother Says I Mustn't*, which ran at the Sydney School of Arts in late August and subsequently in other cities. Walch's ability to provide successful material for the varied theatrical talents of the time is evident in his subsequent writing for the 'Fakir of Oolu', Alfred Silvester; for the Stewart family of Richard, Docy, Maggie and Nellie; for W.S. Lyster's burlesque and opera-bouffe company; for the comic giants of the age such as Harwood, Holt and Greville; for dramatic actors like Rose Edouin (Mrs G.B.W. Lewis) and Alfred Dampier, and for the latter's talented daughters Lily and Rose.

By the middle of 1872 the lure of Melbourne, Australia's principal city and theatrical Mecca, called Walch away from his Sydney and Parramatta friends. After a farewell benefit on 30 August 1872, organised by his *Sydney Punch* colleagues, the Walches departed for the 'El Dorado of the South'. Perhaps Darrell or Rickards had tempted him with visions of wider theatrical horizons, or perhaps Walch was again exploiting an opening. At the beginning of 1870 the established dramatist William Mower Akhurst returned to England, where in the 1870s he produced splendid equestrian-historical spectacles at the former Astley's Amphitheatre for the prince of Showmen, 'Lord' George Sanger. Akhurst was a journalist and localiser who since 1853 had provided Melbourne with a steady stream of burlesques, dramas and pantomimes, achieving a new Australian note in his later ones such as *Tom Tom, the Piper's Son* (1867) and *The House that Jack Built* (1869) which Walch was subsequently to amplify.[53]

Walch consolidated his position as Akhurst's Melbourne heir by writing 'a Christmas grotesque', *True Blue Beard*, for the Opera House in 1872, while a Sydney version localised by Archibald Murray played simultaneously at Sydney's Theatre Royal. As so often in Australian theatre, the local writer got his chance merely because promised imported attractions had temporarily failed to arrive. In this case H.R. Harwood embarrassed his colleagues in the Theatre Royal management by being late in returning from his overseas talent-spotting tour for the theatre's re-opening after its disastrous 1872 fire. *True Blue Beard* was produced merely because no English novelty arrived in time to replace it.[54] Nonetheless, to have a major pantomime running in two cities at once showed that Walch has 'arrived.' The choice of subject may owe something to the fame of H.J. Byron's Covent Garden 'Blue Beard' pantomime of 1871. Walch's *True Blue Beard* copies the effects of the grand-processional entry of Blue Beard's suite mounted on pantomime elephants and giraffes, with Byron's giraffes replaced by more homely camels, who, like certain politicians, have a lot of 'neck.'[55] Rickards' occupancy of the New Apollo Hall over the 1872 Christmas season furthermore ensured that *Mother Says I Mustn't* was joined by a new Walch comic sketch, *Shy, Shy, Dreadfully Shy*.

The success of the Theatre Royal's production of W.S. Gilbert's *Pygmalion and Galatea* in February 1873, starring Eleanor Carey, George Coppin and another Tasmanian, Hattie Shepparde, moved Rickards and Walch to timely emulation. The result was 'a concatenation of absurd(d)it(t)ies' entitled *Pygmalion and His Gal (a dear!); or, The Celebrated Living Stone of Ancient Athens (No Relation to the Doctor)* which ran merrily at the Apollo Hall from 31 March with Rickards himself *en travesti* as Galatea.[56] So popular was this genial spoof, aided by Rickard's comic brilliance, that a 'second edition' was staged at the Princess's Theatre in 1874. In 1873 Walch consolidated his financial position also by becoming the Secretary, chosen out of 115 candidates, of the Melbourne Athenaeum, which position by mid-1874 was worth £300 per annum. Hence, until the 'will-o-the-wisp' of publishing was to draw him away from this secure income in 1879, for this decade his family enjoyed financial security and the writer himself respected institutional visibility amongst Melbourne litterateurs.

William Saurin Lyster, the energetic opera impresario, was to be Walch's next theatrical collaborator. In September 1873 Walch provided for his opera-bouffe company an amusing version of Offenbach's *Geneviève de Brabant* at the Opera House. This ran for a very respectable twenty-four performances and, fitted out

with harlequinade, became the Sydney Royal Victoria's 1873 Christmas pantomime. In May 1878 it was revived for the opera company of Emily Soldene, who had played in Farnie's version in 1871. Hence by Christmas 1873 Walch was again in a good position to supply a pantomime for the Opera House, of which Lyster was now the lessee. For Lyster's opera-bouffe company Walch created *Australia Felix; or, Harlequin Laughing Jackass and the Magic Bat*: the liveliest and most topical surviving pantomime script. Lyster also produced Walch's 1874 pantomime *Adamanta; the Proud Princess of Profusia and her Six Unlucky Suitors* for the Opera House with original music by John Hill. Writing in 1905, 'Autolycus' (Henry Gyles Turner) recalled the romping fun of *Adamanta*, particularly the 'dazzling, gauzy, sheeny Oriental costume' worn by the dramatic star Eleanor Carey, whom Lyster had captured after her falling out with the Theatre Royal; and the 'heads' of the rejected suitors — huge character masks of local notables like the doctors James Beaney and L.L. Smith — hung on the city gates.[57] Of *Australia Felix* he recalls not a word: forgetting and remembering are the stuff of theatre history. Walch for his part did not forget his mentor Lyster at the latter's death in 1880. By then burdened with his own private grief and worries, it is typical of Walch that he should hastily hire a wagonette to pay his respects by following the gloomy cortege on the long road to the Melbourne General Cemetery. During what must have been a sombre journey, Walch 'remembered that the hearse carried the quiet form of one who was amongst the first men in this colony to give a certain struggling author a helping hand.'[58]

During the 1870s Walch produced a steady stream of burlesques and pantomimes, including five delightful Christmas concoctions (three of whose scripts have survived) for the Theatre Royal management of Harwood, Stewart, Greville and Coppin. Here he was writing for the best comic talents in the country, supplemented in the later half of the decade by the arrival of Bland Holt, later to make his mark in management in the nineties with his Australianised Drury Lane melodramas, but in the seventies an accomplished comic actor. His Clown in Walch's 1879 *Babes in the Wood* was a *tour de force*; a reminder that performers as much as writers create the taste of an age. For the burlesque specialists Horace Lingard and Alice Dunning he localised *Pluto; or, The Magic Lyre* in 1876, one of their standard successes in which the statuesque star 'looked very pretty in violet and silver.'[59] Lyster's grand 1877 production of Wagner's *Lohengrin* at the Opera House was mercilessly spoofed by Walch's 1878 *Lohengrin in a Nutshell* at the Academy of Music. Perhaps the oddest collaboration of this decade was Walch's

provision of comic sketches for the magician Alfred Silvester, 'the Fakir of Oolu', who claimed that it was he and not Professor Pepper who had invented the famous sheet-glass ghost effect which in the sixties had lent new realism to many a spectral old drama. Walch turned to good use his taste for combining the comic and the macabre, a taste he shared with his friend the writer Robert Percy Whitworth, both of whom produced stories where livid apparitions of bloody bushrangers are sometimes actual ghosts, sometimes a white cow seen in the moonlight by an alcoholically unsteady witness.[60] During 1876 Walch wrote for Silvester's family such comic trifles as *The Haunted Chamber* and *The Great Wager of £500*, where characters who foolishly spend their nights in inappropriate surroundings receive retribution in the form of supernatural visitations. Unfortunately for Walch 'the ghost failed to walk' in the old theatrical sense, as his insolvency of 1880 shows that Silvester left the country owing him £20.[61]

Besides producing these sketches, Walch also wrote more substantial comedies; a genre in which his heart seems mainly to lie. *The Great Hibernicon* (1874), *Perfidious Albion* (1878) and *If; or, An Old Gem Reset* (1879) showed his desire to produce for the dramatic as well as the musical stage. For the young family of Alfred Dampier he wrote a winning vehicle in *Helen's Babies* (1877), which they subsequently toured extensively throughout the world. Two of the Stewart sisters, Maggie and Nellie, played also in the Melbourne premiere. For Richard Stewart's family Walch provided a vehicle of their own, a variety piece called *Rainbow Revels* (1877) meant to be similar to the Vokes family's touring show, which the star talent of the family — and the show — Nellie Stewart, remembers in her autobiography.[62] His literary output, neglected since *The Fireflash*, was augmented by three Christmas annuals which afforded space to himself and to other colonial authors: *Head Over Heels* (1874), *Hash* (1877) and *Australasia* (1878). Of these publications the most attractive and characteristic is his 1875 fantasy *On the Cards; or, A Motley Pack*, with eccentric and fascinating two-colour engravings by the artist George Gordon McCrae. Walch's talent for merging the realistic, the satiric and the fantastic is never better exemplified than in this delightful narrative, set in a deserted theatre after the rigours of a pantomime dress rehearsal. (The sections which give valuable detail of pantomime practice are printed in Appendix I of this edition.) Walch was a great collaborator, possessing it appears the temperament which thrived on the union of complementary talents.

Of the theatrical personalities who arrived in Australia in the seventies, two stand out who were to influence both Walch's career and the shape of Australian theatre history. The first of

these, appearing at the Melbourne Theatre Royal late in 1873 just before *Australia Felix* was to play at the Opera House, was the dramatic actor Alfred Dampier, in his vehicles *Faust and Marguerite, Grimaldi, The Merchant of Venice* and sundry gentlemanly melodramas. By mid-decade the careers of Dampier and Walch came into contact: the actor's need for new plays for himself and growing family fitting with Walch's ability to provide sympathetic and suitable material for a large variety of theatrical talents. The collaboration commenced routinely enough when Walch produced a prologue for Dampier to speak for *Faust and Marguerite* at the Theatre Royal on 22 September 1876; the year of Walch's involvement with the 'Fakir' and his comic magic acts at Saint George's Hall. Comedy formed the initial element of the partnership, with Walch writing *Helen's Babies* and an ambitious three-acter *Humble Pie* for Dampier's farewell to Australia in July 1877. This was the year that Dampier began to seriously consider tapping local writing talent for material to satisfy his own and his talented daughters' lines of business. On the dramatic side, the first result was F.R.C. Hopkins' drama *All for Gold*, which had affecting and prominent parts for Lily and Rose and a meaty one for their father. This play premiered in Sydney in March 1877 and was performed in Melbourne in June. An 1892 article in the *Leader* alleges that Walch co-wrote *All for Gold* with Hopkins; a supposition impossible to verify, since Hopkins' name alone appears in all records, but it suggests that fifteen years later, at the height of the famous Alexandra season, some observers were prepared to believe that it was Walch who had been Dampier's good dramatic genius from the start.[63]

The other illustrious newcomers to Australian theatre were the American James Cassius Williamson with his wife Maggie Moore. *Struck Oil* premiered in 1874 and was one of the genuine theatrical crazes of the time, achieving, 'Autolycus' believed, a 'mesmeric hold' over audiences for record-breaking runs and revivals. Even the pious believed that *Struck Oil* was more wholesome than the usual run of theatrical wickedness, the clergy attending in mufti to savour the show's moral uplift.[64] Williamson was always to take care that the pious should not be offended, founding his theatrical fortune on respectability, and, more pertinently, on unsentimental financial caution. With a few exceptions, his shows had been proven successful outside Australia before they were risked here; 'human nature' is the same the whole world over, he declared, hence there was no point in seeking out Australian expressions of it.[65] There was no opening in this philosophy for the local Australian writer, and under the rule of the 'Triumvirate' of Williamson, Garner and Musgrove, the Theatre Royal monopoly of the seventies seemed in retrospect

like a brief golden age. For Williamson Walch wrote only one pantomime, his last Australian stage work, *Sinbad the Sailor*, in 1893. His other literary contact with Williamson was when as the Firm's secrtary he was engaged to write Garner's biography along with a history of Australian theatre.[66] What emerged instead was an approving monograph on Williamson and his dealings, giving an account of Williamson's *Pinafore* lawsuits of 1879, when he returned finally to Australia with the Australasian rights to this and any future Savoy operas, and engaged in extensive litigation to enforce his claims. Walch concluded that Williamson thus proved 'principally at his own expense, the validity of English Copyright law in Australia, a matter of no small value to authors and owners of plays, strengthening also the hands of honorable managers in the colonies.'[67] As an author who, like Clarke, obtained small financial recompense from his labours, Walch possibly hoped that the new dispensation would provide a new deal for the much-exploited Australian playwright. Yet when he took up intensive writing in the very popular form of melodrama in 1890, it was with an old-fashioned actor-manager that he collaborated, not with the Firm.

Towards the end of the decade Walch's financial affairs, both business and domestic, deteriorated. He resigned from the Athenaeum in March 1879, at a time when his debts were piling up. The point was reached when in October 1880 he filed for insolvency, giving as his reason 'sickness in family, losses in business as a publisher and in consequence of the trustee under a deed of assignment executed by me in February 1879 for the benefit of my creditors having collected a large sum of money in respect of assets and absconded therewith.' The deficiency came to £2,858 14s 4d, with debts plus interest owed to his bookselling relations; his literary works and a few fugitive theatrical debts owing being his only capital. Walch was not the only insolvent of the time, his friend Clarke suffered a second disastrous bankruptcy in June 1881. Walch's bankruptcy file shows that with characteristic generosity and optimism he had chartered at his own expense a steamboat which carried a company which played the banned Clarke burlesque *The Happy Land* in January 1880 to Frankston for a clandestine beach performance, and hired a caterer to provide the wealthy guests with food and drink. As a financial venture the excursion was a failure, as the celebrities expected the entertainment to be complimentary and Walch was £50 the poorer.[68]

The year 1881 was a fraught and busy time for Walch. He was active in theatre, but his real dream and project lay in literature. With the artist Charles Turner he devised a grand

publication, intended to cash in on the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880. This was his book *Victoria in 1880*, with topographical and historical material covering all parts of the colony written by Walch himself from original research, with elegant engravings by Turner and others. Today, *Victoria in 1880* appears a triumph of colonial publishing, and at four guineas a copy Walch hoped to make real money. All through 1880 he laboured towards its completion, until finally in April 1881 it appeared, but proved not to be the goldmine which would solve his financial troubles. In August 1881 Marcus Clarke, burdened with similar difficulties and crushed by mysterious sorrows, died suddenly at a tragically early age. Little of this private unhappiness showed in Walch's 1881 book of verse *A Little Tin Plate*, which was light, urbane and witty.

In November an ambitious comedy-drama *Her Evil Star* played at the Bijou, written for its director Mrs G.B.W. Lewis and set in Western victoria incorporating the *Loch Ard* shipwreck. Domestic tragedy, comedy and the ghost theme are blended in this characteristic Walch piece. The stresses and guilt of Walch's private life are displaced in a plot featuring a villain who is a callous spendthrift and gambler, who appears like a malignant phantom from the shipwreck to torment his supposed widow and blight her chances of building her life anew. Her impulse to be rid of him by means of poison is checked by the apparition of their child. Finally the dastard is disposed of when he falls in a pursuit over a rocky ravine. The *Argus* disliked both the apparition and the fortuitous end of the villain; although the latter device, with a horse substituted for a human actor, packed them into the Alexandra in 1891 when it was done by the Wild West hero Dr Carver in Dampier and Walch's *The Scout*.[69]

During 1881 Silvester reappeared at St George's Hall and Walch wrote more sketches for him. For Christmas he supplied no fewer than two Melbourne pantomimes; a 'Gulliver' for Mrs Lewis at the Bijou and a 'Dick Whittington' for the Princess's. The latter employed the eccentric talents of the comedian Fred Marshall, who had arrived with the London Comedy Company in 1880, whose impersonations of sundry villains provided 'a dramatic company in himself,'[70] which was as well since the far larger Theatre Royal also produced a Whittington pantomime that year. Both theatres took care to burlesque the excitement of the 'raft scene' from Bland Holt's sensation drama *The World* — it was clear in what direction the theatrical wind would soon be blowing.

As if these labours were not enough, Walch with two friends the turf enthusiast and author R.P. Whitworth and the cricketer

John Conway ventured late in 1881 to pursue once more the 'will-o-the-wisp' of publishing. On 15 October they launched *Town Talk*; 'a weekly budget of news, notes and novelties.' A blend of theatrical, political and sporting news — cricket and racing predominating in the latter — *Town Talk* folded in January 1882. However the appearance of the solider and slightly more long-lived weekly the *Federal Australian* may not have been a coincidence since this paper, an early attempt to establish a genuinely national weekly, carried on the nativist cultural stance of *Town Talk*.

At some time after the end of 1881 Walch's health appears to have collapsed under his herculean efforts in the previous year to restore his financial standing. A Christmas annual appeared for 1882, with illustrations this time by Melbourne *Punch*'s Thomas Carrington, but the theatrical silence lasted until mid-1883. His public reappearance was marked by a crowded benefit granted by 'the press and stage of Victoria' at the Theatre Royal 'in celebration of his recovery from his recent long and dangerous illness.' Nellie Stewart, George Rignold, Solange Novaro, Dampier, Greville, Henry Walton, George and Blanche Leopold all provided their talents, in a long programme which included Walch's own signal that he was back in the business; a brief comedy appropriately entitled *Proof Positive*, 'light, airy, and full of fun.' In his speech the frail forty-year-old writer admitted that he had been very ill for a long time but recovered thanks to 'the skill of [his] physician and friend combined' plus good nursing, doubtless supplied by Ada.[71] Someone amongst his journalist friends must have decided that a long sea voyage would benefit the author as much as the support of his theatrical colleagues, because on 26 July Walch sailed from Melbourne first class for Madagascar as the *Argus* correspondent. His detailed and securely-paid reports from that island on the colonialist manouvrings of European powers were given prominence in the paper's columns.

Walch was back at work in Melbourne late in 1885, although the publication of *Seven Rovers* in Hobart in 1884 may suggest a Tasmanian interlude. *Table Talk* was pleased to see him back 'in harness again, and as energetic as ever,' believing him 'one of those men who can write anything apropos of anything else you choose, or he will write you a musical absurdity entitled "Everything, and a good many other things." '[72] Theatrical writing reappears, though not at the pace of output of the seventies. For Harry Rickards he wrote *Bric-a-brac*, *Spoons* and a burlesque *Babes in the Wood*.[73] He also supplied the Theatre Royal with *The Sleeping Beauty* for Christmas, which was an

assemblage of such variety acts as acrobats, *poses plastiques* and xylophonists.[74] This was symptomatic of the way pantomime was evolving; Walch was to write only twice again in this form, as his attention moved increasingly towards the legitimate drama.

In publishing he turned his pen to praising great men and deeds. A *Life of General Gordon* and the book on the Williamsons appeared in 1885; so too did a pamphlet *A Glass of Champagne*, which described the manufacture of the 'king of wines' and was basically an elegant advertisement for Krug and Company. This commercial form of literary survival appears to have aroused the virtuous scorn of some of his possibly better-funded contemporaries, since *Table Talk* set out to consider the fallen fate of the 'fixed star' in Victoria's otherwise unstable literary Southern Cross — who like the poor was always with us — in writing literary advertisements, so often the ruin of art. 'Today it is a prominent actor who employs his facile pen, tomorrow a land speculator, the third day a furnishing firm, and so on.'[75] Walch had employed his 'facile pen' in advertising copy and puffs before this date, and his reply made it clear that while he was indeed always with the Victorian literary scene he had no intention of remaining poor. 'Literature has to be to me both staff and crutch,' and sonnets won't pay the butcher and baker. Why should not commercial literature be elegant and readable? Evidently his critics had read his, which delighted him as it doubtless did the advertisers.[76]

This commercial acumen may have paid off when in 1887 Walch conceived the *Australian Birthday Book*, sending out numerous questionnaires to prominent Victorians. According to a later story 'Walch originally meant to issue this book on his own account, but Hugo Wertheim, the piano maker, got to hear of it and financed a first edition of 20,000 copies.'[77] A guide to Tasmania for the firm of Huddart and Parker appeared in 1889; a friendly or perhaps less friendly rival to *Walch's Tasmanian Almanac*. But in 1888 the 'will-o-the-wisp' twinkled again. Melbourne was enjoying a land boom — even Walch claimed to have profited from it [78] — and another international Exhibition, celebrating Australia's first centenary, promised to bring trade and visitors to the city. With Nat J. Barnet as manager, Walch became editor of their Centennial Printing and Publishing Company, which produced from 5 October 1888 the *Melbourne Mirror*, 'a weekly social, political, literary and dramatic journal' and one of the liveliest colonial newspapers. Garnet had again embarked on the marshy grounds of newspaper proprietorship, enlivening the *Mirror's* columns with vivid and sympathetic theatrical commentary; all in the interests of intercolonial

federation of the Australasian colonies, against which eventuality 'Garnet and Barnet' laid grand journalistic plans.[79] A surviving literary product of the company is Walch's last annual, *Christmas Crackers* (1888), and the official programme for the Centennial International Exhibition.

The last glorious phase of Walch's dramatic career occurred in partnership with Alfred Dampier: the famous Alexandra seasons of 1888-1892, where an honorable showing of Australian-written and Australian-subject sensation drama was performed alongside of full-blooded melodramas of the older but ever-popular kind which had always been one of Dampier's specialties.[80] Beginning their literary collaboration with a *Count of Monte Cristo* in January 1890, they raided Australian literature in their spirited adaptation of Boldrewood's *Robbery Under Arms*. In this play it is tempting to see the dramatic scenes as Dampier's work and the comic ones as Walch's; however Walch's work on *Her Evil Star* showed that he could himself create dramatic material outside the comic mode. Not that he relinquished comedy as such, writing during 1890 *The Land Lubber* for Katie Rickards at the Gaiety and various songs and sketches for music hall.[81] Meanwhile at the 'Alex' *For Love and Life* followed in November 1890, and another Boldrewood adaptation *The Miner's Right* in February 1891. Two glorious farragos of sensation, variety and animal stars were concocted for Frank Carver and his Wild America Troupe: *The Scout* (May 1891) and its sequel *The Trapper* (June 1891). The prominent interests in these Australian-written Westerns were Carver's frontier skills with rope and gun, Lily Dampier as the equestrian heroine, and a large tank of water into which every evening a talented horse plummeted fifteen feet from a rocky bridge, while the brave Carver, pursued by Indians, clung heroically to the scenery above.[82] With these noisy and crowd-pleasing Alexandra entertainments one is already aware of the material which would shortly make the fortune of those canny enough to capture on film these rumbustious performances.

Walch and Dampier battled on at the Alexandra with *This Great City* in November 1891, followed by a *Jack the Giant Killer* pantomime for Christmas. The capture and trial of the notorious domestic mass-murderer Frederick Deeming gave grisly and remunerative topicality to their *Wilful Murder*, which ran thirty-two performances from March to April 1892. But the end was close, for Dampier's management, for Marvellous Melbourne, and for the Australian people, as the financial follies of the land boom collapsed the country into the Great Depression of the nineties. *Help One Another* in June 1892 was Walch and Dampier's last

'Alex' collaboration. Walch wrote only two more plays in Australia: a comedy-drama *Silver Chimes* for Adelaide and a grandiosely-staged *Sinbad the Sailor* for J.C. Williamson at the Melbourne Royal at Christmas 1893. The spectacular effects but unsatirical tone of this pantomime, far removed from the topicality of *Australia Felix* of twenty years earlier, are a fitting ending to a career which after an energetic Indian Summer faded into the neo-colonialist winter of that remorseless slighting of local dramatists by the importing chains which persisted until our own times.

Walch however did not easily give in. If Australia was untenable for Australian theatre he would export it, in the interests of promoting international understanding by the production of our drama abroad. This desire to penetrate that overseas market which was now practically the sole source of Australian cultural imagery was a bold stroke, if dictated by financial necessity. At his benefit in June 1892 Walch announced his desire to have such plays as *Robbery Under Arms* and *The Miner's Right* performed in America and England[83] Although little is known of his successes in this venture, it produced at least one result in a collaboration with one John Grocott, an opera-bouffe called *Kismet; or, The Cadi's Daughter*, published in Nottingham in 1894. At the end of his career Walch returned to the form in which he had written his earliest Sydney pieces in the early 1870s.

Nothing is known of Walch's private life between the mid-nineties and his death at his Melbourne home at the age of seventy on 3 January 1913. Hugh McCrae, the poet son of artist George Gordon McCrae who created the witty illustrations for *On the Cards*, remembered Walch at an unspecified date when he had been a long time 'going down the wind'. 'He seemed too short, and too thin, in his chair away from the light: shabbily dressed and distracted looking. I compared him with some marionette ... tossed away and forgotten.' The writer adds the detail that Walch 'talked tremendously, and kept going out of the room and coming back again.'[84] The distraction and thinness can be accounted for by an energetic career in two of the most demanding and precarious occupations — theatre and journalism — open to a colonial literatteur. The tremendous talking recalls the genial gregariousness which gained the affection of his contemporaries to the extent that not a sharp or waspish word about him is evident in either public record or private correspondence. This feat is remarkable when one recalls the hothouse feuds and passionate infighting — so publicly displayed — of the literati of the time. His main fault, from the commercial point of view, was a certain

financial unworldliness. If unlike Clarke or Neild, Walch aroused no passionate antipathies, he cannot have been any kind of fool to survive in the turgid waters of colonial literary life with its precarious semi-professional and semi-craftsman financial status; waters which dragged under many of his contemporaries such as Clarke, Barcroft Boake, Adam Lindsay Gordon, Henry Kendall, Henry Morin Humphries and Henry Lawson.

Sadly, on the very day when Walch's funeral was announced, 'Ixion' wrote in the *Argus* a fictional account of an 'Old Time Pantomime', where the writers he mentions as typifying the 1870s are Clarke, Akhurst and Carrington — of the most prolific Australian pantomime writer of the time there is no word.[85] Every age has its own legitimate concerns; and an audience after the Depression and on the brink of an imperial war may have found the nativist self-constructions of forty years ago puzzling or irrelevant. However this edition of *Australia Felix* is presented in the hope that in our times a newer generation of theatregoers and literary historians may have the pleasure of rediscovering the reusing the varied career and lively works of one of our long-neglected colonial authors. A writer whose interests stretched from politics to advertising, who wrote material for the founders of Australian opera and variety as well as — through melodrama — our cinema, is a figure worthy of our renewed attention.

NOTES

1 Richard Dyer, 'Entertainment and Utopia,' in Rick Altman, ed., *Genre: The Musical. A Reader* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 175–189.

2 George Kateb, *Utopia and its Enemies*, quoted in Dyer, p. 182.

3 The relevance of these issues is explained in detail in the Notes to the text.

4 Dyer argues (p. 184) that entertainment's Utopian aspects of energy, abundance, etc, are effective not because entertainment is trivia forced upon us by a cynical industry, nor because it reflects 'eternal' needs; but because it responds to real needs *created* by the inadequacies of specific societies. However these are not the only needs, and entertainment can effectively deny, through ignoring, the legitimacy of other problems.

5 Dyer, p. 184.

6 Gerald Frow, *Oh Yes It Is! A History of Pantomime* (London: BBC, 1985), p. 39.

7 Frow, pp. 83–84. See also Samuel McKechnie, *Popular Entertainment Through the Ages* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, 1931), pp. 126–127; A.E. Wilson, *Pantomime Pageant: A Procession of*

Harlequins, Clowns, Comedians, Principal Boys, Pantomime-writers, Producers and Playgoers (London: Stanley Paul [1945]), pp. 38–43. The most detailed study of Grimaldi and the Regency pantomime is David Mayer's *Harlequin in his Element: The English Pantomime 1806–1836* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969).

8 Michael Booth, ed., *English Plays of the Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 7–8. This collection contains, besides an Introduction, a selection of texts and an invaluable Appendix C which reproduces contemporary records by theatrical practitioners of the production of pantomime.

9 *Illustrated London News*, 5 January 1861, p. 22.

10 'Ixion,' writing on 'Old Time Pantomime' in the *Argus* (4 January 1913, p. 4) creates a composite ideal 'pantomime' of the 1860–1870 era with his favourite actors together in one 'cast.' He claims that an opening would last two hours and a harlequinade one. However the running time for Walch's *Hey Diddle Diddle* of 1876 is given in the Melbourne Theatre Royal's 'Cast and Time Book' (La Trobe Library, Coppin Collection: Australian Playbills 7/18). Of the total running time from 7.45 to 11.30 pm, the opening to the end of the transformation scene occupies three hours ten minutes, (including thirteen minutes of performance breaks) and the harlequinade thirty-five minutes.

11 Booth, pp. 9 ff.

12 See Mayer's chapter 'Theatrical Borrowings, Theatrical Satire', pp. 75-108.

13 Booth, p. 38.

14 J.R. Planché, *Recollections and Reflections: A Professional Autobiography* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1872), pp. 134–138. This remains the clearest contemporary account of the changes in the forms of extravaganza, burlesque and pantomime.

15 The transformation scene as viewed from the front has been described by Percy Fitzgerald in his *The World Behind the Scenes* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1881), pp. 89–91. He also explains the mechanisms and technology which produced it. Fitzgerald is reproduced in Eric Irvin, *Dictionary of the Australian Theatre 1788–1914* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1985), pp. 303–305; and in Booth, pp. 510–512.

16 See Edward H. Pask, *Enter the Colonies Dancing: A History of Dance in Australia 1835–1940* (Melbourne: OUP, 1979) for the careers of the individuals who danced in nineteenth-century Australian theatre.

17 Garnet Walch, *On the Cards, or, A Motley Pack* Melbourne: Baillière, 1875), p. 1.

18 Michael Booth, *Victorian Spectacular Theatre 1850–1910* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 74–92.

19 *The Leader*, 10 January 1874, p. 18. Akhurst's burlesque, published under the title *Paris the Prince and Helen the Fair; or, The Giant Horse and the Seige of Troy* (Melbourne: Bell, 1869), commenced a long run at the Melbourne Theatre Royal on 11 April 1868.

20 See Margaret Williams, *Australia on the Popular Stage 1829–1929* (Melbourne: OUP, 1983), pp. 200, 267–68, 270. The nature-sprite version of the Aboriginal character appears in K.S. Prichard's novel *Coonardoo* (1929) and continues to fascinate film-makers both Australian and European.

21 *The Argus*, 10 April 1860, p. 5.

22 *Sydney Punch*, 5 January 1867, p. 47.

23 Garnet Walch, *Sinbad the Sailor, Little Jack Horner and the Old Man of the Sea* (Melbourne: William Marshall, 1893).

24 *The Era*, 5 January 1861, p. 22.

25 '[Christmas in Australia]' in L. T. Hergenhan, ed., *A Colonial City: High and Low Life. Selected Journalism of Marcus Clarke* (St Lucia: UQP, 1972), p. 29.

26 *The Age*, 25 December 1873, p. 4. The writer notes that greasy pole climbing and greasy pig chasing are incongruously maintained, but puzzles over why at 98° temperatures teenagers should enjoy kiss-in-the-ring.

27 See Maisy Stapleton and Patricia McDonald, *Christmas in the Colonies* (Sydney: David Ell and Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 1981) for narrative and valuable pictorial evidence of this nativising process in social practice and in popular iconography.

28 *The Age*, 22 November 1873, p. 4. For an account of sporting imagery in *Australia Felix* and the historical significance of the Grace tour, see Richard Fotheringham, 'Sport and Nationalism on Australian Stage and Screen: *Australia Felix* to *Gallipoli*', *Australasian Drama Studies* 1, No. 1 (October 1982), pp. 65–88.

29 *The Age*, 19 December 1873, p. 3.

30 Thomas Wills, 'the Grace of Australia,' and inventor of Australian Rules football, who had trained the Aboriginal team which toured England in 1867, fell victim to this faction fighting and was not selected. The *Age* championed him, but his institutional enemies, including Conway, were powerful. The *Age* and *Leader* campaign against Hammersley was more successful and he too was excluded.

31 The Victorian team specified in the *dramatis personae* of *Australia Felix* correctly lists the names of the cricketers, except that it has Campbell as a player instead of Horan, suggesting that the libretto was printed quite close to the 26 December premiere.

32 *The Age*, 27 December 1873, p. 3; *The Herald*, 27 December 1873, p. 3.

33 3 January 1874, p. 17. Further games were played around Victoria and in other colonies, England winning its first match against the Warrnambool 22 in January 1874. The New South Wales 18 defeated the visitors in Sydney on 24 January, and the Victorian 18 match on 12

March was drawn; otherwise the visitors won most games, including one with the combined New South Wales and Victorian 15 in Sydney.

34 See Veronica Kelly, 'Garnet Walch in Sydney,' *Australasian Drama Studies* 9 (October 1986), pp. 93–109 for details of Walch's early work. Darrell took *Trookulentos* to New Zealand and played it at the Theatre Royal, Wellington, at Christmas 1875. Walch's Sydney friends did not forget him, nor his collaborator the scenic artist Habbe who had also sought work in the southern city. On the night of 22 January 1874, when Walch took his author's benefit for *Australia Felix*, 'a large number of Sydney people were present in the dress circle who afterwards especially sought out and congratulated Messrs Habbe and Walch on having achieved a similar triumph to their production of *Trookulentos* in Sydney' (*The Herald*, 23 January 1874).

35 *The Australasian*, 27 December 1873, p. 819.

36 Tom and Jerry, before they became a cartoon cat and mouse, were characters in Pierce Egan's *Life in London* (1821), which created a craze for scenes of metropolitan lowlife. See J.C. Reid, *Bucks and Bruisers: Pierce Egan and Regency England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971).

37 Blanchard and Byron's Drury Lane *Beauty and the Beast; or, Harlequin and Mother Bunch* (1869) had a scene in a banyan forest where the characters encounter an army of monkeys (*Illustrated London News*, 1 January 1870, p. 2). Walch re-used 'Isle of Monkeys' scenes in others of his pantomimes. The traditional battle between the cats and rats of *Dick Whittington* pantomimes is the best-known today of these costumed conflicts; the *Nutcracker* ballet preserves this traditional feature, as it does a rudimentary transformation scene. Walch's *On the Cards* explains the *ad hoc* origins of such groups as the 'celebrated Simian Troupe' of *Australia Felix* through his 'Grunta Family,' 'none of them being in any way related to each other or previously known to fame' (p. 2).

38 Toby and Juliana Hooper analyse the mythic stature attained by the kookaburra in the children's fiction and illustrated journalism of the period, particularly evident in the early 1870s. 'Once the early settlers recovered from their initial shock at the uncouthness of our larrikin friend and became accustomed to his rollicking laughter, he quickly established himself as a "goody of the bush". One of the main reasons for this was his celebrated role as a snake catcher ... The colonists of the Victorian era were in dread fear of snakes, so the "Snake Destroyer" was given hero status ... His exploits were written into children's stories.' (*The Laughing Australian: A Celebration of Australia's Best-loved Symbol* [Melbourne: Nelson, 1982] pp. 23–25). The illustrations are a valuable source for the pictorial evolution of the kookaburra persona.

39 *The Australasian*, 3 January 1874, p. 18.

40 'Nation' in the context of the pantomime, and of the cricket game, meant to contempories not a remote and problematical federated Australia but the colony of Victoria — the only existing credible political entity and focus of local patriotism. 'Australia Felix' is Thomas Mitchell's name for the western district of Victoria. See the *Age's* report of the England-Victoria match (27 December 1873, p. 5) where 'nation' is used throughout to mean Victoria.

41 See *ADB* under 'Charles Edward Walch' and 'Garnet Walch'. The most recent account of Walch's life is Garrie Hutchinson, 'Panto Writer Lives in Footnotes,' *Age* 'Melbourne Living,' 4 March 1986, p. 3.

42 'Mr Garnet Walch, an Australian Dramatist,' *Table Talk*, 14 March 1890.

43 *The Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 5 November 1880, p. 3.

44 The *Age* of 12 May and 3 September 1873 give details of the Athenaeum soirées. The plot summary of *Her Evil Star* can be found in the *Argus*, 7 November 1881, p. 6.

45 His address as Secretary to the French Literary Club in October 1886 is reproduced in Gustave Le Roy, *Australia's Welfare* (Adelaide: Hussey & Gillingham, 1892), pp. 193–197.

46 *The Fireflash; Four Oars and a Coxswain: Where they Went — How They Went — and Why They Went: and the Stories They Told Last Christman Eve, By One of the Crew* (Sydney: Gibbs, Shallard, 1867). It was also published in Sydney by Gordon & Gotch and in Hobart by J. Walch & Son. A second edition in Melbourne by George Robertson in 1878 contains an 'Introduction' which recounts Walch's journalistic career in Parramatta.

47 'Introduction' to *The Fireflash* (1878), p. 6.

48 *The Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 8 April 1881, p. 3.

49 'Introduction to *The Fireflash* (1987), p. 7. Further fascinating material about the practice of regional journalism in the period can be found in Walch's story 'The Phantom Compositor,' which combines a gothic murder story with realistic details of the technical production of a small provincial newspaper, which appears to be the *Cumberland Times*. He describes his own functions thus:

> I had been editor and sole proprietor of the *Maizetown Times* for nearly six months. During that period I had done my utmost to increase both the circulation and popularity of the journal, by mixing freely amongst the inhabitants of the township, opening my columns to ardent though ungrammatical debaters on all sorts of subjects, and chronicling every item of news, how unreliable soever, that I could possibly lay hands upon.

(A. Patchett Martin, ed., *An Easter Omelette in Prose and Verse* [Melbourne: George Robertson, 1879], p. 4).

50 I am indebted to the descendants of Garnet Walch, David and Margaret Goss and family, for precise details of Walch's children. The first, second and fifth children, George Garnet, Charles James and

Ellen died in infancy; the surviving children were Kate Ada, Eliza, Clairellen, Albert Henry and Richmond Garnet. Their mother Ada Kate Walch died aged seventy on 13 July 1921, and is buried with Walch at Box Hill Cemetery, Melbourne; her part of the tombstone bears the telling inscription 'A life lived for others.'

51 For details of Walch's early theatre career see Veronica Kelly, 'Garnet Walch in Sydney,' *Australasian Drama Studies* (October 1986), pp. 93–109.

52 *The Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 19 November 1880, p. 3.

53 See Paul Richardson, 'Harlequin in the Antipodes,' *Southerly* 42, No. 2 (June 1982), pp. 212–220; and Kelly, 'Garnet Walch in Sydney'.

54 *The Era*, 26 January 1873, p. 11.

55 An illustration of Byron's play is reproduced as Plate 100 of Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, *Pantomime: A Story in Pictures* (London: Peter Davies, 1973).

56 *The Argus*, 5 March 1873. For Gilbert's soggily pathetic scene of the shooting of the fawn, Walch substituted a more mundane cat.

57 *The Argus*, 10 June 1905, p. 4.

58 *The Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 10 December 1880, p. 3.

59 *The Argus*, 22 May 1876.

60 R. P. Whitworth, 'The Hawker's Story,' in his *Under the Dray: A Collection of Australian Stories* (Melbourne: McPhail, [n.d.]); 'The Irishman's Story of a Ghost,' in his *Round the Camp Fire* (Melbourne: W.H. Williams, [n.d.]): Garnet Walch, 'The Phantom Compositor,' in A. Patchett Martin, ed., *An Easter Omelette in Prose and Verse* (Melbourne: George Robertson, 1879); 'Jim's Share' and 'The Legend of the Phantom Pumpist' in *Head Over Heels: A Christmas Book of Fun and Fancy* (Melbourne; Gordon & Gotch, 1874).

61 Public Records Office of Victoria, VPRS 762/163, Item 3508. The schedule shows that Walch became unable to pay his debts in February 1879, and that he had been borrowing large and small amounts.

62 Nellie Stewart, *My Life Story* (Sydney: J. Sands, [1923]), p. 39. A picture of Nellie in *Rainbow Revels* faces p. 40.

63 *The Leader*, 18 June 1892, p. 23.

64 *The Argus*, 3 June 1905, p. 5.

65 *The Argus*, 27 May 1905, p. 5.

66 *Table Talk*, 20 October 1885, p. 11.

67 *The Williamsons, being a Brief Account of the Career of Mr and Mrs Williamson. Together with Facts and Figures Relating to the Firm of Williamson, Garnet, and Musgrove* (Melbourne: William Marshall, 1885), p. 22. The *Table Talk* article of 14 March 1890 gives an

extravaganza *HMS Binnacle* as written by Walch for the Stewart family, played by them in India 1879–1880, but no production dates have been found for this. The Stewarts had played in *Pinafore* at St Georges Hall, Melbourne, in 1879. Performing such material out of the Australasian colonies would be a wise move, as from mid-1879 J.C. Williamson possessed the copyright to *HMS Pinafore* and was stern in suppressing rivals.

68 PROV, VPRS 762/163, Item 3508. For details of Clarke's misadventures as a topical burlesque writer see Veronica Kelly, 'The Banning of Marcus Clarke's *The Happy Land*: Stage, Press and Parliament,' *Australasian Drama Studies*, 2, No. 1 (October 1983), 71–111.

69 *The Argus*, 7 November 1881, p. 6.

70 *Australasian Sketcher*, 21 January 1882, p. 7.

71 *The Argus*, 14 July 1883, p. 16; 16 July 1883, p. 4.

72 *Table Talk*, 23 October 1885, p. 13.

73 *Table Talk* (4 March 1890) mentions a play *Blunders* which Walch wrote for Rickards sometime in 1885–1890, but no reliable performance dates have been found for this.

74 *Table Talk*, 31 December 1885, p. 14.

75 'Our Garnet', *Table Talk*, 12 November 1885, p. 10.

76 'Our Garnet in Reply,' *Table Talk*, 20 November 1885, p. 10.

77 H.W. Malloch, 'Garnet Walch, Versatile Founder of the Tasmanian Almanac,' *The Argus*, 25 November 1944. Walch was not the founder of the *Almanac*; his brother James was the Walch involved.

78 'A Morning Walk,' by 'Gnetra', *Melbourne Mirror*, 5 October 1888, p. 18. 'Had not I myself once held the deeds of a Northcote allotment for 14 days and, *without ever seeing the land*, achieved a profit of 130% in that brief period?'

79 See advertisement in the *Melbourne Mirror*, 12 October 1888, p. 35.

80 Richard Fotheringham's 'Introduction' to his edition of *Robbery Under Arms* (Sydney and St Lucia: Currency/*ADS* 1985) gives details of the Alexandra seasons, and of Walch's and Dampier's repertoire and fortunes as they battled for survival into the Great Depression.

81 *The Lorgnette* of 19 April 1890 (p. 6) reports this activity.

82 For further details of *The Scout* and *The Trapper* see Fotheringham, pp. xxxv–xxxvi; Eric Irvin, *Australian Melodrama: Eighty years of Popular Theatre* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1981), pp. 72–75; Margaret Williams, *Australia on the Popular Stage 1829–1929* (Melbourne: OUP, 1983), pp. 169–171.

83 *The Age*, 27 June 1892, p. 6.

84 *My Father and My Father's Friends* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1935), p. 46.

85 *The Argus*, 4 January 1913, p. 4.

THE TEXT OF *AUSTRALIA FELIX*

The text of the pantomime survives in the copies of the printed libretto published to accompany the performance like an opera libretto, or be sold as souvenirs. *Australia Felix* exists in two slightly differing versions, both printed by Azzoppardi, Hildreth and Co. of Melbourne in 1873. The copies consulted are in the La Trobe Library of the State Library of Victoria: items LTP 792.3 W14AU (hereafter SLV) and MCP 792.3 W14A from the Moir Collection (hereafter Moir); and in the Mitchell Library of New South Wales: item ML 782.9W, which is identical to SLV. These have been used to establish the text of this edition, supplemented by newspaper advertisements giving the harlequinade scene plot and cast. Moir is particularly interesting since it has pencilled notes done by the *Australasian* reviewer J.E. Neild, noting his impressions of parts of the performance and including a few rough sketches of scenery and costumes.

The main difference between these versions is the different placing of Boblo's second-act entrance and solo 'Artful Mo.' SLV places this as part of Act II, Scene iii, while Moir has it as a solo scene at the beginning of Act II, simply re-using an existing scene location from Act I. SLV thus has four scenes in the second act, and Moir five (see Note: II, i, for details). The second printing of the libretto, SLV, retains the 'Artful Mo' scene but places it later in Act II, which suggests that the material was relocated soon after the premiere and another printing of the libretto undertaken. Moir then is a first version, and for SLV the printers have gone to some trouble to cram the amended text into the same forty-five pages as the original.

The other difference is the alteration of one and a half lines of description of the blank 'Scene V' of the 'panorama' in I, i, altering the topic of the joke from L.L. and J.T. Smith to the embezzler O'Ferrall (see Note: I, i, 97-98). Otherwise the texts are identical, misprints and all, except for two transposed words at the end of lines 6-62 in II, iii; an ampersand substituted for 'and' as a space-saving device in the scene-heading of II, iii; and a redundant entrance for Boblo in the same scene caused by the introduction of the preceding block of the 'Artful Mo' text. SLV has 'Registered Under Victorian Copyright Act. All Rights Reserved' on the title page.

This edition follows the more economical scene order of SLV (closer attention to the theatrical questions raised by the placings of the 'Artful Mo' scene is given in the relevant notes). Spelling, punctuation and hyphenation have been silently amended where

necessary, while keeping as much as possible of the features of Walch's style, such as his use of dashes, which aid comprehension and give a sense of the energy of the lines. All stage directions are preserved and rendered in contemporary format; a few omitted speech headings are restored and some confused ones conjecturally re-established.

Descriptions of the non-verbal action of the 1873 performance are retained, such as the 'Grand Ballet d'Action Fantastique,' the cricketing marches and the transformation scene, as these explain the dramatic function of important elements of spectacle. The titles of the tunes for the various songs, where given, are printed in round brackets; sometimes Walch's words to these tunes are given in the libretti, and sometimes the bare direction '*Song*' is given without a tune being specified. The text thus suggests the *ad hoc* and changeable nature of pantomime performance, with musical numbers being decided or altered at the last moment and drastic alterations to scene order and text being made well after the first night, which was traditionally seen as a kind of full dress rehearsal. In fact Michael Booth claims that 'it is impossible to speak in any meaningful way of the relationship between performance and an established text in pantomime.'[1] As for the jokes, press advertisements regularly warn us of 'new locals nightly,' with author and actors both 'improving' and updating the show as it went along. Hence the stage directions, songs and topical references of this text can give a good but not precise idea of what any one performance of *Australia Felix* may have sounded like.

NOTE

1 *Victorian Spectacular Theatre 1850-1910* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 75.

AUSTRALIA FELIX;

OR

Harlequin Laughing Jackass

AND THE

MAGIC BAT,

AN ORIGINAL EXTRAVAGANZA

BY

GARNET WALCH,

Author of "Trookulentos," "True-Blue Beard," "Pygmalion and his Gal (a-dear)" &c., &c.,

Forming the opening to the

CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME

AT THE

OPERA HOUSE, MELBOURNE, 1873.

Melbourne:
PRINTED BY AZZOPPARDI, HILDRETH & CO.,
10, 12 & 14 POST-OFFICE PLACE.
1873.

AUSTRALIA FELIX.

First Performed at the Opera House, Melbourne, on Boxing Night, 26th December, 1873.

The Magnificent and Unequalled Scenic Representations
From the Master Pencil of

MR A. C. HABBE

The Gorgeous and Unparalleled Effects by the same celebrated Artist.

The Music arranged by ... ... Mr. ZEPLIN
Orchestra composed of Solo Players from the Italian Opera Band, under the direction of ... Mr. T. ZEPLIN
The Elaborate and Intricate Mechanical Effects by ... ... Mr. TOUZEL and Staff of Assistants
The New and Characteristic Dresses by Mr. FORD & Assistants
The Properties, Masks, Tricks, &c. by Mr. C. WARD & Assistants
The Gas ... under the direction of Mr. S. WAUD
The Coloured Fires ... ... by Mr. HAYGARTH
The Comic Scenes invented and arranged by Mr. G. LEOPOLD
The Ballet and Marches under the direction of Mr. H. LEOPOLD
The Dances, Trips, &c. ... ... by FRAULEIN FANNIE and the Messrs. LEOPOLD
Prompter ... ... Mr. HEAWOOD
The whole produced under the direction of the Author.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ:

MATERIAL.

Old Australia, an ancient Squatter of "Italian" extraction. N.B.—This is said with *Italian iron-y* ... Mr HOGAN
The Missus, his Helpmate - a strong-minded and seriously-disposed Lady ... ... Mr FORD
Felix Young Australia—their Son, who cuts his eye teeth and mamma's apron-strings early in life Miss JEANIE WINSTON
Victoria (an unsophisticated darling, whom you are certain to fall in love with at first sight Miss ALICE WOOLDRIDGE
Miss Collyns Treeter, the latest thing out—of a bandbox Miss WREN
The All England Eleven, their country's pride Masters W G. Gracekin, W R. Gilbertkin, F. H. Boultkin, H. Juppkin, R. Humphreykin, J. Southertonkin, J. Lillywhitekin, M. M'Intyrekin W. Oscroftkin and A. Greenwoodkin.
The Australian Eighteen, their country's hope Mesdames Allana, Bishops, Boylea, Campbella, Carra, Conways, Cossticka, Coopers, Coatesa, Gaggina, Goldsmitha, Gibsona, Hedleya, Kellya, Midwintera, M'Ganna, Robertsona, Wyndhama.

MINISTERIAL,

Boblo, a wily individual, fond of bad company and worse deeds ... ... Mr. H. DANIELS
The Lord Chamberlain, his first appearance on any stage Mr ROWLEY

ETHERIAL.

Mirth, a genius—"From the crown of his head to the sole of his foot he is all mirth! he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow string, and the Little Hangman dares not shoot at him—He hath a Heart as sound as a Bell, and his Tongue is the Clapper: for what his heart thinks his Tongue speaks." *Shakespeare* ... ... Miss LYDIA HOWARDE

Grog-Blossom, Mirth's Chief Attendant—a "page" of romance—always thirsty in fact, possessed of a *dry* humour peculiarly his own ... Mr. J. E KITTS

The Queen of Night ... ... FRAULEIN FANNIE

Early Morn ... ... Miss BLANCHE LEOPOLD

Apple Blossom, such a duck ... ... Miss COLSON

Rose Bloom, such another ... ... Miss LYNCH

Nimblefoot, Lightheels, Sweetface, Sanciper, Shapely, Nicey nicey, Pretty pretty, Stunna, Tootsy pootsy, A.1., Perfecta, Innocenta, Glorietta, Exquise ta Nunbetta, Sweetlips Nectarina, Truelove, Kissi-kissi Elves of the Willow Glen, by Misses Holmes, Crawford, E. Higgins, Leslie, S. Ford, C. Ford, H. Forde, Parker, Angus, Ward, Rollins, N. A. Higgins, Collins, Knight, Douglas, Royal, Smith, Johnson and Kennedy.

Mirth's Irresistibles and Amazons of the Magic Mirrors ... ... By the LADIES OF THE CORPS DE BALLET

ÆRIAL.

Wooroohoohoo, the Laughing Jackass, the "settler's clock" of olden days, and a clock that strikes a most unmistakable "settler" at the close of the piece. Mr G. P. CAREY.

Mosquito, a splendid specimen from Collingwood Flat Mr A. H. BELL

IMP-ERIAL.

Kantankeros, the Demon of Dulness—a most objectionable party, as will be demonstrated to the audience ... ... Mr C. LASCELLES

King Mischief, his ally—a monarch of unconstitutional tendencies ... ... Mr GEORGE LEOPOLD

Scoriax, the Demon's Head Torch bearer—one who holds a candle to the [redacted] ... ... Mr G. HODSON

Squintax, Asbestos, Vipax, Scorpios, Centipedos, familiars in the household of Kantankeros ... ...Messrs SULLIVAN, FITZGERALD, O'TOOLE, &c.

L.L., J.D.K.Z., Battle Axe, Old Tom, Sheoak, Vitriol, Strychnine, Blue Ruin—King Mischief's Guards—Messrs Toper, Guzzler, Swigger, Tippler, Soaker, Loafer, Sponger, and Bibber.

Simius the Millionth, King of the Apes, his first ape earance ... ...Master ALBERT LEOPOLD

Gibber, Chatter, Jabber, Splutter, Mouther, Squeaker, Squealer, Sneaker, Grinner, Gnawer, Tweaker—Monkeys. By the Celebrated Simian Troupe.

IMMATERIAL.

Fairies, Imps, Demons, Characters in the Great Cricket Scene, &c., by a Host of Auxiliaries.

TRANSFORMATION SCENE.

A DREAM OF JOY developing as follows:—

1. Grotto of Prismatic Crystals
2. The Lake of Loveliness
3. The Golden Gates of Learning
4. The Temple of Art, Music and Literature
5. The Silver Pavilion of Perfect Bliss
6. The Jewelled Columns of the Shah of Persia, and Naiad's Summer Houses
7. The Eastern Pagoda expanding into the Shrine of Beauty and Cataract of Diamonds

The whole Invented and Painted by Mr. A. C. HABBE.

ACT I

SCENE I — The Centre of Gravity, and Salamanders' Retreat (Habbe)

(CHORUS: *from 'Satanella'*)

IMPS: *Here amidst the flames that glow,*
The flames that glow,
Till the rocks together run,
Together run,
We queer imps glide to and fro,
Glide to and fro,
Salamanders ev'ry one,
Yes, ev'ry one.

SCO: Hush! for I hear the sound of rushing wings,
Now janitor please beat those gongs and things.

[*Thunder and lightning. Enter* KANTANKEROS.]

ALL: Our King! behold him!

KAN: That will do at present,
Give me a whine that's not so effervescent;

SCO: Real and not sham-pain.

KAN: Slave! the pun is stale,
What, ho! my edict on yon rock's side nail.

[IMPS *affix notice, 'Joking Strictly Prohibited,' to back of scene.*]

Who dares to disobey his King's behest,
Shall jesting die, by steel he can't digest.
[*Showing dagger*]
As this is Gravity's exact true centre,
'Leave Jokes behind all ye who here may enter'.

[*All groan.*]

There! that sounds pleasanter to me I own,
No half-sized grumble, that is one full groan;
I have a Hendersonian dread of revelry,
My predilection's earnest steady devilry;
The sound of laughter to mine ear is grating,
I hate it, and I'm pretty good at hating.

SCO: Where hast thou been today, sire?

KAN: Up in London.

SCO: Much business doing?

KAN: Business! next to none done,
Saw Gladstone, had a chat with Charley Dilke.
Then poisoned fifty cans of London milk;
Forged Orton-Tichborne twenty brand-new lies
And gave the price of coals a further rise;
Smashed two excursion trains to little bits,
And helped a bailiff who was serving writs;
Dined on wasps' honey, cheap and very filling,
And in a poor-box dropped a spurious shilling.

SCO: A list of deeds I heartily admire,

KAN: To greater far than those do I aspire,
To feats more startling.

[*Loud knock. All start spasmodically; then second knock.*]

Knocks! to-night. Who's there?

SCO: [*Looking off.*] A gent with pinkish eyes and whitish hair.

KAN: Hal-lo! that's Boblo; matchless tax-collector.
Who, up above, I've made my sub-inspector.

[*Enter* BOBLO *and* LORD CHAMBERLAIN.]

Boblo! you're welcome, upon that depend,
This visit's keyind, — but who's your ancient friend?

BOB: He's the Lord Chamberlain of Britain's isle,
Who, like yourself, is never seen to smile,
He strangles wit with Red Tape's deadly trammels,
He strains at gnatty things and swallows camels;
He shields the ministerial hide so tender,
From Satire's shafts he is our best defender.

KAN: H'm! doesn't seem particularly bright,

BOB: But *so* respectable —

KAN: Oh! quite so — quite!

BOB: For your advice we've both just popped downstairs,

KAN: Exactly — here you lazy rascals — chairs!

[IMPS *bring forward three chairs, the pattern of which is 'Death's Head and Cross-bones.' The* LORD CHAMBERLAIN *expresses terror.*]

BOB: [*Handling a chair*] That's a neat article — 'tis
I declare,
E'en better than the Canterbury Chair.

KAN: Yes, nice design — my own — be seated pray.

BOB: This, briefly put, is what we have to say —
In England we've succeeded in reversing
Much honest laughter to what's more like cursing,
The merry times of maritime John Bull,
We hope to mar-i-time; aye to the full;
Britannia's jollity we trust to settle,
Her sterling pluck change to Britannia mettle.
Daily this course we have persisted in till late,
Smashing Wit's diamonds wheresoe'er they scintillate,
Grinding Life's facets, when facet-ious, down,
And blurring Fancy's prisms with Fact's dull brown.

KAN: You have worked well, and as your just reward
I'll give whate'er a demon can afford.

BOB: We ask no guerdon for the work we love,
Besides we're paid by trusting fools above;
We dupe e'en lawyers to our satisfaction,

KAN: A very pretty style of dupe-lex action.

BOB: As for myself I wish t' enlarge my sphere,
And in *Australia* 'do' as I've 'done' here.

KAN: I'm glad to hear it — do you know your way?

BOB: Rather! I've been out there before today!
I hate Australians of all men on earth.

KAN: I hate them also — they're too fond of mirth,
And Mirth's my greatest rival as you know.

BOB: Then come with me!

KAN: Agreed — it shall be so.
Your friend shall act as regent in our place,
Why, he's asleep!

BOB: That's usually the case,
I'll wake him.

KAN: Do not — let us test the themes,
That form the staple of his senile dreams.
I'll give them local colours while they're growing,
Appropriate to the place to which we're going.

[*Makes several passes over* CHAMBERLAIN*'s face and then points to back of scene, which opens and discloses:*]

THE GREAT LOCAL PANORAMA

Painted on — 000,000 feet of canvas.

PANORAMA — (*Music*)

SCENE I

KAN: Dream number one!

BOB: Is that some horrid spectre?

KAN: No! that's a Wimmera Free Land Selector.

BOB: You mean a dummy! oh! please change that dream,
For certain friends of mine don't like the theme.

SCENE II

KAN: A rod! for those who break scholastic rules,
But that's not used now in Australian schools.

SCENE III

BOB: What's this so out of proper perpendicular?

KAN: A Melbourne Bridge.

BOB: Well, Melbourne's not particular.

SCENE IV

Now, an *al fresco* scene this one appears:

KAN: Vice-regal lodgings for the next two years.

SCENE V — A BLANK

KAN: [*Without looking*] A portrait of O'Ferrall.

BOB: Why, where is it?

KAN: Oh, I forgot — he's gone upon a *visit*.

SCENE VI

KAN: Oh! this won't do — that's a *good-humoured* face.

BOB: The lion of the day — bold Captain Grace!
He's in Australia, with his chosen team.

KAN: The subject galls me. [*to* LORD CHAMBERLAIN]
Stop! no longer dream!

KAN: [*Looking at* CHAMBERLAIN] — And still he
wakes not —

BOB: Excellent old creature
His drowsiness is his most charming feature
These are the colleagues worthy of their hire
Who never want to set the Thames on fire.

KAN: Or if they did would calmly first insure it,
Bewail the evil, but let others cure it.
Bestir, ye knaves — no longer idly crouch —
Remove this mortal to his earthly couch.

[IMPS *bear off* LORD CHAMBERLAIN.]

Come Boblo, come, Australia waits below —
You take the O.P. trap, by this I'll go.

[*Dance of* IMPS. BOBLO *and* KANTANKEROS *sink through stage.*]

SCENE II — The Willow Glen by Moonlight (Habbe)

(OPENING CHORUS: *'Spring, Gentle Spring'*)

Sing, sing, sisters, sing,
Fairest fairies of the vale
Hither haste and with ye bring
All the elves who haunt the dale;
Hand in hand with jocund lay
Keep our moonlit holiday;
All the sweetest flowers of earth,
All the gems so pure and bright,
Strew across the path of Mirth
As he enters here tonight.

GRAND BALLET D'ACTION FANTASTIQUE

Arranged by Mr Leopold, and executed by Fraulein Fannie, Miss Blanche Leopold, and the Opera Corps de Ballet.

[*Enter* MIRTH *attended by* APPLE BLOSSOM *and* ROSEBLOOM.]

(SONG: *'One Gentle Heart'*)

MIR: *My gentle art,*
Will I believe,
Cause you to smile,
Never to grieve;
Passion and Vice
May weave a thrall,
Mirth hath pure charms
Dearer than all.

Upon a pretty state of things we'll soon light,
Now Mirth can only hold his court in moonlight,
By daytime I am banished from the land
Where once — or day or night — I had command;
Forced with King Mischief too to make alliance,
To set my many foes here at defiance;
That partnership I'll end, when next we meet,
I'll owe no victories to his rank deceit.
Here comes my faithful squire, my bold Grog Blossom.
Forty-five stone, and agile as a 'possum.

[*Enter* GROG BLOSSOM.]

Well, Groggy, what's the news?

G.B.: Your Royal Highness,
Imprimis — first — I'm suffering from dryness,
[*Produces flask and drinks.*]
Moonbeams are worse than dust to choke and smother.
[*To himself*] Thanks, yes, I don't mind if
I take another, [*Drinks.*]
[*Touching nose*] I always moisten this before I speak.

MIR: There's no Permissive Bill about that beak.
Come, come, the news?

G.B: King Mischief's on my track.

MIR: What in the name of mischief brings him back?

[*Enter* KING MISCHIEF, *attended by familiars,* L.L., J.D.K.Z., *&c.*]

K.M: I'll answer that myself — say, is it true
That you would break the bond between us two?
The bond that hitherto has held so nicely
'Twixt Mirth and Mischief?

MIR: That's my wish.

G.B: Precisely.

MIR: Mirth without Mischief for the future reigns.

K.M: You'll get more kicks than ha'pence for your pains,
Why the idea's absurd.

MIR: Or right or wrong
I mean to try it.

K.M: Bunkum! Go along.

MIR: My mind's made up, I'm fully now resolved.
Our partnership, King Mischief, is dissolved;
Like Harrisonian ice on board the Norfolk,
It melts away — I've done with you and your folk.

[*Exit* MIRTH *with* GROG BLOSSOM.]

K.M: He throws me overboard like doubtful meat.
Well! I was over bored with him. [*To audience*]
That's neat.
[*Suddenly*] Ter-raitor, turncoat and a few etceteras
Is't thus you go for to desert your betterers?
With rage I burn, I boil, I fry, I stifle,
I'd pound you to a jelly — for a trifle.
Oh, that the w-r-r-retch a thousand 'lives' had got,
At Devil's Pool I'd make him lose the lot.
Stay — [*Quietly*] — happy thought — I'll neither
beat nor cuff you,
I'll worry you to fits, you stupid muff you,
I'll make your life as sour as tartest cider,
Till you're as thin as Sefton's Dancing Spider.
See I am kyalm — kyalm as a leetle child,
And yet within! how awfully I'm riled.

(SONG: '*I am so Volatile*')

I'm in just such a rage,
As went the Government rounds,
When O'Ferrall left the stage,
With twenty thousand pounds.
Or like a certain swell,
Attorney-Gen'ral styled.
When Mount and Morris slipped through his hands,
And left him awf'lly riled.
Yes, I am awf'lly riled, I am so awf'lly riled,
I never before have felt so sore,
I am so awf'lly riled.

CHO: *He is so awf'lly riled, He is so awf'lly riled,*
He never before has felt so sore,
He is so awf'lly riled.

K.M: *I try to keep alright,*
But I do feel terribly bad,
If Doctor Hadden were here tonight
He'd swear that I was mad;
Yes, as mad as New South Wales,
Which grew extremely wild
When Francis and Co. caught the P. and O.
And Parkes was awf'lly riled.

[*Enter* TELEGRAPH MESSENGER. *Gives large message.*]

A telegram, let's see, aha, in cypher writ,
[*Puzzled*] The key — dear me — in vain I fear I try for it.
[*Attendant whispers in his ear.*]
Thanks, now here goes — Yes, no, yes, A.B.C.
[*Slowly deciphers the following.*]
'Melbourne, Australia, one twelve seventy-three,
Kantankeros and Boblo jointly greet
The great King Mischief' — 'pon my word that's neat.
'Will he accept a first-rate star engagement?'
Of course I will — I feel I'm for the stage meant,
'The Op'ra House at Christmas. We both play,
Success is certain, POSTSCRIPT — So's the pay.'
[*Sings*]

Think well, think well, I'm a star,
I am sent for from afar,
I'm the magnet to attract,
I'll show Melbourne how to act.

[*Re-enter* MIRTH *with* GROG BLOSSOM *and attendants.*]

MIR: Go, go by all means, I'll bet my regalia
They know too much for you in free Australia;
They're fond of *me*, of honest hearty Mirth,
But as for Mischief —

K.M: They shall learn my worth.

MIR: Not if my arm can save them.

K.M: Save them! how?

MIR: I'll go out too.

G.B: Phew! won't there be a row,
It makes one thirsty at the bare idea.

K.M: One against three; you're cracked, that's pretty clear,
What force you stupid can you match with ours?

MIR: You quite forget that I've some magic powers,
See! from yon trees, the willows of the glen,
Whose wood has always been of help to men,
With hocus, pocus, pheliax, so pat,

[*Bat descends.*]

I draw —

G.B: [*Stepping forward eagerly*] — a bottle!

MIR: No! a cricket bat.

K.M: Me with your willows don't you try to hoax,
Nor cheat me with this sorriest of jokes —
A common cricket bat, and made of wood.

G.B: [*To* KING MISCHIEF] — Yes, like your head —

MIR: But *here* the stuff is good.
This is no common bat as you will learn
In far Australia ere you thence return.
It shall work wonders there, or I'm no prophet,
Although you *now* may think so little of it.
This is the symbol of the manliest game

To which I've ever lent my royal name,
Type of true British sport, without alloy,
Where you, friend Mischief, are *de trop,* old boy,
No swindling blacklegs soil the turf I prize,
Them and their filthy lucre I despise;
The cricket field's the modern tournament.

G.B: And Paradise is the Refreshment Tent.

K.M: You certainly can 'pitch it' to perfection
But keep that till the general election,
As for your bat, pray do not come without it,
Then like your speech — if needful you can 'spout' it.

(DUET: '*Ten Thousand Miles Away*')

MIR: *I'll start at once for that distant clime,*
No matter what you say;
And I'll be there in double-quick time,
Ten thousand miles away.

ENSEMBLE: *Oh, though the winds may blow,*
And the forkéd lightnings play,
We'll be out there in double-quick time,
Ten thousand miles away.

(CHORUS: '*Carry the News*')

MIS: *I'll hire a mansion at Toorak,*

MIR: *We'll all surround you,*

MIS: *To rack and ruin you may pack,*

MIR: *We'll all surround you;*

MIS: *You'd better take care what you say,*

MIR: *We'll all surround you;*

MIS: *Just wait till we reach Hobson's Bay,*

CHO: *We'll all surround you.*
Carry the news, carry the news to Melbourne,
Carry the news, we'll all surround you.

[*Repeat and Dance. Tableau. Scene closes in.*]

SCENE III — A Cockatoo Squatter's Mansion in the Bungaree Forest (Habbe)

[*Enter* MISCHIEF, BOBLO, *and* KANTANKEROS.]

KAN: Brothers well met: dismiss all manner eerie hence.
And tell me your colonial experience.

MIS: I've been a special plague to J.G. Francis,
I've twirled his wits in certain fiendish dances,
Of coming storms I've made him hear the thunder,
Of what he'll undergo and then go under.
Then hied I to the couch where Langton snored,
While balmy sleep his weary brain restored,
From 'tightness of the chest' I made him suffer,
While £.S.D-mons gibed him as a duffer;
Such damnèd Treasury-minutes while he counted,
To Stephen's chamber on swift wings I mounted,
With slaughtered bills and broken laws attacked him,
Until a bilious fever fairly racked him;
Ere he rekervered in *re* Kerferd sped I,
And for him now, a pill I'm getting ready.

BOB: Gillies I teased with traffic on the brain,
Through which I ran a special spectral train,
Crammed full of imps who cried out 'sleep no longer,'
But come and dance with us at far Wodonga.
Then on to him, two-thirds of K.C.B.,
Who rules the roost where 'Land for Sale' you see,
Permissive Casey, him I gave no quarter,
I soaked him to the chin in rum and water.
To Cohen's next you would have found me Cohen,
I worried him with duties that are owin'.
Next for a fight I tackled to A. Fray-ser,
And left him spluttering like a little geyser.

KAN: My time since first our fairy ships cast anchor,
Has been employed in fost'ring party rancour,
For free-trade orators and those protective,
I've written speeches stuffed with coarse invective,
Each candidate will thus regard the other
With candid hate that nothing e'er can smother.

MIS: Why are we summoned here?

KAN: To aid the plot.

Dost well observe yon humble little cot?
In that dwells young Australia, [*Both start.*]
we must lure him,
By all means in our power we must secure him.
Our rival Mirth from harm the lad would shield,

MIS: He'll find that hard with foes like us afield.

BOB: Hush, stand aside or else our project fails,
The word is —

MIS: [*In a whisper*] 'Shout!'

BOB: The countersign?

MIS: 'Two ales!'

[*Enter* VICTORIA *reading.*]

VIC: 'The course of true love never did run smooth,'
No comfort there my flutt'ring heart to soothe,
Shakespeare, your language is as cold as ice,sir,
My own day-dreams are infinitely nicer.

(SONG: '*L'Estasi*')

Oh, vision estatic,
Oh, sweetest reflection,
I'd live in an attic
'Neath Cupid's protection.

With Felix beside me
To love, guard, and guide me,
Naught ill could betide me,
So happy I'd be.
Oh, beloved one
Do not tarry,
But your true love
Haste to marry.
Yes — I wait, dear,
For a mate, dear.

Come and take me to your heart
Oh, come, oh, come, oh, come again
To be my own,
With me, with me, with me remain,
With me alone,

For ah, with love my soul doth overflow,
For thee, for thee — no other love I know.

[*Exit* VICTORIA. *Voices of* OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS *heard in the hut.*]

OLD A: [*Within*] I say it was.

THE M: [*Within*] It wasn't.

OLD A: [*Entering*] Hould your whisht,
Or I'll —

THE M: [*Entering*] Or you'll do what?

OLD A: D'ye see that fisht?

THE M: I say 'twas Casey's Land Bill —

OLD A: I know betther,
Sure haven't I Sir Gavan Duffy's letther?
In which he says for those that should require land,
He'd frame an Act in honor of old Ireland,
That glorious country, pleasant, green, and turfy,
To feel whose sod once more I'd turn a 'murphy.'

THE M: Ireland again, you harp upon its fame.

OLD A: An Irish harper, ma'am, I like the name,
Sure I'm descended from the great O'Connor,
I'm Ireland's son and jealous of her honor.

THE M: Ireland's a title that has won renown,
Both at the bar and on the stage in town.

OLD A: That's thrue for you, widout a word of stuffing,
'Twas Ireland got me off that cattle duffing.

THE M: But for his eloquence —

OLD A: Sure he knows how,

THE M: It's Pentridge broth you might be supping now;

OLD A: Instead of being, on this same occasion,
A squatter — of the Cockatoo persuasion.

THE M: The other Ireland — rumor speaks aloud of him,
A real *Colonial* star, and so we're proud of him.

[VICTORIA *sings without.*]

OLD A: Ah! here's the child — today's her birthday too,

VIC: [*Entering and kissing*] Morning Mamma! — and
there is one for you
You dear old Daddy —

THE M: Don't be forward, Miss,

VIC: What! can't I give my own dadda a kiss?

THE M: [*Tragically*] He's — not — your — father.

VIC: [*Laughing*] That sounds tragic — very.

THE M: At my expense, Miss, don't be making merry.

OLD A: Hould on old gal — I'll break it to her mild.
[*To* VICTORIA] You're not your father's, or your
mother's child!
The fact is, dear, I found you when a baby
In the lone bush, some ten miles hence it may be.

THE M: Yes, and I've *found* you ever since, Miss Pert,
Taught you to iron a meal and cook a shirt!

VIC: [*To* OLD AUSTRALIA] Oh! tell me more please
of my early history,
Whose daughter am I?

OLD A: Faix, that same's the mystery.
I found you 'neath a gum-tree, safe and snug
Rolled in a bit of half-worn 'possum rug,
A note lay on your breast — I took an' read it,
'Adopt her,' said the note, 'she'll do you credit.'

THE M: A lot of *credit* we have found in store through her,
There's not a storekeeper trusts us the more
through her.

VIC: [*Aside*] Felix is not my brother; [*Suddenly*]
am I pretty?

THE M: No, not a bit.

OLD A: That's neither thrue nor witty.
Yes, yes, my dear, you are, my precious stone,
[*To* THE MISSUS] Come out of that and leave the
girl alone.

[*Exeunt* OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS *into hut.*]

VIC: So I'm good looking, and I'm *not* his sister.

[*Enter* MIRTH.]

MIR: So you *may* be his missus — he your mister,
Don't be alarmed — *my* influence overshedding,
I'll help all matters to a merry wedding.

VIC: Then I may love him still?

MIR: Yes, more than ever.

VIC: And will he love me too?

MIR: If you are clever,
He'll love you more than Melbourne belles love dress,
Aye, even more than Bagot loves the Press!
Give him this bat — and, mark me, what will follow,
With it he'll beat all neighb'ring batsmen hollow;
His fame will travel — he'll be called to town,
Where he will win a champión's great renown,
Grateful for this, he'll make you, dear, his bride;
A 'cricket on the hearth' *I* will provide,
Now, *au revoir*; you'll see me soon again.

[*Exit* MIRTH.]

VIC: You're my good Genius, that is very plain.

FEL: [*Without*] Cooee-e-e!

VIC: Cooee-e-e!

FEL: Cooee!

VIC: Cooee!
That's Felix, who my Felix is to be,
I think I'll hide.

[*Conceals herself. Enter* FELIX.]

FEL: Hallo! what, no one here,
I heard a cooee — this is *coo-ee-ere!**

[*Enter* OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS *from hut.*]

Aha! my parients. [*To* OLD AUSTRALIA] Well, my
ancient fogy.

THE M: How playful is the sweet young roguey poguey.

**The author will be happy to present a handsome silver Scotch mull to any person who does not see this joke.*

FEL: I say, old girl, is breakfast nearly ready?
I tried to kill a joey with my neddy,
An edifying fact I merely mention,
As earning my own tucker's my intention;
When I say neddy, waddy is the word,
But what d'ye think — I missed the brute — absurd.
Well, missing 'steamer', as do sometimes passengers,
What other grub have we?

OLD A: [*Goes to door of hut and brings in a string of sausages.*]
Me boy, there's sassengers.

FEL: Oh, bother sausages, my sauce age I
And salad days have passed, so now I sigh
For kickshaws, curries, *patés de foies gras,*
Moët to follow, and a nice cigar,
That for your sausages!

[*Takes them from* OLD AUSTRALIA *and throws them down.*]

They'll feed my pet,
Here Wooroohoohoo! you'll like these I'll bet.

[*Laugh heard without. Music.* LAUGHING JACKASS *hops on, picks up sausages, exit and laugh.*]

OLD A: Till next the saveloy man comes in view,
Life's pleasures 'ave alloy.

FEL: That's one to you.

THE M: Ungrateful boy, your mother's tears behold.

OLD A: Duty and breakfast lost, we're doubly sold.

[*Exeunt* OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS *into hut.*]

(*SONG:* FELIX)

[*Enter* VICTORIA *with bat.*]

FEL: Viccy, you here, and what on earth is that?

VIC: A present for your future — 'tis a bat!

FEL: A bat, oh, bother! what's a bat to me?

[*Enter* MIRTH.]

MIR: Take it and use it, then Sir you shall see.

(SONG: '*Take it Bob*')

MIR: *Take the bat, take the bat,*
Take it and see,

VIC: *Take the bat, take the bat,*
Take it from me.

FEL: *Take the bat, take the bat,*
What's it to me.

(TRIO: *from 'Barber of Seville'*)

MIR: *Follow me, my young Apollo,*

FEL: *Quickly — quickly — I will follow;*

VIC: *You will beat all batsmen hollow!*

MIR: *Even mighty Captain Grace.*

ALL: *(I/You) will beat all batsmen hollow.*
Even mighty Captain Grace.
Follow! Follow!
(I/You) will beat all batsmen hollow.
Even mighty Captain Grace.

[*Enter* KING MISCHIEF.]

K.M: The Magic Bat — Ha! ha! that's move the first;
But Mirth, I challenge you to do your worst,
Against your bat with neither legs nor wings,
I'll pit an insect that has both — and stings.

[*Makes some passes in the air and exit. Enter* MOSQUITO *from above.*]

(SONG: '*Sally darning stockings*')

MOS: *Oh! I'm the fly that flies by night.*
When simple folk are loudly snoring,
Though oft by day I take my flight,
In Mischief's cause my way exploring.
For oh! I'm fond of naughty tricks,
In every sort and kind I share,

From scandal up to politics,
Mosquito is all there.
Oh! my! what nectar do I often sip;
My eye, from the fairest of the fair?
Dear me! I've tasted of each rosy lip,
I'm sly, and oh! so gentle, that they never
know I'm there.

I buzz about the Melbourne Clubs,
The latest scandal overhearing,
And then at all the lowly pubs,
I whisper it to those who're 'beering.'
And oh, when dice and cards are out,
I irritate and make men swear,
Then if a fight should come about
Mosquito is all there.
Oh, my, what set-tos do I often see
My eye! beneath the gaslight's glare,
Dear me, when swells go on the spree
I'm sly and oh, so gentle — that they never
know I'm there.

[*Dance and exit.*]

SCENE IV — Boxing Day, 1873. The M.C.C. Ground

March of Juvenile Cricketers *to represent All-England Eleven.*
(AIR: '*Red, White and Blue*')

Followed by Ladies of the Ballet, *as Australia's Champion Team*
(AIR: Signor Zelman's *'Hail, Australia'*)

Cricketing Song — (AIR: *'Gensd'armes' Duet'*)

[*Two* BATSMEN *step forward:*]

BATS 1: *We two are batsmen, bold, yet wary,*
BATS 2: *For of our stumps we take good care;*
BATS 1: *At slogging you'll find we're not chary;*
BATS 2: *Of running we can do our share.*
BATS 1: *We drive, we cut, to square-leg send 'em,*

BATS 2: *And swell the score midst many a cheer.*
TOGETHER: *We run it out, we run it out,*
And prove we're slap-up cricketers.

[*Two* BOWLERS:]

BOWL 1: *We are two bowlers, swift and curly,*
BOWL 2: *In batsmen we put wholesome fear;*
BOWL 1: *You'll find us off the spot but rarely,*
BOWL 2: *If loose you play, you'll soon pay dear.*
BOWL 1: *Your middle stump you'll see go flying,*
BOWL 2: *And Grace-ful you will not appear.*
TOGETHER: *We bowl 'em out, we bowl 'em out,*
And prove we're slap-up cricketers.

[*Two* FIELDSMEN:]

FIELDS 1: *We are two fielders, quick and watchful,*
FIELDS 2: *With hands alert and eyes kept clear.*
FIELDS 1: *Should you but chance to snick a bailer*
FIELDS 2: *We'll have you in the slips, no fear!*
FIELDS 1: *At leg, mid-wicket, point, or cover,*
FIELDS 2: *No ball can pass if we are near —*
TOGETHER: *We catch 'em out, we catch 'em out,*
And prove we're slap-up cricketers.

[*Enter* GROG BLOSSOM.]

G.B: This is a glorious country, this Australia,
They serve out ardent spirits by the pail, here;
And as for beer — of which I do my part —
Carlton, especially, has touched my heart.

[*Pats his stomach. Enter* KING MISCHIEF, *disguised as a magsman.*]

K.M: [*Aside*] More likely touched your liver, I should think.
[*To* G.B.] So you like Melbourne — Come and have a drink!

G.B: I don't mind if I do. Are you from home?

K.M: Yes, lad! like you, I crossed the salt sea-foam.

G.B: I come from London — have you ever been there?

K.M: The little village, matey? I've been *seen* there!

[*Exeunt* KING MISCHIEF *and* GROG BLOSSOM, *shaking hands heartily. Enter* KANTANKEROS *and* BOBLO, *the latter with Under-and-over board. Both disguised.*]

KAN: [*Pointing off*] That's *one* disposed of, by friend Mischief's aid,
And of the rest I don't think we're afraid.
Art ready, Boblo? hast thy part rehearsed?

BOB: [*Natural voice*] Hear me, good master! In it I'm well versed.
[*Sets board and changes voice.*]
'Pop it on, gents, and make your little game!
The old man's always square — yes, always just the same!
The child can play with the father, and the father can play with the child,
The winner is bound to win, and —

KAN: Here's some one — draw it mild!

[MOSQUITO *crosses, and whispers 'Kabat.' A well-known* POLICE INSPECTOR *crosses.* BOBLO *and* KANTANKEROS *appear innocent and unconcerned.*]

BOB: Kabat it was — it was, so help me never!

KAN: If mortal bobbies catch me they'll be clever —
Here comes our pigeon with his priggish mentor.
Stand we aside, until our cue to enter.

[*Exeunt* KANTANKEROS *and* BOBLO. *Enter* MIRTH *and* FELIX *arm-in-arm.*]

FEL: Life *is* like Life, I say, down here, in Melbourne.

MIR: Felix, with shame your youthful cheek might well burn;
You're far too fond of Clicquot's bubbles B.D.

FEL: Yes, that and P.B. leave a fellow C.D.
On good authority I've heard it stated
That dissipation makes one dizzy pated.

(DUET)

MIR: *When you roam in Mirth's dominions*
You must know how to behave —
Soaring light on Pleasure's pinions,
And ne'er be Passion's slave.
And oh! remember this, boy,
Or else some day you'll rue —
There's danger in a kiss, boy,
Unless that kiss be true.

FEL: *Ah! I'd stay in your dominions*
All my lifelong, if I could;
And I'd soar on Pleasure's pinions
If Pleasure be so good.
And I'll remember this, too,
[*Aside*] *At least, while you're in view,*
That there's danger in a kiss, too,
Unless that kiss be true.

MIR: Well, I must leave you — take care how you play,
And, for Victoria's sake, win here today.

[*Exit* MIRTH.]

FEL: Yes, if I win, I'll owe it all to Viccy,
But, 'pon my word, this bird's uncommon dicky.

KAN: [*Entering unobserved*] — Ha! ha! Ho! ho!
and equally, He, he!
Now for my plan. [*Stumbles against* FELIX.] What!
it can never be!
Not young Australia — How dy'e do old man?

FEL: I don't remember — Sir, you've the advan-

KAN: -tage of you? — not a bit, my lad,
My father's brother to your dear old dad.
Here comes a lady friend, a famous belle,
I'll put some 'side' on for you — just as well.

[*Enter* MISS COLLYNS TREETER.]

Miss Collyns Treeter, ah! my cousin Felix!
[*To* FELIX] — Talk of your talk abouts! there's none but she licks.

(SONG: '*Work Boys, Work*')

[*To* MISS COLLYNS TREETER]

He has money, he has rank,
He's director of a bank;
He's an M.L.A. and alderman as well,
He has stations not a few,
Of cattle, thousands too,
A pawn-shop and a very snug hotel.
He has a lot of Hustler's shares,
But for them he hardly cares,
For he wants some one with whom to share his life;
He owns ninety miles of rail,
He has fleets in which to sail,
And the only thing has hasn't got's a wife.

(AIR: '*Polka*')

MISS C.T: *He has cash in the bank! That's the sort for me, then;*
For the hint, take my thanks; let us both agree, then.
You and I will combine — pluck him — fleece him — skin him.
He'll be mine — he'll be thine — We are bound to win him.

[FELIX *and* MISS COLLYNS TREETER *waltz off.* KANTANKEROS *strikes triumphant attitude and retires to back.*]

KAN: [*Looking off*] — Aha!

[*Enter* VICTORIA.]

VIC: Not here, Oh! Viccy, he's deceiving you;
Felix, I fear that there is no believing you,
I've got my new dress on too, so vexatious,
For, as 'Mrs 'Arris' said I looked 'splendacious.'

(SONG: '*That Rogue Reilly*')

Here's a boy that I've followed everywhere,
And his little sweetheart he called me slily,
But now he's not acting upon the square,
I declare he's treating me vilely.
In every street, I hoped we'd meet,

And here in vain each path I try;
Ah me! how tired are my poor feet.
I feel inclined to have a cry.
Oh, you know that I've followed you everywhere,
And your little sweetheart you used to style me;
But now you're not acting upon the square,
You certainly will rile me.
You certainly will rile me.

[*Enter* OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS, *in holiday attire.*]

OLD A: It *is* our Viccy.

THE M: Oh you saucy jade,
Where's our sweet boy whom you've decoyed, betrayed?

OLD A: Ah, hould yer whisht.

THE M: It is my wish to find him.

OLD A: Well, here's his lass!

VIC: Alas! who's left behind him.

OLD A: Och, wirasthrue — he's sailed some furrin vessel in,
For by the powers the boy has been embezzlin'.

VIC: Nay, he has stolen naught save my poor heart.
I loved him better — than [*At a loss for a simile*] mince pies or tart.
Better than swells love bitter-beer so pale,
Better than Longmore loves the gentle Vale;
Better than Rupert loved the fatal Loreley,
Better than even Carrick loves his Morley;
Better than Beaney loves a good dissection,
Or forty-twoster's did a free selection.

OLD A: To lose him thus is sure a great disaster.

VIC: There's Wooroohoohoo! let him track his master.

[*Music. Enter* LAUGHING JACKASS; *he tracks round, and finally stops, pointing in the direction in which* FELIX *went.*]

Good bird! So *that's* the way.

KAN: [*Stepping forward*] Ahem! Excuse me,

The antics of that curious bird amuse me;
But if you're looking for a fine young gent,
Tall, with light hair — why *that's* the way he went.

[KANTANKEROS *points in the wrong direction.* LAUGHING JACKASS *tries to persuade the* OLD PEOPLE *and* VICTORIA *to follow* FELIX, KANTANKEROS *interferes* — OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS *go off* — VICTORIA *is following, when she is caught back by* KANTANKEROS, *who endeavours to steal a kiss* — LAUGHING JACKASS, *who is at the other side, rushes back, pecks* KANTANKEROS *and exits after* VICTORIA *with a loud laugh. While* KANTANKEROS *is engaged in repairing damages, enter* KING MISCHIEF *with dog-collar.*]

K.M: Has e'er a gent here seen a little dog?
[*Recognising* KANTANKEROS]
— What pardner! — Buttons is well plied with grog.
He's tight as beans —

KAN: [*sulkily*] I've heard of Titus Oates,
But Titus Beans no history gives;

K.M: Try Grotes'.
Where's Boblo?

BOB: [*entering*] — 'Ere ye are my pair of beauties
Ready for action.

KAN: To your several duties.

(MUSIC: *as in Fair Scene of 'Martha'.*)

[*Various characters come on, viz:* NEW CHUM, LUCKY DIGGER, MAN ABOUT TOWN, CHINAMAN, FRENCHMAN, GERMAN, APPLE *and* CIGAR SELLERS, 'ICE CREAMS!' *&c., &c.,* THREE-CARD-MEN, DOODLE'EM BUCK, *&c. As music ceases,* BOBLO *is at Under-and-Over table, and* KING MISCHIEF *is mounted on a cask, with purse and half-crowns;* KANTANKEROS *as bonnet.*]

K.M. Four, and that's five half-crowns, all in the purse,
Who'll take the lot?

BOB: Well, this is worse and worse;
The old man's losing.

K.M: You, Sir, don't you show it.

[KANTANKEROS *takes purse and expresses great delight. He stakes at* BOBLO*'s table.*]

BOB: If I ain't well-night skinned! here, I say, blow it.

[FELIX *has entered with* MISS COLLYNS TREETER *and is looking on.*]

KAN: I've won again, that's just because I'd pluck.
Hallo! my Felix. Going to try your luck?

[FELIX *gives* MISS COLLYNS TREETER *money — she goes to where* KING MISCHIEF *is, while* FELIX *proceeds to stake at* BOBLO*'s table.*]

K.M: Five pounds for one! — who says! — now
here you go!
You, Miss?

[MISS COLLYNS TREETER *takes the purse, and expresses disgust.*]

FEL: Confound it!

KAN: [*To* FELIX] Better luck next throw.

[MISS COLLYNS TREETER *goes to* FELIX, *gets more money and returns.*]

K.M: Ten pounds to five, — that's going it, by thunder.
You, Miss, again?

[MISS COLLYNS TREETER *takes purse again.*]

FEL: That's over!

BOB: [*Lifting dice-box*] No, dear! under!

KAN: Well, that is curious! but you're bound to win.

FEL: [*After giving* MISS COLLYNS TREETER *more money*]
Here's my last fiver!

K.M: Now then, gents, wire in!
Who wins this lot, by Jove, will be in clover!

FEL: 'Under', I back.

BOB: It's over!

FEL: Over!

VOICE FROM CRICKET GROUND: 'Over!'

[MISS COLLYNS TREETER *appeals to* FELIX *for more money, — he makes signs expressive of a state of bankruptcy.*]

BOB: What! no more money? S'help me! he's dead broke.

K.M: I'll lend the bloke a quid!

BOB: Sorry I spoke.

K.M: Here, my young covey, just you collar that —
And, for security, I'll take — your bat!

[*Takes Bat from* FELIX, *who is quite bewildered.* KING MISCHIEF *comes down.* FELIX *goes to table again and stakes.*]

KAN: [*To* FELIX] Take my advice, and back the *under*, now.

[KANTANKEROS *comes down and meets* MISCHIEF.]

K.M: Hurrah! the magic Bat!

KAN: Hush, make no row.

BOB: [*To* FELIX, *after glancing knowingly at confederates*]
Well, where d'ye put it 'fore I lift the cover?

FEL: [*Looks at* KANTANKEROS, *who nods*] on — under!

BOB: [*Lifting the box*] S'help me — over.

FEL: [*Aghast*] Over!

VOICE FROM CRICKET FIELD: Over!

[*Enter* CRICKETER.]

CRICK: Your innings next — the game depends upon it.
Come, change your hat —

[*Exit* CRICKETER *with* FELIX.]

MISS C.T: He'll lose, I'll bet a bonnet.

K.M: You're right, my dear, let's go and have some sherry.

[*Exeunt* KING MISCHIEF *and* MISS COLLYNS TREETER *arm in arm.*]

KAN: But one more move — then Mirth, you won't be merry.

[*During above scene* MOSQUITO *has occasionally crossed and probed various characters.* MUSIC *recommences. As it ceases, loud groans, from back.* FELIX *rushes in.*]

FEL: Lost, lost the game! Oh, what have I been at?

MIR: [*Entering*] Lost! you don't say so — where's the magic bat?

FEL: Gone. I have sold it.

[KING MISCHIEF *and* MISS COLLYNS TREETER *re-enter.*]

K.M: [*Showing bat*] Yes, Mirth, sold again!

MIR: This *is* a pretty go.

K.M: It is — that's plain.

[KANTANKEROS *and* BOBLO *re-enter.*]

KAN: How now! friend Mirth?

MIR: I 'give you best', *at present.*

[*Enter* OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS.]

OLD A: [*Embracing* FELIX] — Me bhoy.

THE M: [*Also embracing him*] — My child.

FEL: Now, this is *very* pleasant.

VIC: [*Running in*] — Felix, I'm sorry, but you mustn't mind dear.

MIR: [*To* VICTORIA] — Ah! bad begins, but worse remains behind, dear.
Stay! there is yet a chance.

FEL: Oh! welcome sound.

[*A well-known* INSPECTOR *advances, beckoned by* MIRTH.]

INSP: Arrest this man for gambling on the ground!

(MUSIC: '*Run them in*')

[*Enter two gigantic* POLICEMEN *who arrest* KING MISCHIEF.]

MIR: Once lodged in gaol, they'll crop that head of hair;

FEL: 'Twill be a 'gaol and scissorer' affair.

K.M: Pshaw, I'm a King you knaves, with rage I burn!

MIR: A king! another sort of aching you will learn.

KAN: [*Aside to* KING MISCHIEF] — Submit, and at a later hour to-night,
Your master-spirit will set all things right;
Meanwhile, the bat — of that I'll take good care,
Hi! good Mosquito — take this, you know where?

[MOSQUITO *enters and takes the bat.*]

MIR: And Wooroohoohoo, see yon insect, follow him,
Track where he goes, and, if you can, why, swallow him.

[LAUGHING JACKASS *enters and chases* MOSQUITO, *exeunt and fly across at back of scene.*]

MIR: Where is my Groggy?

[*Enter* GROG BLOSSOM *elevated.*]

G.B: Here my royal 'toucher'.

BOB: He's had too much.

G.B: No-such-thing's-too-much, Sir.

MIR: Stand by me now, while I set at defiance,
Yon demon and his triply strong alliance.

Medley — (AIR: *'After the Opera'*)

K.M: *By the time that to-morrow is over,*
When twelve at the Post Office strikes;

KAN: *If the bat, Mirth, you cannot recover,*
Kantankeros does as he likes.

MIR: *I consent, though I hardly expect,*
In thirty-six hours to succeed;
But if I do, pray recollect,
From Australia you three must secede.
So till thirty-six hours have flown over,
Don't think that your triumph has come;
If the bat I can only discover,
I'll soon have you under my thumb.

KAN, BOB, K.M:
Then when thirty-six hours have flown over,
We'll know that our triumph has come;
For the bat you will never discover,
So, Mirth, you will have to succumb.

(AIR: *'Band begins to play'*)

FEL: *Oh, I don't feel half so happy since I began to play,*
For by my indiscretion Victoria's lost the day.

VIC: *I wonder what friend Hammersley or Mr Wills would say,*
If you treated them this way, this way.

ALL: *He doesn't feel so happy since he's been in to play,*
For by his indiscretion Victoria's lost the day;
Oh! what would Mr Hammersley or Mr Gibson say,
If he treated them this way, this way.

(AIR: *'Starry Night for a Ramble'*)

MIR: *Oh! if Wooroohoohoo's lucky, he'll soon fly back to me,*
And bring us news to tell us, where'er the bat may be;

G.B: *And then, you three old humbugs, I'll thrash you with delight.*

K.M: *As Trollope says, don't blow too much — before to-morrow night.*

OLD A: *Till to-morrow night I'll ramble,*

THE M: *I will go as well;*

OLD A: *Through the bush and bramble,*

THE M: *Searching ev'ry dell.*

[*All repeat.*]

(AIR: *'Eclipse Polka'*)

MIR: *And if we find the bat,*
And if we find the bat,

FEL,VIC: *There'll be pretty fun, pretty fun, pretty fun,*
Just remember that.

[*All repeat.*]

(AIR: *'Up a Tree'*)

MIS: *You may look through all Australia, then,*
Your search will prove a failure, then,
For I think you'll own that Mischief knows a
Little thing or two;

KAN: *Kantankeros is here as well,*

BOB: *And Boblo, too, that leary swell,*
So of success your chances seem
Particularly blue.

MIR: *Well, as we're all agreed upon*
Our plan — let's start with speed upon
The track — and find the magic bat
Before to-morrow night.

ALL: *'Tis a novel expedition, this,*
A most peculiar mission, this,
But in a Christmas pantomime,
Whatever is, is right.

(DUET: *from 'Poliuto'*)

MIR: *Permit us now to sing an air,*
Than which naught could be properer,

FEL: *Which Melbourne folk have stamped with their*
Approval at the Opera,

VIC: *That gem of music rich and rare,*
From Donizetti's Opera.

ALL: *We should not meddle with an air,*
That's written for grand opera,
Were Zelman here he'd tear his hair,
And say 'twas most improperer,
But he's away, so we don't care,
We'll sacrifice grand opera.

(CHORUS: *'Oh! Nicodemus'*)

ALL: [*To audience*] *Don't cranky deem us — cranky*
deem us. Don't you go away,
But crack 'Australia Felix' up, let it run for
many a day;
It's not quite all buffoonery, there's sense with it allied,
So don't you cranky deem us, at this jolly
Christmas-tide.

(GRAND FINALE: *'Umbrella Chorus' from 'Chilpéric'*)

Rain, rain, go away,
Come again another day;
That's what the children say
When they want to go and play;
Come on or you'll get
Shoes and stockings very wet,
Go home, change your clothes
Mind and tallow well your nose,
Rain, rain, rain, rain!
Doesn't it drizzle too?
We had best mizzle too;
No more moments can we here idly waste
Good-bye Good-bye,
Good-bye — Excuse — this sudden haste.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

SCENE I — Fitzroy Gardens with Treasury in the distance (Habbe)

[*Enter* MIRTH *and* GROG BLOSSOM *the latter carrying large Carpet-bag.*]

G.B: Your royal highness — stop — for breath I'm panting,
Oh! pray, pull up?

MIR: 'Twill pull you down, you Banting.
Stay, this is just the spot we were to meet.

[GROG BLOSSOM *sits down on Carpet-bag exhausted. Enter* VICTORIA.]

VIC: Good day, good genius;

MIR: Same to you, my sweet —
How goes it with our friends?

VIC: They fare but badly,
They miss your influence so very sadly.

MIR: My influence flew hence, as you well must know,
Last evening, with the Bat — yet hold — not so,
If Wooroohoohoo can but track that fly,
If he returns —

VIC: What's yonder in the sky?

[*Laugh heard.*]

MIR: 'Tis he! brave bird.

[MUSIC. *Enter* WOOROOHOOHOO.]

Come, let 'um scratch its poll;
And has it traced the bat? Ah! what's this scroll?

[*Detaches scroll from neck of bird, hands it to* VICTORIA, *who reads.*]

VIC: 'I, Cockatoo, have had an education,
And write this at my feathered friend's dictation:
Mosquito flew towards the isle of monkeys,
Who've long kept flying-bats to act as flunkeys.'

MIR: Ha! he mistook the sort of bat he had,

[*Bird nods assent.*]

Upon my word the error wasn't bad.

VIC: And will this help us?

MIR: Yes, of course it will.

VIC: [*Melodramatically*] Ah, hope once more does through this bosom thrill.

G.B: [*Jumping up*] A sudden thought has struck me.

[*All start.*]

MIR, VIC: Where?

G.B: Behind!
In front, above, beneath, on every side,
The demon spreads his web of evil wide.
The bat remains with him, if you *will* let it —
Why not tell somebody to go and get it.

MIR: But who's that somebody — *you're* always tight.

[GROG BLOSSOM *is highly indignant.*]

The bird is tired.

VIC: Can I go?

[MIRTH *shakes his head.*]

OLD A: [*Entering*] P'raps *I* might.

THE M: [*Entering*] And I'll go with you.

MIR: That exactly suits,
To help you on the journey — see these boots:

[*Two pairs large boots rise up traps.*]

These are the famous seven-leagued boots of old
They'll take you just wherever they are told;
Here in this bag are books of magic packed,
By reading which you'll find how you're to act;
If in six hours from this you don't return,
I'll send my warriors the cause to learn.
Come, I will show the way — now are you ready?

[*Exit* MIRTH. OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS *have been putting on boots. They try to walk with large strides.*]

OLD A: These are not Rosier's make, I know.

G.B: There, steady — steady!

[*Exeunt* OLD AUSTRALIA, THE MISSUS, GROG BLOSSOM, *and* BIRD.]

VIC: Now to invoke good Fortune, were I Patti,
I'd mesmerise the bat with '*Batti Batti*'.

[*Enter* FELIX *very disconsolate.*]

Poor Felix, why so down-cast and dejected?

FEL: [*Aside*] She's kinder to me than I had expected;
Ah, sweet Victoria, I am all ashamed
For I, for all this trouble must be blamed.
Can you forgive me, if I caused you pain?

VIC: I do.

FEL: [*Ecstatically*] Hurray! I'm happy once again,
And whatsoever charm is o'er us pendant,
Your *charms* to me shall always be resplendent.

(DUET: '*Sweet to gaze upon*')

FEL: *Ah, she's my only charmer*
So sweet to gaze upon,
I'd in my heart embalm her
But oh, my heart is gone.

VIC: *Ah, he's my only lover*
And true to him I'll be,
For now I can discover
His love is all for me.

FEL: *Oh, my, she's sweet to gaze upon.*

VIC: *Oh, my, I feel my heart is gone.*

ENSEMBLE: *You may talk about your (handsome men/pretty girls)*
The fair, dark, short, and tall,
But the (handsome native youth/pretty little girl)
I love
Is the dearest of them all.

[*Dance and exeunt.*]

SCENE II — The Island of Monkeys (Habbe)

(N.B. — The action of this scene is founded on a similar situation in *Le Roi Carotte.*)

[*Enter* MOSQUITO *from above with bat; enter* KING OF THE MONKEYS. MUSIC. *Enter* OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS.]

OLD A: Well, here we are again, though that's a platitude.

[*Consults quadrant.*]

The onety-oneth degree, yes, that's the latitude.

THE M: Oh, I'm so tired —

OLD A: Rest ye there, my love
While I consult the books for our next move.

[THE MISSUS *lies down — while she is sleeping, a butterfly, snake, &c., disturb her.* OLD AUSTRALIA *sits down in centre of stage, opens bag and takes out eatables, a flask, and various small articles of clothing. He commences eating;* MONKEY *appears.*]

What's that? my word, I thought it was the divil,
It's but a monkey — and he seems quite civil.

[*He nods,* MONKEY *returns salute.*]

Here, have a bit of tucker, so! well caught;
Now to consult the books that I have brought.

[*Takes a number of books from the bag and puts them behind him; meanwhile, several* MONKEYS *have come down unobserved and steal the old woman's bonnet, her parasol, and several of the books. They sit in a row behind* OLD AUSTRALIA *and imitate his every action. He takes out a snuff-box — takes a pinch and lays box down — a* MONKEY *steals it — sneezes —* OLD AUSTRALIA *looks to the right; they all look that way — he looks to the left, they all look to the left. At last he sees them and starts up — they make off with everything.*]

OLD A: Hi! murder! thieves!

THE M: [*Starting up*] — Police — blue fire — and murder.

OLD A: My books.

THE M: My bonnet.

OLD A: This must go no furder.

[OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS *make frantic efforts to recover their property, which the* MONKEYS *have been sharing amongst them; but* MONKEYS *dance round the old couple, and finally upset, overpower, and bind them with creepers. March heard in distance.* MONKEYS *gradually grow alarmed and sneak off. March heard louder. Enter* MIRTH's *Troop of* GUARDS. *They set the old couple free. Evolutions.* MONKEYS *go in quest of weapons, and re-enter. Tableau!*]

SCENE III — Breakneck Gully, and road to Hangman's Flat

[*Enter* MISS COLLYNS TREETER.]

(SONG: '*Smartest Girl That's Out*')

[*Enter* BOBLO.]

BOB: [*Natural voice*] Helped by the loan of certain
magic powers,
I've travelled hither in a brace of hours;
Just to look round and see if I can find,
Such little trifles as are left behind.
To this disguise I've taken quite a liking,
'Tis picturesque, yes, 'pon my word, 'tis striking.

(SONG: '*Artful Mo*')

Oh! I'm the beau ideal *of a very artful lot,*
Who make a little money with the leetle brains
they've got;
Ven I vants a horse to vin a race — he'll vin it
if he can,
If not — I'll vork the oracle as vell as any man.
And all the protests in the vorld ain't no account to me,
For I knows my game before I plays, and so
my vay I see;

You may seek through all Australia, but wherever
you may go,
You'll find it hard to meet a card like Artful Mo.

I can always do a shuffle out of anything too varm,
I can do a little shlogging — for I'm always
in good form;
I'm a Melbourne Institution — as I'd have you
clearly know,
A sort of grown-up larrikin is Artful Mo.

There are others of my kidney, whom you'll find
about the town,
Who earn a tidy living, though they don't
achieve renown;
Who, together with the nobbler and a quiet game at loo,
Make silly would-be jolly dogs do that which
they will rue.
There always must be pigeons and there always
must be hawks;
You meet both sections daily, where'er you
take your walks,
In the loftiest society as well as midst the low,
You'll find some individuals as cute as Artful Mo.

I can do a little dancing in the true Casino style,
I always choose a partner that I know has got a pile;
At driving and at riding I stand I think a show,
In fact a gutter-genius is Artful Mo.

[*Enter* KANTANKEROS.]

KAN: Ha! likewise Hum! to-night will be — to-night
To-day was — is — no — might be — that's not right —
[*Goes to Prompter.*]
Thanks — yes, of course! — To-night confirms
my powers!
To-day's hours done — the day will then be ours.
Ha! Boblo! Good.

BOB: Mosquito's back again —
He left the Bat far o'er the raging main.

KAN: 'Tis well, my Boblo, — all is now serene,
At midnight meet me in our last front scene.
Now leave me, for I fain alone would be —

[*Exit* BOBLO. *Enter* MOSQUITO — *makes low obeisance, &c.*]

Insect, thy work is finished! Cease to be!

[*Large Extinguisher descends and annihilates* MOSQUITO. LAUGHING JACKASS *laughs without.*]

That sound again! — the only thing that daunts me;
Somehow that laughter follows me and haunts me!
They come — to beg a respite, I suppose;
They shall not have it — I don't spare my foes.

[*Enter* FELIX, VICTORIA, *and* GROG BLOSSOM.]

Well friends! The day is drawing to a close —
Have you the Bat?

G.B: No!

VIC: No!

FEL: No!

KAN: All noes!
That has indeed a nays all twang about it;
Touching this Bat — we cannot do without it!

VIC: Grant one day's grace, oh! king of lurid flame.

KAN: Grace for your side! — that's giving you the game.

FEL: Have pity —

KAN: Pity's not my style, young rover.

G.B: Yours is a style there is no getting over.

[*Enter* MIRTH.]

MIR: [*To* FELIX] No tidings from all those whom
I've despatched, —
I almost fear that they are over-matched.

FEL: Yet we may win?

KAN: What win, sir?

FEL: So I hope.

KAN: Won't wash.

FEL: Not 'Windsor?' while there's life, there's soap.

KAN: Drat your stale puns.

MIR: Come, come, I say, no larks.
I too will make some cursory remarks.

[MUSIC *tremuloso — they all come forward and each in turn denounce* KANTANKEROS, *thus:*]

MIR: If you should gain the day and rule this land,
May north winds blow and fill your eyes with sand.

FEL: May your Yan Yean supply be daily cut off;

VIC: And on dark nights your street gas all be shut off.

G.B: May Trollope make you, oh! how low to grovel,
The hero of his next *Australian* novel.

MIR: May Dr Neild assist at your removal,
And 'urn' your ashes, if not your approval.*

FEL: May the Clunes' infants take you for a China man.
May you be thrashed by every able miner-man.

VIC May your deceased wife's sister always frown on you.

G.B: May Higinbotham have a deadly down on you.

MIR: May Melbourne larrikins all take a rise out of you,

[*Exit* MIRTH.]

FEL: May Melbourne sparrows pick the ugly eyes
out of you.

[*Exit* FELIX.]

VIC: May Press and Pulpit both combined traduce you.

[*Exit* VICTORIA.]

G.B: And may the gods up in the gallery goose you.

[*Exit* GROG BLOSSOM. KANTANKEROS *cowers more and more, until at the last curse he rushes off.*]

*Absurd to burn a demon fond of hating,
Whose manner never was 'incinerating.'

Author

SCENE IV — The Post Office Tower with Illuminated Clock. (Habbe) *Time, 8 minutes to 12.*

(MUSIC: *'Turn on old Time'*)

[*Enter* GROG BLOSSOM.]

G.B: Turn on old time — ah! Time turns on too quickly,
It gives me quite a turn — I feel so sickly
And not a drop remaining in my flask;
I — whose best helmet were a well-filled casque.
Eight minutes more and it will be too late —
For then — the pubs shut — oh! cruel Fate!
'Is that a Tom-cat that I see before me?'
Old Tom! — ah me! — 'how the "old Tom" comes o'er me.'

[*Exit* GROG BLOSSOM. *Enter* MIRTH.]

MIR: But seven minutes to the fatal hour.
When I must forfeit all my magic power;
No bat — no news of those who went to bring it,
I cannot tell my woe — suppose I sing it.

(SONG: *'Danish Air'*)

Ah! my fair Australia, land of peace and beauty,
Sadly I think of what the end will be;
Mirth, for your advancement, gladly would be true t'ye,
But for the force of adverse destiny,
But for the force of adverse destiny,
Yes, did Fortune help me — I would do my duty,
Truer than steel — I'd stand by thine and thee,
But all hope is gone,
Mirth is now forlorn.

[*Trumpet*]

Farewell — farewell! Australia, fare thee well.

[*Exit* MIRTH. *Enter* BOBLO.]

BOB: Five minutes to — our side is bound to win,
Like Thomas Dodd, Esquire, when we go in;
Let twelve but strike — for twelve, you see's the main,
Disguise avaunt — Boblo's himself again.

[*Exit* BOBLO. *Enter* FELIX *and* VICTORIA.]

FEL: Four minutes and a half — when midnight strikes,
The Demon treats us both just as he likes.

G.B: [*Re-entering*] I wish some one would treat *me* —
I'd take brandy,
Or any other sort of liquid that was handy.

FEL: If from this nettle 'danger' I could pluck
The flower safety,

VIC: You *would* be a duck.

G.B: What, pluck a flower? Pickles! piccalilli!
Far better pluck a goose.

VIC: *You're* one, you silly.

[*Re-enter* MIRTH.]

MIR: Three minutes and a half; oh! black despair,
With anger I could pluck out all my hair.

G.B: More plucking. We're a plucky lot of men.

[*Enter* KANTANKEROS.]

KAN: Time's nearly up — three minutes more, and then
You're mine — aye, all of you, you well know that
Naught now can save you —

MIR: Naughty man, the bat!

KAN: Give up all hope — two minutes and a half —

[LAUGHING JACKASS *laughs without.*]

Aha! that dreadful sound — that mocking laugh.
Psha! it is nothing — Time is all but past,
Prepare to meet your doom.

THE M: [*Rushing in with bat*] Don't be so fast.

ALL: The bat; the bat!

OLD A: It is, my bhoys, hooray!

MIR: The Demon's sold, and we have gained the day.

(SONG: *from 'Lucrezia Borgia'*)

THE M: [*Sings*] *Joy, joy, all joy excelling,*
Rapture and bliss astounding;
With these this breast is swelling,
Lightly my heart is bounding.

[*All except* KANTANKEROS *repeat.*]

KAN: There's but one way my exit now to make,
I'll change myself into a deadly snake;
Then none dare touch me, so I'll calmly glide,
Down to my own, my warm mid-earth fireside.

[*Changes to snake. Loud laugh. Enter* LAUGHING JACKASS, *which snaps up snake, and exits laughing.*]

MIR: We hope this finish friends, is to your liking,
Now imitate the bakers' clock, by striking;
And — Habbe thought! — we'll thank you, if you will,
With your twelfth stroke reveal Our Habbe's skill.

[*Clock strikes — flats fly open and reveal first stage of TRANSFORMATION SCENE.*]

HARLEQUINADE

CLOWN George Leopold
HARLEQUIN Henry Leopold
COLUMBINE Fraulein Fannie
PANTALOON (his first appearance in Melbourne)
W.P. Morrison
POLICEMAN G.P. Carey

Scene 1 Public House and Baker's
Scene 2 Overground Railway
Scene 3 Melbourne All the Year Round
Scene 4 Birch's Academy

introducing the Juvenile Company of Pantomimists:

HARLEQUIN Miss Blanche Leopold
COLUMBINE Miss Hettie Lee
PANTALOON Master Charles Rollins
CLOWN Albert Leopold

GRAND LAST SCENE

NOTES

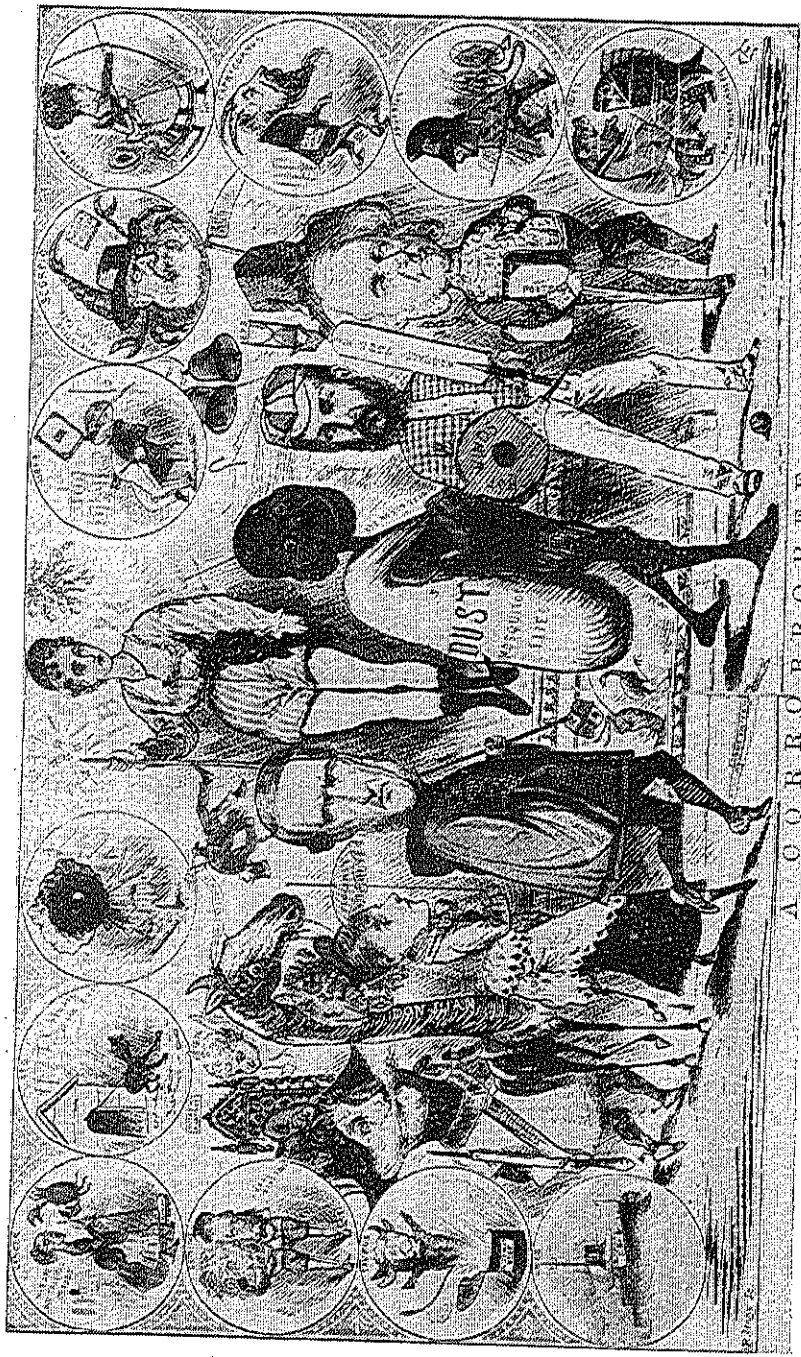
I, i. 1 *'Satanella'*
Balfe's opera of the supernatural received its first Australian performance at the Melbourne Theatre Royal in 1862. It was produced by W.S. Lyster's opera company in 1871. The 'wild chorus' of the Imps is interrupted by thunder and lightning and doubtless a flash of red fire, heralding the traditional entrance of the Demon King, Kantankeros, who puts a stop to these celebrations. 'After the manner of an Englishman, he takes his pleasures sadly, and he rivals Dr Johnson in his abhorrence of a pun' (*Argus*, 27 December 1873). The 'Centre of Gravity' is the traditional 'demon scene', a gloomy blue and green-tinted locale populated by matching inhabitants, a legacy of the Dark Scene of the Regency harlequinade. It is meant to be a sharp contrast to the scene which follows: gracious airy abode of the good genius. In the Moir copy, Neild has pencilled 'An electric look' next to this first scene heading.

I, i, 18 *'All groan'*
The *Argus* reports the 'hearty groans' with which the Imps placate their master.

I, i, 21-24 *I have a Hendersonian dread of revelry ... and I'm pretty good at hating.*
Anti-wowser sentiments abound in Walch's writing. The butt of this jibe is the Reverend Ankatell Matthew Henderson, a 'popular preacher' at the Collins Street Congregational Church whose illiberal views, such that all gamblers on the Melbourne Cup, from the Governor down, were damned, brought him into collision with sections of the press. The *Herald* of 27 October 1873 reports his sermon to a group of Sunday School children, to the effect that merriment was incompatible with religion: 'Could a Christian young lady sing "I'm so jolly"?' His young listeners were admonished not to giggle or gossip, and he irritably rebuked a small child 'who was yawning with hunger and weariness.' Unfortunately for him Henderson also went on to attack the press as liars and adversaries of Christianity; this earned his opinions maximum exposure in the months just prior to the Christmas pantomimes. By sternly rebuking his Imps for their levity, Kantankeros is dramatising Henderson's recent pulpit exploit; and of course this gives the character an opportunity to make a strong impression on the children who made up a significant section of the pantomime audience.

I, i, 27 *Saw Gladstone*
The Liberal ministry of Gladstone, of which W.S. Gilbert made notorious fun of his 1873 burlesque *The Happy Land*, was on its last legs, and defeated early in 1874.

I, i, 27 *had a chat with Charley Dilke*
Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke (1843-1911), Member for Chelsea in the British parliament, was one of the distinguished visitors to Australia who left a permanent record through the publication of his impressions, which made him thereafter the British expert on colonial questions. This was *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in the English-speaking Colonies* (1868). In this work he set the agenda for a long-standing literary battle by contrasting the Englishness and 'exhilarating air' of Melbourne, the London of Australia, with its Paris, the semi-tropical torpid Sydney, populated by the refuse of California and descendents of convicts. Dilke was a radical in politics — Deakin became his pupil and friend — and in 1871 caused a scandal by enquiring why the Queen paid no income tax, compounding this in 1872 by attempting to move an enquiry into the Civil List, thus causing



The events of 1873 according to *Melbourne Punch* (January 1874). From the left can be seen *Norfolk* beef, the Canterbury Chair, Offenbach's 'Gend'arme', Don Juan the Melbourne Cup winner, a 'silkwormiste', Stephen as Education Minister, the hot northerlies, W.G. Grace and Governor Bowen. (Courtesy National Library of Australia)

an uproar in the Commons and great hostility to the 'republican' Dilke himself.

I, i, 28 *poisoned fifty cans of London milk*

A contamination case widely reported in the Australian press.

I, i, 29 *Forged Orton-Tichborne twenty brand-new lies*

Arthur Orton, the butcher from Wagga Wagga, gained long-standing notoriety for numerous years because of his claim to be the heir to the Tichborne estate. Orton's trial for perjury opened in London in April 1873 and continued until the end of February 1874, when a fourteen-year sentence was handed down. Marcus Clarke incorporated aspects of these extended events of his novel *His Natural Life*. Continuous Australian interest in the case was guaranteed by Orton's provenance, but by 1873 the main press comment was focussed on the affair's seemingly unending longevity.

I, i, 39-40 *Boblo, matchless tax-collector ... made my sub-inspector*

The character of Boblo, the demon's lieutenant, is based on Robert Lowe (1811-1892), the Colonial Secretary in Gladstone's government. The 'pinkish eyes and whitish hair' identify the character to the audience, since Lowe was an albino. His career in NSW politics from 1842 to 1850 made him a figure long remembered in Australia, principally for his opposition to manhood suffrage and other democratic innovations; attitudes which he maintained in Britain. In 1868 he became Chancellor of the Exchequer in Gladstone's government. A follower of Adam Smith, his financial measures were considered brilliant, but his 1871 budget fell over an unpopular measure placing a tax on lucifer matches ('matchless tax-collector'). Manning Clarke's personal interpretation of Lowe is as a 'psychological monster,' all head and no heart, 'never motivated by a single generous or noble impulse' (*A History of Australia*, Vol. 3, p. 434). Lowe features as a character in Gilbert's *Happy Land* burlesque, the censoring of which early in 1873 placed him anew before Australian eyes.

I, i, 42 *This visit's keyind*

'Keyind': 'kind' pronounced as a burlesque of the diction of the older melodrama.

I, i, 43-48 *He's the Lord Chamberlain of Britain's Isle ... From Satire's shafts he is our best defender.*

Since 1737 under British law all theatrical performance had to be licensed by the Lord Chamberlain; a power not abolished until 1968. The daily administration was deputed to the Examiner of Plays, who licensed scripts as suitable before performance could occur. During 1873 the Lord Chamberlain's office was brought into disrepute by several unpopular incidents, the most notorious being the banning in March of W.S. Gilbert's and Gilbert A'Beckett's *The Happy Land*, their burlesque of Gilbert's rather saccharine fairy play *The Wicked World*, at London's Royal Court Theatre. This play had as characters the 'popular ministry' of Gladstone, Lowe and Ayrton, and the actors were accurately made up to resemble their originals (as was Boblo in *Australia Felix*). After a few excisions and plenty of wonderful publicity, *The Happy Land* ran for over 400 performances. Then in July the Lord Chamberlain's office struck again, demanding the removal of the actor Henry Corri's character makeup and costume as the 'Padishah Doo-Deen' in Burnand's *Kissi-Kissi* at the Opera-Comique. The actor brilliantly impersonated the Shah of Persia, a recent and much-feted visitor to Britain, and after Persian protests had been made the directive to the theatre was given. (Iranian displeasure with Australia over the impersonation of the Ayatollah Khomeini in

the ABC's satirical TV show *The Dingo Principle* in April 1987 makes an interesting comparison.) These theatrical events in Britain were keenly followed in Australia, the various colonies of which lacked pre-performance censorship, as it gave weight to the sentiment that Australia was not only a greater Britain but a more liberal and advanced one. Walch has cleverly drawn on these contemporary events to build his contrast between a repressive and gloom-ridden Britain and the festive freedom of the 'sunny south.' In fact before the production of *Australia Felix* a rumour was current that this pantomime was going to be merely a localisation of Gilbert's *The Happy Land* (*The Herald*, 23 December 1873, p. 3). However the distinction of localising this notorious piece fell to Marcus Clarke, when his Australianised version of *The Happy Land* was banned by the Victorian government after two performances at the Academy of Music in January 1880, causing the issue of the actual extent of Australian stage freedom to be thrown into sharp relief and vigorously examined.

I, i, 54 *the Canterbury Chair*

Another topical jest at the British heritage. Early in 1873 the retiring Governor of Victoria, Lord Canterbury, announced his intention of presenting to the colony the chair upon which his father Manners-Sutton, as Speaker of the Commons, had sat in the first parliament elected after the 1832 Reform Bill. At the end of the year the 'historic relic,' as the conservative *Argus* reverently termed it, was placed in the Victorian Legislative Council. Opinion was divided over the nature of the legacy, and satiric cartoons likened it to 'a dentist chair or an earth closet' (*Melbourne Punch*, 9 October 1873). Popular sentiment was voiced by 'Atticus' in the *Leader* (5 July 1873), who opined that 'economy was one of Viscount Canterbury's many virtues.'

I, i, 62 *Her sterling pluck change to Britannia mettle*

Britannia metal was a tin alloy that looked like silver.

I, i, 76 *I've been out there before today!*

See Note to I, i, 39-40. Interestingly it is the Lowe character who initiates the demons' expedition to Australia.

I, i, 77-78 *I hate Australians ... they're too fond of mirth*

This could be a reference to the image of Australia constructed by Dilke in his *Greater Britain*. 'What shape the Australian mind will take is at present somewhat doubtful. In addition to considerable shrewdness and a purely Saxon capacity and willingness to combine for local objects, we find in Australia an admirable love of simple mirth, and a serious distaste for prolonged labour in one direction; while the down-rightness and determination in the pursuit of truth, remarkable in America, are less noticeable here' (G. Blainey, ed., *Greater Britain*, p. 164).

I, i, 87 *'Great Local Panorama'*

This appears a spoof of the sometimes extravagant claims for the moving panoramas, forerunners of cinema, exhibited throughout the nineteenth century as travelling attractions and used also as a spectacular element in pantomime. Kantankeros here assumes the role of the lecturer who explains the painted scenes as they are wound from one reel to the other. However this 'panorama' of 'ooo,ooo feet of canvas' may not have been a proper one at all, consisting as it does of six simple images. The *Age* (25 December 1873) mentions 'a magic disc,' possibly some kind of magic lantern projection. In the Moir copy Neild has written 'Black and White simple' beside Scene I of the 'vision'. No review of *Australia Felix* even mentions this 'panorama' whereas the one painted by Hennings for the Royal's *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* receives copious description, as was usual in reporting a

form like pantomime which so emphasised spectacle and topicality. 'A Panorama consisting of the Celebrated Cities of the World ending with Fawkner's Town and the Local Pump' was Clarke's satirical summary in his 'Rehearsing a Pantomime' article in the *Weekly Times* (31 January 1874). The Opera House, unable to compete with their rivals' outlay on cast and production, opted it appears for some kind of parody of the realistic pictures and grandiose themes of the usual panorama. The simple images, if provided by Habbe, possibly resembled the style of the cartoons of *Melbourne Punch*; surviving sketches by this artist reveal a lively sense of caricature and grotesquerie: see e.g. his illustration on 'First Arrival of Victorian Settlers' in *Harry Emmet's Theatrical Holiday Book* (Melbourne: 1885), p. 24. The equivalent scene in *Trookulentos* (pp. 31-32) clearly used cartoon images.

I, i, 88-89 *Wimmera Free Land Selector ... a dummy!*

The Land Acts, passed in 1860 (Nicholson), 1862 (Duffy), 1865 and 1869 (Grant) were a series of legislative attempts to 'unlock the lands' from the grip of the squatters, who held in merely in leasehold, for close settlement by agrarian smallholders. However bad drafting, the obstruction of the property-based Legislative Council, and the determination of the squatters to hold onto their territory at any cost, frustrated the purposes behind the Land Acts. The loop-holes in the legislation and the consequent opportunities for abuse were notorious. The most prevalent technique in securing freehold land was 'dummying' — employing an agent who selected his or her 320 acres and later transferred the title to the squatter. The Grant Act of 1869 was the most successful, causing eleven million acres to be legitimately selected in Gippsland and North Western Victoria. Its operation was facilitated by the determination of James Casey, who in June 1872 became Commissioner for Crown Lands and set about organising the Lands Office. His greatest triumph was the confiscation of 34,000 acres of dishonestly acquired selection land in the Wimmera district. The Board of Enquiry at Stawell uncovered a ring of five landholders who had used 120 'selectors' to alienate crown land. Their land was forfeit, although the squatters and their dummies were not prosecuted (*Age*, 16 October and 19 December 1873). 'Unlocking the land' was a popular cause in liberal urban circles, since it provided a rallying ground against the reactionary power of the plutocratic Upper House. There was in addition the persistent ideal of transforming rural Australia into a yeoman community of small agrarian holders — 'Australia Felix' for the many. Since Boblo says that 'certain friends of mind don't like the theme' of dummying, his friends are by implication squatters.

I, i, 91- 92 *A rod! ... not used now in Australian schools*

The Francis Education Act of 1872 provided for free, secular and compulsory primary education. In January 1873 it came into effect, with James Wilberforce Stephen as Victoria's first Minister for Public Instruction. The principles of the Education Act fiercely divided the community for many years before and after 1872, as the issue of state aid for church schools, and of religious instruction to state school pupils, were then as now contentious topics. Walch in such writings as his *Town Talk* journalism of the 1880s was a secularist, who saw the provision of universal education by the state as a forward step, to be celebrated and defended. As the 1872 Act went into its first year's operation directives were circulated to teachers tightening the details of administration. One such suggested that children were not to be hit unduly (see 'Atticus', *The Leader*, 22 November 1873 and 10 January

1874). It was the severity of corporal punishment which was at issue, not, as the lines suggest, its abolition. The libretti assign this speech to Boblo, but it belongs properly to Kantankeros as the panorama presenter.

I, i, 94 *A Melbourne Bridge*
The immediate subject of this perennial jest was the seventeen-year-old Falls Bridge. In December 1873 the delegates of civic and state authorities met to discuss replacing it, each passing the financial responsibility to the other and concluding nothing (*Age*, 3 December 1873, p. 3).

I, i, 95-96 *an* al fresco *scene ... Vice-regal lodgings for the next two years*
The new Government House was then being built in the grounds of the Botanic Gardens, exceeding its cost estimates and its projected date of opening. Clarke's *Twinkle Twinkle* libretto jokes that 'Our Bowen's mansion leaps from Mueller's lawns' (p. 15). The *'al fresco'* scene was possibly a bare paddock.

I, i, 97-98 *O'Ferrall ... gone upon a visit*
The papers of early November 1873 report that H.J.V. O'Ferrall, a Lands Office clerk on £180 p.a., had gone to New Zealand suddenly on 23 October on 'urgent private business.' O'Ferrall had it transpired been systematically embezzling since 1866 at least, and investigations progressively revealed missing sums up to about £20,000. The secret of O'Ferrall's success it seems was his 'gentlemanly' and sportsmanlike image, which caused his employers to trust him with the books and not check on his activities, as they might with a mere clerk ('Atticus', *The Leader*, 8 November 1873). It was obvious after the fact that O'Ferrall had been living far beyond his means: keeping expensive horses and greyhounds and even treating the Governor to hunting parties, while giving out that his wife had private means (*Age*, 5 November 1873). In December he was reported in Fiji. *Twinkle Twinkle* has a joke that somebody disappeared as fast as 'Land Office O'Ferrall' (pp. 20-21). This description of the blank picture is in the SLV text; a different one is in Moir:

KAN: (*without looking*) That's L.L. Smith 'gainst J.T.'s donkey pitted —
BOB: Where?
KAN: I forgot — they're *purposely omitted*!

I, i, 100-101 *bold Captain Grace ... with his chosen team*
The first mention of the cricket match plot of the pantomime, which is organic to the narrative rather than being, like the other 'panorama' pictures, a topical throwaway joke. As the *Argus* reviewer put it, the demons upon 'discovering that the arrival of Grace and his cricketers had produced general joy and harmony ... conspire together to change all this' (27 December 1873).

I, i, 111-112 *Australia waits below ... by this I'll go*
O.P. means 'off prompt', or stage right. Its opposite is 'prompt', stage left. With the accompaniment no doubt of red fire and drum rolls, Boblo and Kantankeros exit downwards through two of the traps which perforated the nineteenth-century stage surface, and which were traditionally used for exits and entrances of demon characters. The stage technology allows Walch a new twist to the old joke about the 'Antipodes' being somehow 'underneath.'

I, ii, 1 *'Spring, Gentle Spring'*
A popular tune first used in Boucicault and Planché's 1872 *Babil and Bijou* at Covent Garden. *Twinkle Twinkle* also used it in an ensemble for the three Stewart sisters, Docy, Maggie and Nellie, in their characters of star fairies, and it had been performed at the Princess's Theatre, Melbourne, in Smith's variety lineup of new talent, by twelve boys dressed as Swiss peasants. From the *Age* review of 25 December 1873 it is clear that this song was sung offstage by a 'chorus of invisible fairies'. In the Moir copy Neild has written 'liquid green transparencies' next to the heading of this moonlight scene.

I, ii, 31 *Moonbeams are worse than dust to choke and smother*
Melbourne's dry winds and dust storms, especially at Christmas time, caused many a colossal thirst. The water supply, the Yan Yean, was spasmodic and muddy; for many, bottled beverages appeared a reasonable alternative.

I, ii, 34 *There's no Permissive Bill about that beak*
All through 1873 Casey attempted to have passed an act which would allow districts to decide whether to ban pub licences. The Members led by L.L. Smith filibustered and delayed the reading of the bill, until parliament closed at the end of November and the bill lost by default. Despite the daily tragic evidence of alcoholic abuse in Victoria, caused in part by unprincipled contamination of beverages by vitriol, fusel oil, etc, the Permissive Bill was not popular. Even the *Age* pursued the line that, while liquor reform was desirable, this act would not procure it; 'district' was a vague concept, one side of a street could be dry and the other not (see *Age* editorials 2 and 22 August 1873). The powerful publicans' lobby opposed the Bill, and more tellingly to the average person, the teetotallers, or prohibitionists, were in favour. Hence the anti-wowser lobby was mobilised. In *Twinkle Twinkle* the Dame part, played by J.R. Greville, is given a lengthy 'drunk scene' in which the Permissive Bill is attacked and teetotallers satirised, who it is claimed, since they can't hold their own liquor, begrudge the 'moderate man' his glass of beer:

I call him names, and if I can't convince by argument,
I liberally stop his grog by Act of Parliament.

Grog Blossom, though hardly 'moderate' in his application to the bottle, is thus a fit henchman for Mirth in popular eyes; teetotallers had few friends on the popular stage, since the same religious groups who called for abolition also routinely berated the stage as frivolous and immoral. There were also firm economic ties between liquor and theatrical capital, with theatre sharing premises with hotels, to the profit of both.

I, ii, 37 *'Enter* KING MISCHIEF, *attended by familiars*, L.L., J.D.K.Z., *etc.'*
The *Age* article (25 December 1873) states that Mischief enters with his 'warriors.' The cast list gives eight guards, probably played by some of the boys who were Kantankeros's Imps and would later be cricketers and monkeys. The names of Mischief's guards in the *dramatis personae*, 'Battle Axe,' 'Old Tom,' etc, are names of alcoholic drinks, though the inclusion of 'L.L.' may hint that despite advertisements to the contrary the stock pantomime target, the doctor and politician L.L. Smith, is being tilted at again. Comic by-play would be probable between Mischief's guards and the enthusiastic drinker Grog Blossom. Contemporary illustrations of pantomime entrances and processions show children fantastically costumed as every variety of animate and inanimate object — chessmen, insects, animals — so a procession of bottles and glasses is possible.

I, ii, 47 *like Harrisonian ice on board the* Norfolk
Australia was anxious to export more of its meat, but before it could be transported successfully on long sea voyages the markets of Great Britain were unavailable. During 1873 Victorians watched with interest the experiment of James Harrison, who in January successfully froze

one hundredweight of meat for thirty-eight days, which was subsequently eaten and pronounced perfect. By early August a cargo of frozen beef sailed to England on the *Norfolk*. Interest built at home in the ensuing months — would the cargo survive the journey? The news reached Melbourne in December, just in time for the pantomime writers, that the refrigeration process had failed in the tropics and the spoiled meat, as Mischief says, was thrown to the sharks. The dream of increased meat exports also dissolved until at the end of the decade the *Strathleven* carried the first Australian cargo of frozen meat to England.

I, ii, 51-62 *Ter-raitor, turncoat .... how awfully I'm riled*

The 'rage scene' was a set piece for villainous characters in the pantomime. Frequently, as here, it provided the opportunity to burlesque the delivery of the villain in the older style of melodrama. 'Ter-raitor,' 'w-r-r-retch,' 'kyalm' and 'leetle' show the rolled consonants, extraneous syllables and elongated vowels of melodramatic diction.

I, ii, 55-56 *a thousand 'lives' ... Devil's Pool*

A 'life' is one of the three chances each player has in a pool game. The gambling theme is being introduced.

I, ii, 60 *as thin as Sefton's Dancing Spider*

During 1873 such entrepreneurs as Enderby Jackson and Signor Cagli scoured Europe for talent for the Melbourne stage. Eagerly awaited was the variety troupe assembled by J.W. Smith, which opened at the Princess's on 29 October. This contained the comic, vocalist and grotesque dancer Harry Sefton (not to be confused with the Melbourne-based actor of the same name). Sefton's act as 'the Dancing Spider' 'takes the fancy of the audience amazingly,' according to the *Age* reviewer (3 November 1873). 'Tahite' of the *Australasian* took exception to Sefton, considering him 'coarse in his singing and ostentatious as to his dancing' (1 November 1873); charges which the *Leader* refuted (8 and 29 November 1873). The 'dancing spider' left traces in the *Australia Felix* performance in the character of Mosquito (see Note: I, iii 177).

I, ii, 63 *'I am so volatile '*

Another popular tune of the day. It was sung by Harry Rickards as an 'impersonation comique' at the Apollo Hall in October (*Age*, 15 October 1873). With the words altered to 'I am so awf'lly riled' it provides the tune for the character's topical patter song. Neild in the Moir copy has written beside this song 'good dance, expressive of rage'.

I, ii, 65 *O'Ferrall... twenty thousand pounds*

See Note: I, ii, 97-98.

I, ii, 67-69 *Attorney-Gen'ral ... Mount and Morris slipped through his hands*

Henry C. Mount and William C. Morris were minor actors in the infamous history of blackbirding; the kidnapping of Pacific Islanders for slave labour on the Queensland and other sugar plantations. In June 1871 they sailed as business partners of James Patrick Murray on the *Carl* to Fiji and the Solomons on what rapidly turned into — if it had not always been — a blackbirding expedition. On the night of 13 September the islanders imprisoned in the hold tried to break out. Murray and his crew — Mount and Morris among them — fired for hours into the mass of prisoners, while Murray sang 'Marching Through Georgia.' Next morning seventy dead or wounded were thrown overboard, and the decks whitewashed to conceal the blood. The *Carl* personnel dispersed at Levuka, and Murray soon resolved to turn Queen's evidence before his ex-associates did the same to him. The *Carl* trial in Sydney in November 1872 had Murray as chief witness, which gave him immunity while his partners got life sentences. Mount and Morris, swindled of their investment by Murray, had meanwhile quietly returned to Melbourne, saying nothing about their Pacific exploits. The Victorian government was obliged to act as a result of the Sydney trial, thus Mount and Morris were convicted in December 1872 of manslaughter on the high seas and sentenced to fifteen years penal servitude. Victoria in fact had no place of confinement for 'penal servitude', as no such sentence existed under colonial law. Stephen however advised the government that the formality could be dispensed with. Impatient with imperial interference with colonial affairs, the government decided to send the prisoners to Pentridge. This raised the legal point that, since the prisoners were convicted under an imperial law, Victoria had no right to imprison them, and should merely hand them over to the British authorities. In September 1873 the case was tried, and amid cheers Mount and Morris were discharged by Redmond Barry on this technicality. It seems illogical that men who had been sentenced for a horrible crime amidst general condemnation could a few months later become heroes upon their release upon a legal quibble. However the government's technical mishandling of the affair made them appear to many as victims of arbitrary procedures. Meanwhile the chief villain, Murray, had by flattering the godly with protestations of repentence and by timely shopping of his accomplices, purchased immunity and fled to England. The cheers at Mount and Morris's release reflected the popular resentment at the unfairness of this situation. The government was enraged and embarrassed at the judgement, but survived a motion to censure (see the *Age*, 16 April; 17, 18, 19 September 1873; *The Herald*, 18 September and 9 October 1873).

I, ii, 70 *Awf'lly riled*

A poem of that title by Walch can be found in his 1874 *Head Over Heels: A Christmas Book of Fun and Fancy* (pp. 99-100), where he glosses the phrase as 'a colonial saying' which is 'decidedly fast.'

I, ii, 79-80 *Doctor Hadden ... he'd swear that I was mad*

In November 1873 the case of Roberts vs Hadden was tried in the Supreme Court. Roberts, described as a quiet mild person with a few harmless enthusiasms, had been incarcerated for six months in Yarra Bend, simply because a magistrate who had received an eccentric letter from Roberts had ordered Dr Hadden to make a medical examination. Hadden, who had known Roberts for years, signed the certificate which sent Roberts to the lunatic asylum, where he remained until his release was secured. Commentators considered it a frightening example of the flimsy grounds upon which a person could lose his liberty. The extraordinary outcome of the court case was that, while Hadden was found guilty, the jury awarded Roberts a farthing damages. The press considered this verdict appalling, and that it was the jury who were fit candidates for Yarra Bend (see the *Age*, 22 and 24 November 1873).

I, ii, 81-84 *as mad as New South Wales ... And Parkes was awf'lly riled*

In March 1867 Parkes attended the First Australasian Inter-Colonial Conference in Melbourne. There he floated the idea that the six eastern colonies should co-operate to work out new mutually beneficial postal services to Europe to replace the current P & O line's exclusive contract, which was jointly subsidised by England and the Colonies. Plans fell apart because of that inter-colonial rivalry which made the prospect of federation remote. Neither Melbourne nor Sydney would agree that the other city should be the terminus of the Suez route.

Subsequently Victoria, unlike Queensland and New Zealand, refused to come into the New South Wales scheme, which Parkes worked up in the early 1870s, which linked Sydney and Auckland to California via South East Asia. Victoria persuaded South Australia to opt for the Suez route via Ceylon, doing a £90,000 exclusive deal with the P & O as carrier. In June 1873 premier Francis offered New South Wales the chance to join the P & O contract, which it naturally refused, since the California route was both cheaper and faster, and also opened up South East Asian trade. Despite Parkes being depicted as 'awf'lly riled,' it was Victoria which had made an expensive mistake in its contract-peddling (see the *Age*, 13 and 14 June; 21 August 1873).

I, ii, 85 *'Enter Telegraph Messenger'*

If the mails to London took 42-46 days, communication by telegraph between Australia and overseas countries was made possible by the long-awaited completion of the Overland Telegraph Line in October 1872.

I, ii, 95 *Sings*: ... 'I'm a star'

The tune may possibly be that of a song 'I Feel Like a Morning Star,' a 'great sensation' when performed by Emerson's California Minstrels at St George's Hall (*The Age*, 23 August 1873).

I, ii, 98 *I'll show Melbourne how to act*

The rivalry between resident and imported actors is a common theme in Australian theatre history. 1873 had been a particularly trying year for Melbourne theatre, given the innovations in the mail services which interrupted old touring patterns; the 'Monopoly' at the Theatre Royal; the Opera House being used extensively for opera and opera-bouffe and the Princess's being kept mostly dark to eliminate rivalry. King Mischief thus becomes one of the many newcomers eagerly sought by entrepreneurs to pick up a depressed industry (*The Era*, 7 September 1873, p. 10). See Note: I, ii, 60.

I, ii, 100-101 ... *in free Australia,/ They're fond of* me, *of honest hearty Mirth*

See Note: I, i, 77-78.

I, ii, 125-127 *No swindling blacklegs ... the modern tournament*

A good example of a 'claptrap', a speech calculated to rouse the audience to cheers; it is however typical of Walch's humour that both Grog Blossoms's and King Mischief's lines deflate the speech and build more laughs. Contemporaries feared that the 'manly' game of cricket was following racing, boxing and other sports in being dominated by professional gambling interests. The *Age* (20 December 1873) just before the England-Victoria match, bewailed the surrender of 'one manly sport after another to sharpers and gamblers.' The turf was no longer a genuine popular sport, 'but a carnival of feverish speculation, vulgar riot and notorious swindling' (Don Juan, the Melbourne Cup winner of 1873, was suspected of being younger than his alleged years). The anxiety about the decline of English pastimes was exacerbated on 13 December, the very day the English team landed in Melbourne, when the cricketer Gibson bet on the outcome of a game between Melbourne clubs in which he was a player. Would cricket be taken over by bookies, gamblers and nobblers, as racing was seen to be? The *Age* recommended rigid investigations into all players in the crucial England-Victoria match. Furthermore, the lure of easy money and sporting prestige was too strong for the ethics of some Melburnians. O'Ferrall the embezzler (see Note: I, i, 97-98) had used his funds lavishly on his horses and dogs, and during 1873 other cases of financial fraud, undertaken to finance high living, made sensational news. Particularly significant is the case of Richard Wardill, an

accountant with the Sugar Company, who in August embezzled £7,000. Wardill was conspicuous in his turf gambling, obviously living beyond his means, and was also a cricketer of note. The *Leader* said that Wardill had 'introduced the tactics of the betting ring into the cricketing circle' and hinted that it was inadvisable that the All-England Eleven come to Victoria under such conditions. Maybe the Athenaeum Club, of which Walch was secretary, smelt a rat, since Wardill was refused membership. After his sudden disappearance Wardill's body was discovered in the Yarra, a tragic victim of the 'tolerance of fast life' which the *Age* saw as 'one of the worst features of our society.' Felix, the hero of Walch's pantomime, courts the suicidal fate of Wardill, but for him no grim consequences ensue (see the *Age*, 19 August; 2 and 6 September; 20 December 1873).

I, ii, 129-130 *You certainly can 'pitch it' ... the general election*

'Pitch it' means that Mirth is a stump orator who can 'pitch' a good 'spiel.' The general election was due early in 1874.

I, ii, 131-132 *your bat ... you can 'spout' it*

'Spout' means to orate fluently, and also to pawn.

I, ii, 133 *'Ten Thousand Miles Away'*

An appropriate ballad for the two intending immigrants. Walch's 1872 Melbourne pantomime *True Blue Beard* used the tune for a 'Treadmill Chorus' in the final medley of the first act.

I, ii, 141 *'Carry the News'*

'Carry the News to Mary' was a tune popularised in Melbourne by Emerson's California Minstrels who played at St George's Hall from August to October 1873. It was a lively 'nigger minstrel' dance, called a Plantation Walk-round (*Town and Country Journal*, 6 December 1873, p. 713). The tune was also used in *Twinkle Twinkle* at the Royal. The assignations of singers here given attempts to make sense of misassigned and misprinted speech headings in the libretti, i.e. 'War' for 'Mir'.

I, iii, i *'A Cockatoo Squatter's Mansion'*

Walch had first used the figures of the Irish selector and his Missus as the archetypal founding Australians in his 1871 Sydney pantomime *Trookulentos*, with which *Australia Felix* has much in common. 'Cockatoo' was a term of abuse originally used by squatters to describe the increasing numbers of land-hungry selectors who tried to make a go of their small holdings, because they appeared to swarm like cockatoos over the land. The 'Mansion' was most likely a bark slab hut, a 'humble little cot' as Kantankeros calls it (cf. *Trookulentos*, p. 11, where the equivalent dwelling is 'called by some a *gunyah*'). Neild's impression of the scene, 'Very Australian', is noted in the Moir copy. The *Trookulentos* characters certainly augmented their herds with the aid of a branding iron, and Old Australia too it seems has in his earlier days indulged in some 'cattle duffing' (I, iii, 83). The selector career of Old Australia resembles in broad historical outline that of Ned Kelly's family, struggling selectors in the 1870s in Victoria's newly opened North East district, who also took to occasional cattle duffing. John McQuilton's detailed history *The Kelly Outbreak* places the fortunes of the Kellys and the other selectors in their area against the background of the failures of the Land Acts. Felix in the pantomime is a prophetic parallel and anti-type of the then eighteen-year-old Ned: the one saved at the stroke of midnight by the agency of 'manly' sport and a lot of luck; the other falling into 'flash' ways and failing to survive a headlong clash with the might of the law.

I, iii, 3-34

Cf. *Trookulentos*, pp. 6-7.

I, iii, 3-6 *J.G. Francis ... what he'll undergo and then go under*
James Goodall Francis (1819-94) was Chief Secretary (premier) of Victoria since June 1872, presiding over an unsteady coalition which 'went under' in July 1874 after the general election's 'coming storms.' King Mischief and his fellow demons compete in relating their evil doings since they reached Victoria; this complements Kantankeros's initial speech in Scene i on mischief undertaken in England.

I, iii, 7- 10 *Langton ...*£ S D-mons gibed him as a duffer
Edward Langton was the Treasurer and Post Master General in the Francis administration.

I, iii, 12-13 *To Stephen's chamber ... attacked him*
The 'broken laws' appear to refer to the Attorney-General's role in the Mount and Morris case (see Note: I, ii, 67-69). The 'slaughtered bills' could be an allusion to the rough patches in the first year of the Education Act (see Note: I, i, 91-92).

I, iii, 15 *Kerferd*
George Brisco Kerferd was Solicitor-General in the Francis Ministry. In July 1874 he became the next premier. It is uncertain what the 'pill' (or bill?) is which Mischief is preparing for him.

I, iii, 17-20 *Gillies ... dance with us at far Wodonga*
Duncan Gillies (1834-1903) was Commissioner of Railways and Roads in the Francis government. On 19 November 1873 the final section of the North-eastern Railway to the New South Wales border was finally opened, after lengthy delays going back to the mid-1860s. A special train carrying the vice-regal party and official guests ran to Wodonga for a luncheon and ball, but as the train arrived late the hungry guests ate up all the official luncheon and left little for the Governor. See McQuilton for the economic effects of the Wodonga line on the land settlement patterns of the region, and its eventual crucial role, despite derailment attempts, in the capture of the Kelly Gang.

I, iii, 21-24 *two-thirds of K.C.B. ... rum and water*
'K.C.B.' was a popular song, described as 'serio-comic' by the *Herald* when sung by Emma Weippert (31 October 1873; see also the *Age*, 18 August 1872). It was sung by Lizzie Watson in Smith's variety show at the Princess's (*Age*, 21 October 1873). Walch's *True Blue Beard* uses the tune. 'Two-thirds of K.C.B.' gives 'King' Casey, Lands Commissioner, who 'rules the roost' (the libretti have 'roast') where 'Land for Sale' indicates that selection of Crown land was taking place. The next couplet about 'Permissive Casey' refers to his ill-fated liquor reform bill (see Note: I, i, 34) for which an alcoholic soaking is deemed worthy punishment. Clarke varied the joke in *Twinkle Twinkle*:

> DAME: Or, the entanglement, to make more mazy
> Suppose we each refer the case to Casey.
> EMPEROR: And for the cleverness displayed by he,
> Perhaps they'll make our Casey KCB. (p. 62)

I, iii, 25-26 *Cohen's ... duties that are owin'*
Edward Cohen was Commissioner for Trade and Customs in the Francis administration.

I, iii, 27 *A. Frayser*
Called by the *ADB* 'dour and pious', Alexander Fraser was Commissioner of Public Works in the Francis administration and a member of the Legislative Council.

I, iii, 41-34 *Free-trade orators .... nothing e'er can smother*
Kantankeros has been fuelling the perennial dispute between free-traders and protectionists, the latter policy being the one followed in Victoria. Walch does not take sides in the contest, but aims the joke at the excesses of both. A theatre audience would contain advocates of both positions.

I, iii, 43 *'Enter* VICTORIA *reading'*
It was frequent to image 'Victoria' as a smart and rather precocious young lady, as shown in the journalistic cartoons of the time. See also 'Miss Victoria to her Uncle John Bull' in the *Herald* (9 October 1873) where the news of the day is narrated by a female persona. Victoria's reading entrance could have provided opportunities to burlesque performances of Ophelia's business in the 'nunnery scene' of *Hamlet*.

I, iii, 67 'OLD AUSTRALIA *and* THE MISSUS'
The low comedians, who did the broad comedy work, traditionally played the father of the heroine and his usually formidable consort - The Missus is a Dame part played by a man. 'D'ye see this fisht?' (in libretto 'Dy'e') indicates the Punch-and-Judy knockabout character of their relationship. Unlike the traditional fairy-tale pantomime, *Australia Felix* has no mortal characters of royal status; the selector pair substitute for the 'King Djoli-Sophts' and 'Queen Schezatartas' of the usual plots.

I, iii, 70-73 *Casey's Land Bill ... in honour of old Ireland*
The couple appear to be squabbling about the credit for the land legislation which has produced their present status as 'squatters — of the Cockatoo persuasion.' Old Australia credits Sir Charles Gavan Duffy for his 1862 Land Act, flawed as it was. Duffy had been Premier from June 1871 to June 1872. Pro-Irish sympathies were readily interchangeable with pro-nativist ones, as each had reason to oppose British hegemony. With his lengthy oppositional career in Ireland and Victoria, Duffy was long a conspicuous figure in this context. Walch evidently felt warmly towards him, as the following lines occur in his burlesque *Pygmalion and his Gal (a Dear!)* in March 1873:

> Let Erin hope her wrongs will soon be righted
> There's good times coming shure, when Duffy's knighted.

I, iii, 75 *I'd turn a 'murphy'*
'Murphy': a potato.

I, iii, 80-81 *Ireland's ... Both at the bar and on the stage*
The two Irelands here referred to are Richard Davies Ireland, a popular and brilliant if erratic criminal lawyer (he acted for Mount and Morris in their 16 September hearing): and George Richard Ireland, a respected actor, whose severe illness early in 1873 had occasioned sympathy and support from the press and stage (see *Age*, 8 March 1873). The two, besides both being popular figures, exchanged functions a little. G.R. Ireland had studied law before taking to the stage (*Australasian Sketcher*, 16 May 1874, p. 22) and in October sued the *Licensed Victuallers Gazette* for libel for a bad review of his *Faust*, winning in May 1874 £100 damages. R.D. Ireland is described in the *ADB* as 'a clever mimic and dramatic raconteur'.

I, iii, 83 *'Twas Ireland got me off that cattle duffing*
See Note: I, iii, i. No matter how guilty of duffing one presumes Old Australia to have been, Ireland here appears as a people's champion — it was he who defended the Eureka rebels.

I, iii, 88-89 *The other Ireland ... A real* Colonial *star*
G.R. Ireland, though beloved in the colonies, was born in London and arrived in Melbourne in 1853 at the age of seventeen. His Australian stage training thus made him a 'colonial star.' In May 1874 he left for England, but spent most of his career in Australia after his return.

I, iii, 94 *He's — not — your — father*
More burlesque of standard melodrama situations and delivery. Victoria, found beneath the gum tree, is given the origins of many a heroine, but in *Australia Felix* her actual pedigree remains a mystery.

I, iii, 100 *I've* found *you ever since*
The Missus may mean 'provided for,' as in the expression 'all found,' all equipped.

I, iii, 103 *Faix*
Supposed Irish pronunciation of 'faith.'

I, iii, 121 *more than Bagot loves the Press*
Bagot, the secretary of the Victorian Racing Club, did not love the press in late 1873, and the sentiment was returned. He fell out with the *Argus* when his new grandstand was called a cowshed, and stopped press tickets to the races. The morning press retaliated by ignoring all VRC fixtures, including the Derby, but relented enough to report the Melbourne Cup (see *Town and Country Journal*, 8 November 1873, p. 582; *The Herald*, 1, 5 and 7 November 1873).

I, iii, 127 *A 'cricket on the hearth'*
Charles Dickens' 1845 Christmas book, *The Cricket on the Hearth: A Fairy Tale of Home.*

I, iii, 134-153
Cf. *Trookulentos*, p. 12.

I, iii, 134 *Aha! my parients*
Another reportage of melodrama pronunciation.

I, iii, 140 *When I say neddy, waddy is the word*
'Neddy': a cosh or bludgeon; 'waddy': Aboriginal war club or by extension any piece of wood used as a cosh.

I, iii, 142 *Missing 'steamer'*
'Steamer': kangaroo tail stew.

I, iii, 146
'Kickshaws': any fancy French food.

I, iii, 150 'LAUGHING JACKASS *hops on'*
The costume or the mime must have been effective, as Neild notes 'good Jackass' besides the bird's entrance.

I, iii, 154 '*Song*: FELIX'
There is no music suggested for this song. Moir has a scribbled 'kisses' besides this, but it is unclear whether Neild means the song or, more probably, some action associated with Victoria's entrance.

I, iii, 164 *Trio: 'Barber of Seville'*
Neild notes here 'Trio good.'

I, iii, 177 '*Enter* MOSQUITO *from above'*
While Wooroohoohoo enters and exits the same as the other characters, his gait being described as 'hopping' (*Argus*, 8 January 1874), Mosquito appears to have been flown in, and out by some device, possibly a simple rope suspended from the flies (see Note: I, iv, 186). The size and ferocity of Australian mosquitos was a running joke in the nineteenth century, as an inescapable part of 'colonial experience.' This one's pursuits are however exclusively urban; as the words of his song reveal, he is an habitué of clubs, pubs and the gambling resorts of 'swells' — the idea of the 'fast life' which will entrap Felix is being introduced, and Felix from his earlier comments on his new desire for 'kickshaws, curries and patés (I, iii, 146) is ready to be dazzled. Mosquito's one solo number appears to owe something to Harry Sefton's eccentric song-and-dance act (see Note: I, ii, 60). 'Tahite' in the *Australasian* (3 January 1974) approved of the borrowing: 'Mr Bell, as the Mosquito, was as agile and as flexible as the dancing spider, with none of the offensive vulgarity of that bipedal arachnide.'

I, iv, i *'Gens d'armes' duet'*
In December 1867 Offenbach revived and lengthened his 1859 opera-bouffe *Genevieve de Brabant* and inserted the now-famous 'Gendarmes' Duet'. In September 1873 Lyster produced the show in Melbourne, with a freely adapted libretto by Walch, and at Christmas 1873 a version of this played at Sydney's Victoria Theatre as the pantomime. Vernon and Rainford sang the two Gendarmes in the original Opera House production, and versions of the words to the famous tune proliferated; e.g. Billy Emerson and Charles Sutton sang a 'new version' at St George's Hall (*Age*, 20 September 1873).

I, iv, 29 'KING MISCHIEF, *disguised as a magsman'*
A magsman was a conman; his function was to head off potentially troublesome onlookers and look out for the police while his partner the spieler got on with the swindle (*Melbourne Mirror*, 5 October 1888, p. 4). According to *OED*, 'a magsman must of necessity be a great actor and a most studious observer of human nature.' Mischief has no difficulty in decoying the even newer chum Grog Blossom; his ready 'Come and have a drink!' shows a rapid education in colonial social habits. Victoria, according to *Melbourne Punch* (27 February 1873, p. 67) was 'the land of the magsman and cracksman and shark.'

I, iv, 35 *'Under-and-over board'*
See Note: I, iv, 140.

I, iv, 43 *'Kabatt. A well-known Police Inspector'*
Superintendent Leopold Kabat, a German-speaking Pole, was a visible and effective officer on the urban scene. Late in 1873 he was transferred to Gippsland, the *Herald* (27 September 1873) wishing him a speedy return to Melbourne. His alertness and knowledge of German procured arrests even in that rural area (*The Leader*, 5 November 1873, p. 3).

I, iv, 45 *Here comes our pigeon*
'Pigeon' means the dupe, usually in gambling, of the conman or 'hawk'. Jokes on the vulnerability of the newchum to a fast colonial line of talk are changing to those on the old theme of the town mouse and the country mouse.

I, iv, 50 *P.B.*
A kind of beer.

I, iv, 53 *'Duet'*
There is no tune given in the libretti for this number.

I, iv, 72 *this bird's uncommon dicky*
Felix is feeling the effects of champagne.

I, iv, 73 *Ha! ha! Ho! ho! and equally, He, he!*
Kantankeros parodies the stylised laughter of stage villains who gloat over their crimes.

I, iv, 80 *I'll put some 'side' on for you*
To 'put on side' is to swank or give oneself airs. Here it appears to mean that Kantankeros will overpraise Felix to Miss Collyns Treeter.

I, iv, 81 *'Enter* MISS COLLYNS TREETER'
A city belle who 'does the block' daily in her best attire to flirt and be seen. Dilke in his *Greater Britain* notes that 'one surface point which catches the eye in any Australian ballroom, or on any racecourse, is clearly to be referred to the habit of mind produced by democracy — the fact, namely, that the women dress with great expense and care, the men with none whatever.'

I, iv, 82 *There's none but she licks*
'Licks': presumably to surpass, excel.

I, iv,83-94
The words and the tune are used in *Trookulentos*, pp. 25-26.

I, iv, 120-121 *Och, wirasthrue ... the boy has been embezzlin'*
A reference to O'Ferrall and his escape from Victorian justice. 'Wirrasthru' is an Irish exclamation of sorrow or lament (*OED*).

I, iv, 125 *Better than Longmore loves the gentle Vale*
Both these MLAs were teetotallers and had a combatitive style. William Vale, member for Collingwood, was a frequent target of Walch's. In *Pygmalion and His Gal (a Dear!)* a character is 'deaf as Bill Vale, who's always deaf to reason' (p. 21), and *True Blue Beard* also has a joke (p. 23). *Melbourne Punch* (31 March 1870, p. 97) claims that Hansard has doubled in size since he entered parliament (see *The Herald*, 25 November 1873; *Melbourne Punch*, 18 May and 14 September 1871).

I, iv, 126 *better than Rupert loved the fatal Loreley*
A reference to the Romantic literary legend of Sir Rupert and his entanglement with the Lorelei, or Rhine fairy, who lured sailors to destruction on the rocks. The name seems deformed purely to rhyme with 'Morley'.

I, iv, 127 *Better than even Carrick loves his Morley*
There was no love lost between these two. Carrick was the Mayor of Sandridge and Morley a borough councillor. Both were carriers who used the council meetings to place legal impediments in the way of their rivals' trade, and to exchange invective. Each had his partisans who also abused and sued one another. According to the *Age* the proceedings of the crowded weekly council meetings were 'as good as a play' and cheaper (5 July 1873). See also the *Age* (7 October 1873), the *Leader* (12 July 1873, p. 18), and *Melbourne Punch* (17 and 24 July 1873), which spoof their continuous and incomprehensible emnity.

I, iv, 128 *Better than Beaney loves a good dissection*
The flamboyant and wealthy surgeon James Beaney attracted friends and foes in low and high places. His daring surgery (with champagne to all after the operation) saved lives, but also caused him to be twice charged, and cleared, of murdering patients. According to the *ADB* 'at least, unlike some of his colleagues, he did not attend autopsies on the same day as he operated,' since neither theatre hygeine nor anti-biotics were elements of mid-century surgical procedures. Despite his dubious authorship of even more dubious treatises on sexuality, and his unpopularity with the medical establishment, he won the respect and affection of many including Walch. *On the Cards* contains a character portrait of 'Dr Goodley,' glittering with enormous diamonds, 'a man who has special vanities as well as special virtues.' The public admired him, since he dealt with his detractors generously and treated poor patients free (see also P.J. Phillips, *Kill or Cure?*, pp. 110 ff.).

I, iv, 129 *or forty-twosters did a free selection*
Section 42 of the 1865 Land Act allowed diggers to take up, initially, a limited amount of land near a gold field. The provisions proved so successful that by 1868 acreage limits rose and the distance conditions relaxed. Section 49 of the 1869 Act continued the conditions of Section 42, and gave alienation rights to the existing Section 42 settlers.

I, iv, 136 'KING MISCHIEF *with dog-collar*'
According to the *Illustrated London News* (26 May 1860, p. 506) the bonnet dressed at that time is 'clerical black coats and white ties.' Although Mischief is not the bonnet of the team, he may be dressed in this garb (See Note: I, iv, 142).

I, iv, 136 *Has e'er a gent here seen a little dog?*
According to the *Macmillan Book of Proverbs, Maxims and Famous Phrases* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), ed. Burton Stevenson, the phrase comes from Boucicault's famous horse drama *The Flying Scud; or The Four-legged Fortune* (1866). 'I've got to see a man about a dog' is a tag line for a character avoiding confrontations. It is according to Macmillan 'the play's only claim to remembrance,' despite its having influenced the iconography and staging of countless nineteenth-century plays dealing with large social occasions. The mark of *The Flying Scud* is strong in this scene of the pantomime.

I, iv, 137 *Buttons is well plied with grog*
In libretti, 'buttons'. Grog Blossom is referred to by the traditional name of Cinderella's devoted admirer and confidant.

I, iv, 138
Titus Oates stirred up anti-Catholic feeling in seventeenth-century England by discerning alleged papist plots, which resulted in anti-Catholic riots and persecutions.

I,iv, 142 *'Music as in fair scene Martha, various characters come on ...'*
There existed strong theatrical models for staging the MCC cricket match crowd scene. Clearly, Lyster's staging of Flotow's opera *Martha* was one, with which audiences would be already familiar. During 1871 the live circus acts in the scene were dispensed with and by 1873 the chief feature of the scene were marionettes (Love, p. 210). The *Herald's* description shows that these were popular, and that the magic of theatre is not always attained by strictly illusionist means:

> A tiny pasteboard windmill in motion, or a cow painted on the back scene, with a wagging tail, will send thousands into fits of delight. Here is the fair scene of *Martha*. The great attraction of the opera is afforded by a toy roundabout, such as a child could carry away in his hand; a little merry-go-round — up and downs - worked by a jickupy pasteboard mannikin; another jickupy little chap, with stiffish joints, going around a horizontal bar; another tapping a drum; and the climax is reached by four little pasteboard men, each six inches high, mounting above the painted crowd on each others' shoulders. The living actors, even the monkey and the great Fat Boy, with a bolster before and behind, are eclipsed in favour by the marionettes, which please men, women and children alike, for the inevitable baby in the pit raises a squall because it cannot have the pretty toys! (25 August 1873, p. 3)

The various characters of the *Australia Felix* scene are recognisable local types. Their probable prototypes lie in the staging of Boucicault's immensely successful racing drama *The Flying Scud; or, A Four-legged Fortune* (1866), where the Derby scene itself picks up in detail the imagery of Frith's celebrated painting 'Derby Day', presenting a panorama of English society high and low. For *The Flying Scud's* Sydney premiere on 29 July 1867, reviewers noted at length the Derby scene, with its huge assemblage of colourful and sharp characters including 'thimble riggers, card sharpers, doodle'um bucks...' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 July 1867). Walch adapts the existing theatrical imagery to local conditions, just as George Darrell was to do later in his Queen's Birthday carnival scene in *The Sunny South* (1883).

'BOBLO *is at Under-and-Over table, and* KING MISCHIEF *is mounted on a cask, with a purse and half-crowns*; KANTANKEROS *as bonnet'*.
Boblo and confederates are setting up the old carnival game of Under-and-Over-Seven, played with a board divided into three with two dice thrown from a cup, or, as here, dice-box. The player bets on his throw totalling either under seven or over it, or seven itself, putting his money on one of the three appropriately marked spaces on the board. Under and over pay even, while seven pays either four or five to one.

According to Alan Wykes in his *Gambling* (pp. 139-140) the bank has the advantage in any throw. John Scarne (*Scarne's New Complete Guide to Gambling*, pp. 509-510) gives the payoff on a throw of seven as being four to one, advantaging the dealer such that the operator rarely needs to resort to cheating. However the three Demons do appear to be cheating Felix by sleight of hand. Although Scarne says that the operator seldom handles the dice, permitting the player to throw, it appears that Boblo throws, allowing him opportunity to resort to techniques described by Wykes as 'topping' or 'slurring' which ensure that the dice come out the way he wants them. Kantankeros is the 'bonnet' or accomplice in league with the sharper, who decoys the victim by pretending to play and so lures him to supposed easy winnings. Felix's first bet is on seven, his second on over, the third and fourth on under, the last crucial bet on under being urged onto him by Kantankeros.

I, iv, 165 *I'll bet a bonnet*

See previous Note for the double meaning of 'bonnet.'

I, iv, 177-178 *'A well-known Inspector advances ... Music "Run Them In". Enter two gigantic policemen ...'*

Presumably the Inspector is Kabat, while 'Run Them In' shows the music cue as the 'Gendarmes' Duet' again. 'The conspirators taunt Mirth, but she, with feminine revenge, turns around upon King Mischief, causing him to be arrested,' reports the *Argus* (27 December 1873, p. 6), which is alone in referring to Mirth consistently as a female character. Perhaps since Mirth fulfils the function of the usual female benevolent agent, the fairy queen, the *Argus* reported what it was used to seeing in pantomimes rather than what Walch did with these conventions. This scene is the last we see of King Mischief. He joins in the Act I finale medley, but has no appearance in the considerably shorter second Act, even for the denouement. George Leopold also played the Clown; his absence in the last part of the show could be to cover his preparations for the harlequinade.

iv, 179 *gaol and scissorer*

A pun on the names of the biblical characters Jael and Sisera.

I, iv, 180 *With rage I burn!*

Libretti have 'burn?'

I, iv, 186 'LAUGHING JACKASS *enters and chases* MOSQUITO, *exeunt and fly across at back of Scene'*

The *Herald* (23 December 1873, p. 3) says that Mosquito 'flies away with [the bat], pursued by Laughing Jackass.' The previous SD, 'Mosquito enters and takes the bat', could mean that the chase downstage was on foot, with Mosquito pursued into the wings, from whence both reappear flown upstage with Wooroohoohoo still chasing his rival. The upstage scene may have been effected by actors in flying harness, but it was more likely to have been managed, as such scenes frequently were in melodrama and opera, by two small dolls representing the characters. Reports in the Australian press of characters being flown in full harness appear at the end of the decade, e.g. in Walch's Theatre Royal *Babes in the Wood* of 1879. Errol Sherson in *London's Lost Theatre* (p. 33) says that the first flying fairy appeared at London's Gaiety Theatre in 1878.

I, iv, 188 *my royal 'toucher'*

OED gives 'touch' as theft, especially pocket-picking, with an Australian meaning of to cheat or swindle, or to con money from someone.

I, iv, 192 *'After the Opera'*

This tune was used in Walch's 1872 *True Blue Beard* (p. 15).

I, iv, 210-214 *I wonder what friend Hammersley or Mr Wills would say ... what would Mr Hammersley or Mr Gibson say*

Neither Thomas Wills, 'the Grace of Australia,' nor his rival Hammersley were among the twenty-two chosen to practice as the pool of players out of which the Victorian Eighteen were eventually selected (*Age*, 22 November, 2 and 16 December 1873). Their controversy with each other and the selection committee filled the newspapers in the weeks leading up to the match. Gibson, who did play for Victoria, caused controversy by betting on the match he was playing in (see Note: I, ii, 125-127), and by allegedly pulling his team mate Allen's nose on the same occasion (*Town and Country Journal*, 20 December 1873, p. 774; *Age*, 27 December 1873, p. 5).

I, iv, 219 *As Trollope says, don't blow too much*

'Blow' means to brag or skite, and was according to the visiting English author Anthony Trollope the colonials' besetting vice. His book *Australia and New Zealand*, the result of a year's stay in the colonies, appeared early in 1873, and its admonition 'Don't blow' was long remembered in Australia.

I, iv, 231 *leary swell*

'Leary' means wide awake, on the ball. A swell is a man about town.

I, iv, 242 *'Poliuto'*

Donizetti's grand opera of the persecution of Christians under the Roman empire was first performed in Australia by Lyster and Cagli's Royal Italian Opera Company at the Victoria Theatre, Sydney, in October 1873, and subsequently shown in Melbourne before Christmas to critical acclaim.

I, iv, 250 *Were Zelman here he'd tear his hair*

Since 1872 the newly-arrived musician and composer Alberto Zelman had conducted opera for the Lyster-Cagli company, to constantly good notices; the beginning of a long and distinguished career on the Melbourne musical scene.

I, iv, 254 *'Oh! Nicodemus'*

Another nigger minstrel tune.

I, iv, 258 *'Umbrella Chorus from "Chilpéric"'*

An opera-bouffe by Hervé (Florimund Ronger) first performed in Paris in 1868, and subsequently at the Lyceum Theatre, London. Chilperic was a son of a Frankish king. When the Frankish army visits the druids a sudden storm causes them to unfold their umbrellas, and thus the army marches off. Although the opera itself had not been performed in Melbourne, a trio from *Chilpéric* was used in *Twinkle Twinkle*. Like many a show, its music travelled in advance. Reviews of *Australia Felix* pick out the 'Umbrella Chorus' for praise, as it consisted of the full company 'twirling their ginghams to the merry tune' (*Weekly Times*, 17 January 1874).

I, iv, 265 *tallow well your nose*

'Tallow' means to anoint. *OED* gives an 1886 usage by Jerome K. Jerome: 'I... tallowed my nose, and went to bed.'

I, iv, 268 *We had best mizzle too*

'Mizzle' means to drizzle or rain lightly, also to depart.

I, iv, 269 *No more moments can we here idly waste*

Libretti have 'we' for 'here.'

Act II, Scene i

The libretti versions differ in their treatment of the sequence of the second Act, Boblo's song 'Artful Mo' being placed in different scenes. The libretto LTP 792.3 AU in SLV puts 'Artful Mo' in Scene iii ('Breakneck Gully and the Road to Hangman's Flat') after Miss

Collyns Treeter's solo 'Smartest Girl That's Out' and before Kantankeros's entrance 'Ha! likewise Hum' (II, iii, 31). The Moir version gives 'Artful Mo' a scene on its own at the beginning of Act II, titled 'The Cockatoo-Squatter's Hut Revisited.' Neild has cancelled the scene in pencil, making it clear it was not performed on the evening he saw it. The Moir Scene iv thus corresponds to the SLV Scene iii. Except for the song Boblo has little to do in Act II in either version, his only entrances being for one and a half lines in SLV Scene iii, 'Breakneck Gully' (corresponding to Moir Scene iv), and four lines in Scene iv 'Post Office Tower' (corresponding to Moir Scene v). Boblo refers to 'this disguise' to which he's 'taken quite a liking' — his Under-and-Over man's guise of the cricket scene (I, iv), so presumably the song must follow the Act I finale somewhere.

The placing of the song is a matter of convenience. Here the more economical four-scene SLV version is followed, as it starts Act II back in the main narrative, and puts Boblo's character solo after Miss Collyns Treeter's song at the start of the Curse Scene (Scene iii). Thus the second Act starts with the Fitzroy Gardens scenery — a stronger visual statement than bringing back a repetition of the bush hut scene. There remains in the SLV libretto a false entrance for Boblo after II, ii, 34, suggesting that this version is an amended text. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that Daniels' character solo is not specifically mentioned at all in accounts of the performance, which is unusual in the detailed press summaries of the period. Furthermore, the *Herald*, in its detailed plot analysis given on 23 December 1873, presents a nine-scene synopsis where the action after the Cricket scene is shuffled into an order found in neither printed version. Was 'Artful Mo' ever performed? As pantomimes were run in, material was trimmed to end the show no later than 11.30 p.m., so libretti do not at all faithfully reproduce performance texts. The *Age* of 27 December 1873 complained that by 11 p.m. the Transformation Scene was just completed; while the *Argus* of 1 January reports that the show 'has been judiciously curtailed.'

II, i, 2 *you Banting*
In 1864 William Banting in London recommended a weight-reducing diet, consisting of avoidance of liquids, starch, sugar and fats. The term is ironic addressed to the portly Grog Blossom.

II, i, 21-23
Cf. *Trookulentos*, p. 20.

II, i, 37 *These are not Rosier's make*
Rosier's of 46 Swanston Street made theatrical and cricketing boots, as well as more ordinary footwear, and took full-page advertisements in theatrical libretti, e.g. the *Pygmalion and His Gal (a Dear!)* one of March 1873. During November Rosier was at issue with his staff over the firing of four union men, causing the others to strike, which kept his name visible in a controversial sense (see *Age*, 24, 27, 28, 29 November 1873).

II, i, 38-39 *Were I Patti .... 'Batti, Batti'*
Adelina Patti, the famous soprano. 'Batti, Batti' is an aria in Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni*.

II, ii *'The Island of Monkeys ... founded on a similar situation in Le Roi Carotte'*
The monkey scene is basically mimed, the comic business and 'look out behind you' routines forming its attraction for young audiences. The *Age* article of 25 December 1873 (p. 3) reports that at the beginning of this scene Mosquito arrives and hands over the bat to Simius. The

'monkeys' are boys, the same eleven children who play the All-England team, and led by young Albert Leopold, who were picked up for the show and trained by the ballet master. Walch's *On the Cards* lampoons the custom of advertising jokey 'troupes' like this pantomime's 'celebrated Simian Troupe' of 'Gibber, Chatter, Jabber' etc. He invents the 'Grunta Family' impersonating the Five Little Pigs, 'none of them being in any way related to each other or previously known to fame' (p. 2). *Le Roi Carotte* (1872) is a satirical opera-bouffe by Offenbach with a libretto by Sardou after E.T.A. Hoffman lampooning with a strong fantastic flavour recent French politics; the fall of Louis Napoleon and the installation of the Third Republic. Described as an 'opéra- bouffe-féerie', it had a large pantomime and spectacular element. In mid-1873 it was announced (*Melbourne Punch*, 5 June 1873 p. 177) that Lyster intended including *Geneviève de Brabant* and *Le Roi Carotte* in his forthcoming season of English opera. While only the former show was performed, clearly Walch had access to both works and used the latter in *Australia Felix*.

II, ii, 1 *Well, here we are again, though that's a platitude*
It may be, but it is a normal phrase to find in a pantomime. 'Here we are again!' and 'How are you tomorrow?' were since the days of Grimaldi the standard greetings of the Clown to the audience. Old Australia's line is merely borrowed from its usual harlequinade position, but is appropriate in the pantomime knockabout of the Monkeys scene.

II, ii, 9 'OLD AUSTRALIA *looks to the right; they all look that way...'*
Presumably Old Australia cannot see the Monkeys since they form into lines across the stage directly behind him.

II, ii, 10 *'Enter* MIRTH's *Troop of Guards'*
These are the Amazons (the eighteen ballet ladies from the Cricketing and Willow Glen scenes, possibly with augmentation). No pantomime was complete without the March of the Amazons, where the army of the benevolent agent, after complicated choreographic evolutions, routes the forces of the demon; in this case the Amazons 'by means of magic mirror shields subdue the monkeys' (*Age*, 25 December 1873). The Opera House ballet was not as numerous by a third as the one at the Theatre Royal, but 'Tahite' gallantly said they were prettier (*Australasian*, 3 January 1874).

II, iii, 1 'MISS COLLYNS TREETER — *song Smartest Girl That's Out '*
There are no words given for this number; perhaps it was a currently known song. One of Harry Rickards' songs 'Beautiful Melbourne Girls' was used in *Twinkle Twinkle*. Like the 'Artful Mo' song which follows it in the SLV version, it merely gives the character a specialty solo and expands her role. Apart from her song to the tune 'Polka' (I, iv, 93-96) the character has no other solo. The *Age* of 27 December 1873 (p. 3) reports that Miss Wren had 'one comic song,' which may mean that her 'Polka' was the only one she actually performed. If 'Artful Mo' was cut because of time, it is probable that the other solo in this scene was also abandoned.

II, iii, 5 *To this disguise I've taken quite a liking*
Boblo was last onstage in the Cricket scene as an Under-and-Over man. The words of 'Artful Mo' seem to belong more to the raffish ambiance of that scene, as 'Mo' is the prototype of the urbane 'hawk' who preys on such innocent 'pigeons' as Felix. Wherever the scene is placed, at the settlers' hut again or at 'Breakneck Gully' Boblo is incongruous with his bush surroundings — if anything can be so termed in a form which thrives specifically on such incongruous juxtapositions.

II, iii, 7 *Artful Mo*
Boblo now moves into the territory of the Jewish specialty comic: roles not necessarily played by Jewish actors, nor were 'Irish' 'Scottish' or black comic types always played by performers of the nationality of the character. The immediate prototype for 'Mo' is probably the wily Mo Davis in *The Flying Scud*, a part created in Australia by J.R. Greville in 1867. Another model could be Melter Moss in Tom Taylor's *The Ticket-of-Leave Man* (1863) a fast-life habitué played in Melbourne by H.R. Harwood in a recent Theatre Royal performance in November 1873. As both these low comedians were playing in *Twinkle Twinkle*, 'Artful Mo' could be an attempt to expand one of the low comedy parts of *Australia Felix*, competing with the solo drunk act given by Clarke to Greville as Dame in the Theatre Royal show. The *Leader* considered Daniels a very useful actor with 'a peculiar brand of humour that is utilised very successfully' (10 January 1874).

II, iii, 10 *I'll work the oracle*
OED gives as meanings of 'to work the oracle' as influencing to procure a favourable outcome; manoeuvring behind the scenes; or raising money.

II, iii, 16 *I can do a little shlogging*
It is not clear what this is. In context it is improbable that 'Mo' is referring to hard work. Partridge gives a children's usage for 'to slog' as to steal fruit (ca. 1880); and for 'to schlog' as to raise prices extraordinarily (Aust., ca. 1925).

II, iii, 21
'Nobbler' is a glass of spirits; and 'loo' a card game.

II, iii, 32 *'Goes to Prompter'*
This false dry is one of the paratheatrical jokes given to Kantankeros; cf. I, i, 112 'You take the O.P. trap'; and I, iii, 35 'Why are we summoned here?' 'To aid the plot.'

II, iii, 35 *Ha! Boblo! Good!*
In the SLV version there is an entrance for Boblo before this line, which becomes redundant if his song begins this scene.

II, iii, 38 *At midnight meet me in our last front scene*
See Note: II, iii, 32. A front scene, or carpenter's scene, was one taking up only the downstage area, played before a painted canvas drop. Its purpose was to allow elaborate set-pieces to be put in place behind it for ensuing scenes; here, the Post Office scene and behind that again the elaborate Transformation scene. Stand-up acts, musical numbers or two-hander comedy turns, requiring little scenery, are the usual contents of such scenes.

II, iii, 41 *That sound again!*
Typical of pantomime is its parody of melodrama. Lachlan McGowan's version of *The Bells* was played at the Opera House in November 1872 with James Carden as Mathias — a famous role of Dampier's and of course Henry Irving. From a scrappy advertisement (*Argus*, 21 October 1872) it appears that Walch was preparing a burlesque of *The Bells*, bizarrely entitled titled 'Truckeloontas' for the Princess's, but it was not performed. Kantankeros's fear of Wooroohoohoo's laughter parallels Mathias' haunting by the sound of the sleighbells of the murdered Polish Jew.

II, iii, 50 *Grace for your side? — that's giving you the game.*
The joke would be effective no matter which team won the famous cricket match, but would be doubly funny after the Victorian victory.

II, iii, 52 *Yours is a style there is no getting over.*
A pun on 'stile', a set of steps allowing a person to climb over a fence while keeping out cattle or sheep.

II, iii, 56 *'Windsor?' while there's life, there's soap*
A pun on a famous brand of soap.

II, iii, 58 *I too will make some cursory remarks*
The passage which follows (II, iii, 59-74) was advertised as the 'Great Curse Scene' (cf. *Trookulentos*, p. 38).

II, iii, 60-62 *north winds ... Yan Yean ... street gas*
Hazards of Melbourne living which attracted continual comment.

II, iii, 63-64 *Trollope ... his next Australian* novel
On 15 November 1873 the *Age* serialised Trollope's 'Australian' novel, written from material gathered during his visit, called *Harry Heathcote of Gangoil*. Local comment was unimpressed, delighting in pointing out inaccuracies in the local colour and wanting to know why the space wasn't given to a real Australian author. *Melbourne Punch's* parody "Harry Hartshorn, of Tinfoil" by Antony Dollup' had its hero meet a 'cangeroo' whose 'tail was longer than any I may have written' (20 November and 4 December 1893). See also the *Herald*, 9 December 1873.

II, iii, 65-66 *Dr Neild ... 'urn' your ashes*
On 8 December 1873 Dr James Neild, pathologist — and more pertinently for the 'approval' — theatre critic, read before the Royal Society his paper, later published, *On the Advantages of Burning the Dead*. In this he argued with lurid pathological illustration that cremation, then prohibited by law, was more hygienic and cheaper than burial, and that the funerary urn could be reinstated as an art form, as it had been in the ancient world; '... for reasons of health, convenience, economy, and the encouragement of art, it will one day be the established mode of disposing of the dead...' (p. 9). See 'Atticus' in the *Leader* (13 December 1873) who pokes fun at these ideas; 'funeral baked meats' would take over from the 'cold meat business.'

II, iii, 67-68 *Clunes' infants ... every able miner man*
In the Clunes riots the Chinese were the meat in the sandwich in a violent clash between capital and labour. The employees of the Lothair Company struck late in 1873 over weekend working hours. As the strike continued for over three months the company resolved to bring in 150 Chinese from Creswick to replace the Clunes miners. The Chinese travelled under police escort, — a controversial and provocative move. A crowd of two thousand miners and their families, hearing of the approach, barricaded the roads, and in the early hours of 9 December drove back the police and Chinese with a barrage of missiles. Opprobrium was subsequently levelled at the miners, the company, the police, and the unfortunate Chinese, according to partisan stance.

II, iii, 69 *Deceased wifes sister*
In August 1873 Victoria passed legislation legalising marriage between a widower and his wife's sister. The Presbyterian General Assembly opposed such marriages being performed by their clergy, which made news shortly before the pantomime season (see the *Age*, 9 August, 13, 14, 20 November 1873).

II, iii, 70 *Higinbotham ... deadly down*
George Higinbotham, member for East Bourke and later Chief Justice of Victoria. He had been active in the preparation of the Education Act, opposed the Council and the great land estates, and imperial

interference in colonial affairs. He was a renowned barrister, but the immediate reference could be to his chairmanship of the Permissive Bill Association (see Note: I, ii, 34).

II, iii, 71 *Melbourne larrikins all take a rise out of you*
No idle threat. As the native-born children of the gold settlers reached early adolescence in a largely unschooled state, they formed gangs which roamed the streets creating mischief and striking terror into the hearts of the respectable. The 'boy nuisance' was exhaustively commented upon and pondered in the press. Street-wise and enemies of adult pomposity, some of their exploits however were merely acts of vandalism. In a gentler mood they also formed a significant part of the theatre audiences as enthusiastic gallery patrons (see the *Leader*, 1 November; the *Herald* 26 August; 8 December 1873).

II, iii, 73 *Press and Pulpit ... traduce you*
Both forums dealt out high-toned and merciless invective. See Note: I, i, 21-24.

II, iii, 74 *May the gods up in the gallery goose you*
The ultimate curse. 'Goosing' means hissing or other audible signs of audience disapproval. Gallery and pit, the cheapest parts of the class-segregated houses of the time, were the haunts of the workers and artisans and their families, right down to babes in arms, unattached teenagers and courting couples. This section of the audience, frequently the backbone of the house, was loud and generous both in its approval and disapproval of the entertainment, and actors had to come to terms with them or go under. The gallery inhabitants were called 'gods' from the French terms for the gallery, *le paradis*.

II, iv, 1 *'The Post Office Tower with illuminated clock'*
The view was of Melbourne's then-new Post Office, seen from Swanston Street 'with the clock-dial illuminated and the clock itself working mechanically' (*Age*, 25 December 1873). This would have been painted on two flats, as the directions later indicate, which could be quickly pulled into the wings to reveal the transformation scenery set up behind it; — a front scene, as Kantankeros notes (see Note: II, iii, 38).

II, iv, 4 *I — whose best helmet were a well-filled casque*
'Casque' meaning helmet and 'cask' are punned upon.

II, iv, 6 *the pubs shut up*
The pubs were open practically all day, but under the legislation of the time were obliged to close at midnight. The ill-fated Permissive Bill would have made opening hours subject to local option.

II, iv, 7 *Is that a Tom-cat ... how the 'Old Tom' comes o'er me*
Grog Blossom parodies Macbeth's 'Is this a dagger that I see before me?' 'Old Tom' was a name for gin.

II, iv, 24 *Like Thomas Dodd, Esquire*
Tommy Dodd was the winner, or loser, in tossing coins. Partridge cites a music hall song 'Heads or tails are sure to win, Tommy Dodd, Tommy Dodd.'

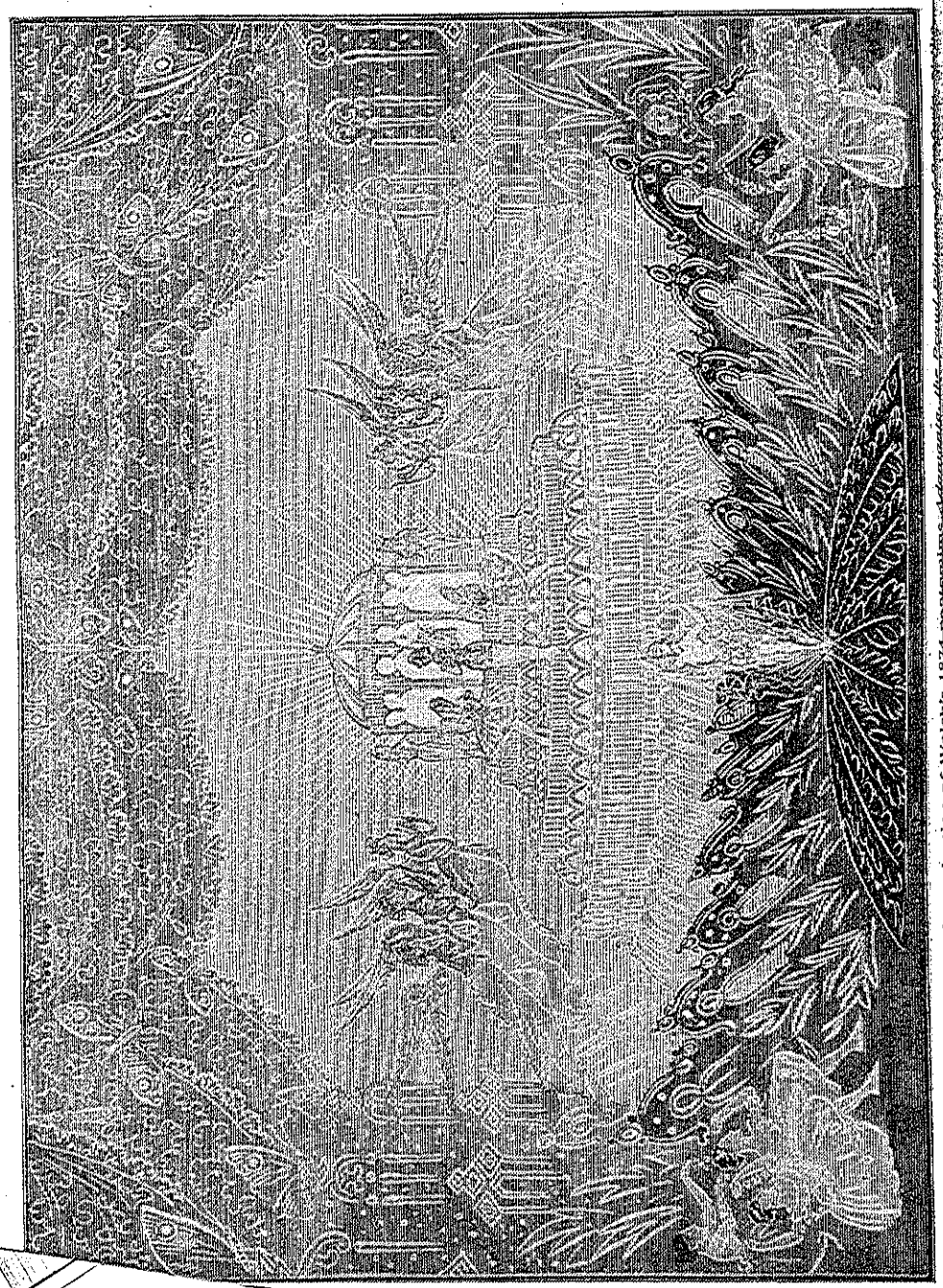
II, iv, 26 *Boblo's himself again*
Parody of 'Richard's himself again' in *Richard III*.

II, iv, 31-32 *If from this nettle 'danger' I could pluck the flower safety*
Cf. Hotspur's line in *1 Henry IV* (II, iii) 'Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety.'

II, iv, 33 Piccalilli is an Indian-type pickle.

II, iv, 56 *Now imitate the bakers' clock*
The bakers wanted the eight-hour day introduced into their trade. In

November they struck, and agreement was reached with employers. For its prompt successful resolution the *Leader* considered the bakers' action 'will stand in the front ranks of colonial strikes' (22 November 1873; see also *Age* 20 October, 13 November 1873).



Transformation Scene from Lyster's pantomime of Aladdin, 1874

APPENDIX I

THE PANTOMIME WRITER AT WORK, and a 'TRANSFORMATION SCENE'

What were the craft and institutional positions of the writers who supplied our early pantomime texts? As in England, so in Australia, the theatre writers were drawn either from within the ranks of the theatrical profession itself, or, more commonly, from journalists, called upon to engage their intimate knowledge of politics and news in the creation of a suitably topical Christmas entertainment. Those familiar with contemporary 'panto', which is largely seen as children's entertainment, may be surprised at the adult jokes and political satire of nineteenth-century scripts. Again, the form was in transition; an entirely adult entertainment at its inception, it gradually became more conscious of the children who made up large portions of the nineteenth-century family audience. However, colonial pantomime appealed across class and age groups, attracting country visitors on their annual city jaunts whose interests had to be included in the largely urban references of the form. Hence, the writer was faced with a broad cross-section of the populace — broader than for any other entertainment. Opera, burlesque, sensation drama, Shakespeare, magic, circus, variety, minstrel shows, hippodrama — all had their audiences, but these were partially segmented, if with some overlaps. Pantomime had to have something for everyone; it was pre-eminently and self-consciously a consensual form.

Hence, the pantomime librettist was primary a collaborator; ultimately with his audience whose opinions and values 'wrote' the show, and more immediately and contentiously, with his theatrical allies before and behind the scenes. Some writers, like Walch, accepted these conditions with a wry grace; others were less comfortable in the role of play-doctor, knowing that 'their' pantomime was destined to face the lofty and possibly unsympathetic scrutiny of press peers. Many could not resist the temptation to narrate their humiliations (and to be paid welcome money for so doing), and thus many valuable records of the technical side of pantomime and rehearsal practices survive. In his *English Plays of the Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 5, Michael Booth includes entertaining and informative accounts of the collaborative process by Francis Wey, G.A. Sala, 'Byron Blank', 'Feraldt' [Augustus Harris], Tom Robertson, Percy Fitzgerald, Leopold Wagner and J. Hickory Wood.[1] Wey gives vivid impressions as an audience member; Wood tells of Dan Leno and Herbert Marshall in rehearsal; the rest explain the preparation and

backstage workings of the theatre. The testimony of 'Byron Blank' takes the writer's point of view, as do those of two Australian dramatists, Clarke and Walch.

Marcus Clarke's comic report of his experiences in writing *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* for the Melbourne Theatre Royal management of Harwood, Stewart, Hennings and Coppin in 1873 is well-known.[2] Less visible is Walch's fictionalised account of pantomime authorship which occurs in his fantasy *On the Cards* (1875). Allowing for comic exaggeration — and exasperation — these accounts provide useful evidence of the logistical difficulties and organised chaos of pantomime preparation, seen from the vantage point of the 'meek author' whose literary effusions are cavalierly modified to suit everyone but himself:

> ... When poor Julius [Marcus] urges that at least his rhythm may be preserved, Burbo [Harwood] says 'Rhythm be podophyllined!' (*or words to that effect*). 'What we want is Rot! The public like Rot, the orchestra like Rot, I like Rot! Write Rot!' 'O certainly, if you wish it,' says Julius meekly, and goes into the green-room forthwith to produce that charming song of 'Brandy in My Tea!' with which Mr Snarleyow, the low comedian [Greville], afterwards electrified the elite of Fawkner's Town.[3]

And then there were the performers, all of whom expected the author's attention to be devoted to his or her own requirements:

> Everyone says 'Where is *my* part?' Miss Caroline Cassowary suggests in the most silvery of tones that she has four songs which she would like introduced, and that Mr Jones can easily put them in 'Anywhere'[...] To which Mr Jones — horribly reminded that he has already *nineteen* songs promised to Miss Maggie Pie, not to mention a grand quartette from *Semiramide* for Young Beng, which has to come in 'anywhere, old fellow, don't you know' — replies, 'O certainly, I will try, my dear Miss Cassowary. Let me take them,' and bears them to the cracked piano, whereon such melodies are rehearsed. 'I shall want a dance here, Mr Jones,' says Miss Maggie Pie, 'and you must put in two scenes after my exit at *Tickleherunderthechin* for me to get on my Peacock's Feathers for the Bird of Paradise scene.'[4]

Not only did the actors want good parts, they insisted on 'improving' the author's lines. 'Gagging', or improvisation, was a practice engaged in by performers which was only removed by the encroaching naturalism of the end of the century. On the comic stage it raged uncontrolled and uncontrollable, since ready responses to passing events and to audience state of mind were the

comic's survival weapons. Walch's view of this in his account of a dress rehearsal shows the differing institutional position occupied by writers and actors:

> ... poor Number Three [the author, Numbers One and Two being the Manager and Scenic Artist] is writhing under the consciousness that his unsymmetrical legs are being duly criticised by his fellow scribblers in the body of the house — and further that, despite his reiterated entreaties at previous rehearsals, that tantalising beauty, Miss de Vavasour, Mr Griggs, 'first low comedy', and other 'artistes' generally, persist in all kinds of sins of omission and commission, spoiling his darling puns, introducing bits of foreign 'business' into his choicest 'situations,' and laying him open, here, there, and everywhere, to the merciless fleam of his deadly rival Raser, theatrical critic to the *Morning Clarion*.[5]

Clarke's view of gagging and the generally minor role of the text is similar: '... the great end and aim of pantomime actors is to eschew dialogue altogether.'[6] After his 'dress rehearsal' Walch's 'author, utterly crushed beneath the weight of mal-pronunciations, undelivered points, and rudely-inserted vulgarities ... reached home in a limp state.'[7]

But reward, financial and otherwise, eventuates for both author and management. 'Then comes Boxing Night. The monster house is pleased. It applauds the songs; it re-demands the dances, it is enraptured by the Virgins of the Sun; and goes frantic over the Panorama.'[8] Another pantomime, invariably advertised as being 'on a scale of magnificence never before attempted in this colony', was launched on its five to six-weeks-run.

As for the culmination of the scenic spectacle of the show — the Transformation Scene — Walch's fictional pastiche of the scenario of such a scene gives a fair indication of how A.C. Habbe, W.J. Wilson or John Hennings may have devised such a pictorial allegory:

> The scene is an allegorical picture representing the Past, Present and Future of Australia. First — night, and an arid waste, broken only by a few jagged rocks, and groups of picturesquely-posed aboriginals gathered round their watch fires. Gradually there steals over the scene the soft grey light of morning, the aboriginals move as if rousing from sleep, native birds are heard, and in the distance up looms the great red summer sun. Slowly, sands, rocks, and natives sink from view, and in their place we see a headland on the coast, with the blue Southern Ocean lapping at its base and

stretching away in the distance. From the nearer waves rise shell-borne water-spirits. These are joined by wood-nymphs from the neighbouring groves and together await the arrival of their Queen — the lovely maid Australia. She, attended by an airy train, enters and mounts the height, from whose summit she gazes yearningly across the ocean. Presently, as if responsive to her prayer, the sails of a gallant ship — white-winged messenger of civilisation — mount the horizon, and as the descending gauzes hide the scene from view, the music swells into a hymn of praise and thanksgiving. The gauzy mists dispersing once again, disclose a view of busy Melbourne as it is, with just sufficient glamour of the brush about it to fit it for its setting, without destroying its verisimilitude. This we may be sure is destined to be hailed with tremendous applause on Boxing Night.

A couple of minutes more and the huge canvas on which the city is painted lifts, and reveals the last stage of the transformation — the Future of Australia. Grouped round the stage are seven thrones, on each of which stands a youthful queen. These are the seven sisters typical of the colonies forming the Australian and New Zealand group. Behind them, linking throne to throne, and falling at their feet in rich profusion, are wreaths and garlands of bright Austral flowers, upheld by cupidons. Larger flowers open and disclose fairies; fern fronds, all green and gold shimmer, bend themselves into triumphal arches on each side; a colossal figure of Peace, with a cornucopoeia, scattering smiling Plenty round, is unveiled by attendent angels, and in the background the noon-day sun of full Prosperity blazes in mid aether. From above descend the beauties of the air to meet their sisters of the earth; the orchestra bursts into the glorious finale to *Faust*, and a rosy glow of tropical sunset spreads over the exquisite picture.... the lime light is almost eclipsed by the brilliancy of the coloured fires, heralding the 'closing in'...[9]

NOTES

1 Booth, pp. 485–518.

2 First published in the *Weekly Times*, 31 January 1874, reprinted in Laurie Hergenhan, ed., *A Colonial City, High and Low: Selected Journalism of Marcus Clarke* (St Lucia: UQP, 1972), pp. 313–327.

3 Hergenhan, p. 315.

4 Hergenhan, p. 316.

5 *On the Cards*, p. 2.

6 Hergenhan, p. 315.

7 *On the Cards*, p. 14.

8 Hergenhan, p. 320–22.

9 Walch, *On the Cards; or, A Motley Pack* [Melbourne: Bailliere, 1875], p. 4.

APPENDIX II

Australia Felix IN PERFORMANCE

For a pantomime anomolous in so many ways, the fact that *Australia Felix* was performed by colonial Australia's pre-eminent opera company is one of them. Not that pantomime production as such was a new entrepreneurial venture for the versatile and tireless William Lyster. It would be a brave or a desperate management which ignored the needs of the holiday season. The fact that *Australia Felix* was devised for the opera-bouffe

William Saurin Lyster, *Weekly Times*, 12 September 1874. (Courtesy La Trobe Library)

specialties of Lyster's performers gave it a higher than average quantity of music and also enhanced its quality. For Lyster had more than one string to his bow. Besides producing grand opera in Australia for two decades, he cannily followed popular taste by mounting seasons of old favourite English operas like *Maritana* and *The Bohemian Girl*, blended with the newer craze for the French repertoire. It was in the spirit of the latter tradition that *Australia Felix* was conceived, and it has as equal a right to be considered an Australian opera-bouffe as an Australian pantomime.[1]

By early December 1873 it was known that the female leads of the 'allegorical, absolutely local and especially musical' Opera House pantomime would be Lydia Howarde, Alice Wooldridge and Jeannie Winston.[2] The rest of the cast, with some exceptions, show that Lyster's resources were somewhat stretched. He 'organised his forces at short notice,' reports the *Australasian Sketcher*, and 'had to take the chance of casting his piece with little more than a conjectural knowledge of the ability of some of his company to support effectively the parts with which they were entrusted.'[3] Howarde (Mirth) was the principal established singer, having worked in San Francisco, New Zealand, and various parts of Australia; she had been Walch's fairy queen, Placida, in the 1871 Sydney premiere of *Trookulentos*, and toured Australia and New Zealand tirelessly throughout the seventies with her own opera-bouffe and burlesque troupe.

The other two women were emerging talents. Alice Wooldridge (Victoria) was the second daughter of the famous 'old woman' actor Susan Wooldridge to take the stage, her sister Harriet having left acting for marriage after a brief and promising career. By 1873 she had done some work in burlesque and pantomime, having played Queen Mab in the 1872 Theatre Royal pantomime *Riquet with the Tuft* and a few other small parts 'hidden for two or three years at the Theatre Royal.'[4] On 22 November 1873 she served notice that she was working seriously on her career by making her concert debut on the Town Hall as a pupil of Lucy Chambers, displaying a rich mezzo voice with a good lower register.[5] Jeannie Winston (Felix) emigrated from Liverpool to Dunedin in 1867 and did small parts until coming to Melbourne to study singing. She joined Lyster's company and emerged gradually from the chorus, taking in the course of 1873 small solo parts, until in September she was entrusted with the lead soprano role, Fleurette, in Offenbach's *Rose of Auvergne*, the curtain-raiser to the Walch *Geneviève de Brabant*. By 15 November 'Tahite' was able to report that this 'rising favourite' would take a leading part in the Opera House pantomime,

appearing for the first time *en travestie*.[6] As Felix her clear voice and statuesque figure made such a hit that male roles became her chief line of work in Lyster's company thereafter: in the *Princess of Trebizonde* and *Chilpéric* (1874), *Eldorado* and *Giroflè-Giroflà* (1875) and in the Emilie Melville season she was Prince Paul in *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein* (1875) and Orestes in *La Belle Hélène* (1876), long remembered as a 'vision of symmetrical beauty.'[7]

With the male actors Lyster was on surer ground. The tenor Charles Lascelles (Kantankeros), a versatile but eccentric performer, arrived in Australia in 1868 as pianist to the singer Anna Bishop and had worked solidly for Lyster in opera-bouffe ever since.[8] His talents appear strongly visual, as his makeup and costumes are frequently commented on, and he also drew humourous (and sometimes scandalous) sketches of theatre life. Although he worked exhaustively in the 1873 opera-bouffe season, the standard of the work was variable, and in reviews of *Australia Felix* too he was called to task for not trying hard enough. J.E. Kitts, a bass, was appropriately cast as Grog Blossom, since one of his most popular roles had been Baron Grog in Lyster's *Grand Duchess of Gerolstein* in 1871. The *Age* issued a characteristic warning after seeing these two in *Maritana*: 'If Mr Kitts is to continue as the King, Mr Lascelles must look to his laurels as the low comedian of the company, or he will be assuredly superceded.'[9]

Lyster could also be certain of the solidity of George Leopold, cast as King Mischief and deviser and star of the harlequinade. Like Harwood, Greville and Holt, he was one of the artistes of his age whose diverse skills equipped him to shine in both parts of a pantomime. This versatile and hard-working performer had arrived in Australia in 1857 as an acclaimed dancer and pantomimist, and gradually enlarged his lines of business to include Shakespeare, melodrama, low comedy and opera-bouffe: *Australia Felix* drew on all these varied skills. With Leopold came his family for the dancing speciality roles: his brother Henry, sister-in-law Fannie and their children Blanche and Albert.[10]

Ford (The Missus), Hogan (Old Australia) and Daniels (Boblo) were all useful actors of low comedy or character roles, whose experience at least could be counted on.[11] Daniels in particular was a gifted natural comic whose work developed through the seventies. 'Autolycus' remembered him in Lyster's *Princess of Trebizonde* production of 1874 as 'a singularly solemn and amusing comedian in comic-opera work. He was as thin and shrivelled as the Apocethery in *Romeo and Juliet*, and he had that

appearance of utter unconsciousness of his audience which is the essential characteristic of a genuine comedian.'[12] In the 'aerial' department, the baritone Arthur Bell seems well cast as the 'fly' Mosquito, a part demanding eccentric vocal and mime skills — in *La Fille de Madame Angot* (1874) he highlighted the role of the dancing-master by dancing throughout the entire part.[13] W.G. Carey, who played Wooroohoohoo, was a young Bendigo-trained actor, 'tall and gentlemanly in appearance [with] good elocutionary gifts [and] natural style',[14] who subsequently made a good dramatic career as a leading man. His Claude Melnotte in 1874 was modelled on Montgomery's and favourably compared with it.

In the musical department there would be no contesting the Opera House's pre-eminence: Lyster had the best band available. Thomas Zeplin, of a musical family, had lead the orchestra for Harry Rickards at the New Apollo Hall in October 1873 and was a seasoned musician. His orchestra for the pantomime was judged excellent, and the 'charming little solos given by respective instruments' were hugely applauded.[15] The singers were professionals and not merely singing actors. The ballet women too were from the opera chorus, so they sang well and danced proficiently.[16] The *Argus* was correct in assessing that 'the extravaganza was essentially a musical one, and all the leading characters were furnished with solos to various tunes and metres to ravish the ears of the audience. Even the Laughing Jackass adds his cachinnatory monologue to the general concert' (27 December 1873). With this musical expertise, plus the tried team of Walch and Habbe and an original literary invention for the plot — a curiosity in itself — the Opera House could make a good showing against the massed forces of the larger Theatre Royal.

A feature of the *Australia Felix* cast which would excite comment in a similar professional undertaking now — of a musical comedy say — was the extreme youthfulness of most of the performers. The men excepted, even the soloists were young; Winston twenty-three, Wooldridge sixteen, and young Sarah Ford, who stepped out of the chorus to cover two emergencies, was only thirteen.[17] Added to these were the troupes of children (nineteen female, eleven male) who played imps, fairies, monkeys and cricketers; the juvenile harlequinade dancers; and the ballet 'ladies' playing fairies, cricketers and Amazons, and a largely youthful ensemble emerges. Pantomime was not solely for the young, but it was performed by them in significant numbers. Already, as we have seen, many of these were already seasoned performers, or aspired to be; others, like the 'monkeys', were

likely children picked up and trained in return for a few shillings or the chance to shine.[18] Despite the joke in the cast list, Simius was far from being Albert Leopold's 'first ape- earance,' this had occurred at a tender age at Christmas 1865 at the same theatre where he now reigned over his monkey subjects.[19] His sister Blanche, whose mother Fraulein Fannie had herself been a child dancing star, was born in 1864.

The reviews of the performances of *Australia Felix* pick out for comment the originality of the libretto and the careful matching of standard musical numbers to the action. 'The music and singing have some approximation to the action' and 'the characters have a consistency no less than individuality, while as a whole there is a dramatic unity and completeness in the pantomime that fixes the attention and excites the interest...'[20] While the script passed the expert scrutiny of the press with approval, some of the details of the numerous main and daily follow-up reviews are valuable in filling out how the 1873 production looked in performance. However, many details of visual style and acting techniques which excite curiosity now were taken for granted by contemporary commentators, and thus not expounded. 'The dresses and appointments are handsome and grotesque' says the *Age* of 27 December 1873, leaving one to assume that they were not both simultaneously and that 'grotesque' refers to the costumes of the demonic characters.

Mirth, played by the star Lydia Howarde in her Melbourne debut, attracted most attention. 'She dresses handsomely, has a good well-developed figure, sings far better than most actresses, and has plenty of vivacity.'[21] Other observers found her stiff and nervous at first, though she relaxed and gained confidence as the season progressed. The *Daily Telegraph* noted that she didn't dance much, but was graceful and ladylike, while her dress was a model of elegance and propriety — as burlesque dresses went (27 December 1873). 'Tahite' also commented on her costume, classified as 'etherial', which was 'both as to colour and design agreeably indicative of the character she represented.'[22] Available clues as to what this 'etherial' dress consisted of is found in the Moir copy of *Australia Felix*, where on her first entrance (p. 13) Neild as reviewer has scribbled a costume sketch of Howarde as Mirth, with indications of the colours. The sketch shows a red tight short-sleeved jerkin cut into pointed edges round the hips, worn over green trunks, with red ankle boots and tights of some illegible colour which could be pink, or, more likely, blue. The comment 'pretty elegant dress' is pencilled alongside. Neild believed that Howarde's costume, and that of Wooldridge as Miss Victoria, were genuinely representative of their characters, 'a

Miss Jeannie Winston, *Australasian Sketcher*, 15 May 1874. (Courtesy National Library of Australia)

branch of aesthetics too frequently neglected', and that these actors showed 'what really may be done in the way of allegorical representation.'

Jeannie Winston, making her mark outside of chorus work in her first breeches part as Felix, agreeably surprised the audience. Her 'formal and restrained manner' displayed hitherto had given no clue to her latent burlesque abilities, but as Felix she sang, danced and did the comedy business to evident satisfaction.[23] Winston and the transformation scene were the best things in the show, according to Neild. Previously presenting herself as 'a handsome, somewhat stately woman, with a good clear so[illegible] voice and an evident ability to make the most [illegible]

appeared as 'a dashing, rattling burlesque actress, bubbling over with fun and manifestly enjoying the humour of the situation as much as the audience.' 'Graces of person, vivacity of style and vocal excellence' was the *Weekly Times*' summary of her contribution.[24] Alice Wooldridge was praised by all for her singing as Victoria. 'She sang sweetly and looked the same' (*Age*, 27 December 1873, p. 3) and had a 'bewitching way' (*Weekly Times*), 3 January 1874, p. 9). As for young Miss Wren — Jenny Wren according to the press advertisements — 'the audience suspended judgement, which was the fairest thing they could do.'[25]

There is ample evidence that Lascelles as Kantankeros did not act as splendidly as he dressed or made up. The *Herald* found him not in good voice (27 December 1873); the *Age* concurred and added that he 'went through his part in perfunctory manner' although his makeup was 'most extraordinary' (27 December 1873). Splendid makeup, but humourless and laboured performance were the *Leader*'s impressions (10 January 1874), while the *Weekly Times* of 17 January 1874 (p. 9) was far more explicit: 'He talks, when he has to speak, like a soulless parrot, and does the gesticulatory business as if moved by mild galvanic shocks.' 'Tahite' considered Lascelles unsuccessful in carrying out the author's intentions. 'What was intended, I take it, was a sort of idealised Quilp; an ill- conditioned demon, all aloes and quassia. Mr Lascelles gave us a gorgeous red-tinselled fiend, not snappish enough, not venomous, not sufficiently happiness-hating' (3 January 1874, p. 18). Daniels and Leopold were the best men, and all agreed that the comedy rested comfortably in their hands. The *Weekly Times* had a special commendation for James Hogan as Old Australia; 'a gentleman who invariably did the heavy villain business in the operas ... He talks the brogue as only a native could, and has a fund of humour which is not an imitation of something seen elsewhere, but is evolved out of Mr Hogan's own consciousness. Mr Ford, as The Missus, plays second fiddle very well' (3 January 1874, p. 9).

The more eccentric parts of Mosquito, Grog Blossom and Wooroohoohoo attracted comment which was detailed yet perhaps not sufficiently revealing for modern curiosity. Mosquito appears to have been a flying part, and mostly mute except for one scripted song and dance 'Oh! I'm the fly that flies by night' (I, iii, 177–200), signalling him as a kind of insect version of the 'fly' man-about-town Boblo. His spectacular and casual annihilation at the Demon's command, done probably by means of a trap, must have provided a good sight gag. The advertisements proclaim 'the ~~~ Mosquito ever seen!' but of his costume the *Argus* merely

states that his appearance 'might have excused the mistake of the Irishman who believed the elephant he saw in India to be the dreaded insect of which he had heard so much' (27 December 1873, p. 6) The character appears to have been presented as the ultimate 'they grow *that* big' mosquito joke — along with snake stories a fertile sub-genre of the colonial humour of exaggeration. Kitts had a surefire role as the drunken Grog Blossom, 'a sort of Falstaff whose corpulency was only exceeded by his capacity for swallowing' (*Argus*, 27 December 1873, p. 6). The already rotund actor probably padded himself even further, since he 'comes upon the stage with such a paunch that everyone knows what to expect; of course it gets belaboured soundly' (*Weekly Times*, 3 January 874, p. 9). As for Carey's Wooroohoohoo, he had 'only to be seen and listened to to become a favourite' (*The Herald*, 27 December 1873). 'Perhaps the most funny thing in the whole pantomime is the wonderfully good imitation of the laughing jackass by Mr G.P. Carey. The kingfisher's peculiar vocal sounds are reproduced in a marvellously natural manner' (*Weekly Times*, 3 January 1874, p. 9). Neild was uncertain whether the actor and the laugher were the same, but the laugh was a success, whoever produced it. As for how the character looked, it is clear from the text and all reports that he hopped on the stage rather than flew above it. The *Argus* tantalisingly reports 'a wondrous fowl' which 'belied its name both by the solemnity of its gait and the unearthly sapience of its appearance' (27 December 1873, p. 6) — a case perhaps of playing against type as the essentially dramatic talents of Carey made the part his own.

An insect not unlike Mosquito must have attacked Jeannie Winston on 6 January, since she had to drop out for a few days after being bitten on the face by 'a poisonous fly.'[26] In this emergency young Sarah Ford, daughter of the comic who played The Missus, was promoted at short notice from the chorus to take over the part of Felix for a few days.[27] It was not her first named part, as she had with her sister Charlotte played the small role of one of Fatima's brothers in *True Blue Beard* the previous year. Kind words were written about her aptitude in the crisis, and the *Leader* congratulated Lyster for unearthing more colonial talent in his company (7 January 1874). Then on 17 January Lydia Howarde became indisposed and young Sarah took over her demanding role of Mirth at a few hours' notice. Again, praise was generous considering that it was hardly a faultless performance — the *Herald* thought is a pity that she should be 'relegated to the ranks of dancing feys' (19 January 1874). 'Tahite' found her promising, though discerned in her diction 'a determined dislike to that much ill-used member of the alphabet' (24 January 1874, p.

115). The monkey scene was noted with approval, 'the youngsters concerned in its rendering entering into the spirit of it thoroughly' (*Daily Telegraph*, 31 December 1873), though some jaded adult observers considered the exhuberance might be pruned.

Of Habbe's work for *Australia Felix*, the sets most picked out for praise are the Willow Glen by Moonlight (I, iii), the Melbourne Cricket Club Grounds (I, iv) and the Pine Tree Walk at Fitzroy Gardens (II, i). The first of these was praised by the *Weekly Times* for both perspective and colouring (3 January 1874, p. 9). The *Herald* wrote that Habbe could lay a legitimate claim to the mantle of Beverley: his scenes 'never violate accepted rules; they are made beautiful by the gorgeous harmony of colour and pleasing invention' (23 January 1874). Neild gave 'brightness and sunniness' as the 'predominant quality' of Habbe's scenery, but of the bush scenes (I, iii and II, iii) no specific description survives apart from Neild's pencilled cryptic remark in the Moir copy against the I, iii heading: 'Very Australian.' The Fitzroy Garden scene also earned a 'very good' and a scribbled 'called', which supports the *Daily Telegraph*'s report that both this scene and the MCC scene 'brought down the house, and brought out the artist.' It is significant, for the question of the evolution of 'Australian' imagery, that urban scenes were valued and acclaimed well in advance of images of pastoral and bush scenery — the latter were to dominate in succeeding decades.

The transformation scene was expected to be a show-stopper; a fitting culmination of the wonders of all the scenery of the opening. The descriptive outline, as so often with these splendid spectacles, is all that survives. The unfolding of the allegory through the stages from the 'grotto of Prismatic Crystals' to 'the Eastern Pagoda expanding into the Shrine of Beauty and Cataract of Diamonds' contains the topical scene of 'the Temple of Art, Music and Literature' — self-assertion of theatre as a cultural force. The scene titles suggest that the glitter of gold and silver metal was well in evidence, and Neild claims that real water was used in the last scene. The *Herald* picked out the 'Cataract of Diamonds' for praise, while the *Daily Telegraph* commended Habbe on the lack of vulgarity and gaudy glare, and the chaste dresses with which the divine forms of the nymphs and fairies were clothed in the final apotheosis. The orientalist touch of exotica reminds us of this lush genre of colonial visual imagery: 'as beautiful as Moore's or any other poet's Eastern imaginings might suggest,' according to the *Telegraph* (27 December 1873).

Of the Harlequinade little specific information is known; reviewers tend to treat this element as a generic set piece rather than as an individualised comedy scenario. Neild, no admirer of

harlequinades, professed this one 'less wearisome than most' though gallantly rallied to the juvenile harlequinade by declaring it 'made special by the production, out of the bottom of a box, of the smallest and prettiest little child I remember ever to have seen used in a pantomime' (*Australasian*, 3 January 1874, p. 18). His reviewer's notes, scrawled on the last page of the Moir libretto, contain such jottings as 'head through bottom of pot'; 'the dead clown', (probably the standard beheading trick, with the 'head' thrown into the audience); 'little harlequinade', and 'Leopold's dance song getting old and [?]'. This last could refer to the Clown's inevitable songs 'Tippitywitchet' and 'Hot Codlins'. For Walch's benefit Leopold danced his Spade Dance, one of those routines like 'horrible acrobatic feats, tumbling, and ... mere circus performance' which a Sydney observer in 1869 complained were replacing the good old pantomime tricks.[28] The *Argus* repeatedly wrote favourably of the *Australia Felix* harlequinade and reported loud applause, and on 13 January 1874 notes that 'the business ... in the scene of the housetops is of more than average merit.' This scene must have appealed also to Neild, for in his notes he has sketched scenery showing a row of housetops; whether this relates to the second scene ('Overground Railway') or the third ('Melbourne all the Year Round') is hard to say.

George Leopold was partnered by his brother Henry in the more dance-oriented part of Harlequin and Henry's wife Fannie as Columbine. The Pantaloon was W.P. Morrison and the Policeman G.P. Carey, who had lately impersonated the kookaburra. For Walch's benefit on 22 January Charles Ward the property master joined this team as second Clown and Carey took Pantaloon. In the juvenile harlequinade the younger Leopolds dominated with Albert as Clown and Blanche as Harlequin. These juvenile harlequinades culminated a long evening's worth of entertainment, when children on and off stage might be forgiven for tiredness; but they were it seems enjoyed and probably indulged by audiences who appreciated the training function of these performances for young actors. After the harlequinade the 'Grand Last Scene' — another effort by Habbe — would conclude the show. By 1873 the transformation scene so dominated as the major scenic event that the last scene after the harlequinade, once the culmination of the pantomime thematically and scenically, was so bereft of novelty that it hardly rates a notice in contemporary advertisements.[29]

Australia Felix ran until 31 January 1874; not a remarkable run as pantomimes go: the Royal's *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* by Marcus Clarke lasted fifty performances until 21 February. Lyster took the pantomime off early and recommenced his opera-bouffe

season with Farnie's *Nemesis*, with much the same cast. The Melbourne press loyally supported the show to the end, some claiming that it could have run longer. Clearly the Royal poured much more money into their spectacle and it paid off, particularly lavishing it on the 'celestial beings ... according to the recognised formula — beings in fleshings showing more or less shapely limbs, and dazzlingly bright in burnished armour or dresses of spangles, made more lustrous by the lime-light effects'.[30] Furthermore, Clarke's pantomime had the stronger low comedy team in Stewart, Harwood and Greville. This shows that the tastes of reviewers and of audiences do not always coincide, since those of the former who compared Walch's through-written script with Clarke's adaptation of John Strachan unanimously preferred *Australia Felix*. Clarke received mixed reviews, of which the *Leader* one is typical: 'Satire requires an effort of intellectuality to appreciate ... it is in this description of intellectuality that Mr Clarke seems to excel, and it often proves fatal to a pantomime, if not relieved by comic incidents.'[31]

With the example of an original pantomime before their eyes, those who habitually grumbled at the hybrid localising of extant pantomimes now had immediate ammunition; as the *Australasian Sketcher* tactfully put it, 'It is very probably that if Mr Marcus Clarke, who adapted *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* &c, had not been fettered by the conditions of having to engraft local ideas upon a foreign stock, he might have competed on more equal terms with Mr Garnet Walch...' (24 January 1874, p. 187). Thus was the unfortunate Clarke rebuked for his acerbic but admittedly more diffuse script. His famous *Weekly Times* piece of 31 January, on the management's and public's preference for green fire over satire, survives as his delightful revenge.

The press also advanced industrial reasons for *Twinkle's* longer run, other than the Royal's superior financial power, the Opera House itself being seen as part of the problem. The larger-capacity Royal was the established drama theatre, whereas anything the Opera House did was seen as a filler between opera seasons, and it was hard to convince the public to try it as a pantomime venue.[32] The *Era* opined that the rebuilding of the Opera House as a middle-class venue had driven away 'the bone and sinew of theatrical success,' the pit and gallery. The dress circle had been brought so close to the stage that only the first two or three seats of the pit were clear of the overhang, thus giving bad sightlines to the all- important gallery as well.[33] The *Era* is here perceptively commenting on an incontrovertible process in social history; the changes in class patronage which by the end of the century were to push the popular audience out of

live theatre, and into the arms of cinema, and reconstitute live theatre as a high-art medium for the educated middle class.

NOTES

1 See Harold Love, *The Golden Age of Australian Opera: W.S. Lyster and His Companies 1861–1880* (Sydney: Currency, 1981) for the history of Lyster's companies and repertoire.

2 *The Australasian*, 6 December 1873, p. 722.

3 24 January 1874, p. 187. For the history of the Wooldridge family see Barbara Jefferis, *Three of a Kind* (Melbourne: Sisters Publishing, 1982).

4 *Australasian Sketcher*, 27 December 1873, p. 170.

5 See the *Age*, 22 November 1873, p. 5; 1 December 1873, p. 2; *The Herald*, 24 November 1873, p. 3.

6 *The Australasian*, 15 November 1873, p. 627. See the *Australasian Sketcher*, 15 May 1875 (p. 24) for a short account of Winston's career to date. After *Australia Felix*, which first tested her comic powers, she went on to play in comedy, farce and melodrama.

7 *The Argus*, 29 July 1905, p. 5.

8 Love, p. 217.

9 *The Age*, 18 July 1873, p. 3. In *Australia Felix* Kitts and Lascelles had however an extremely light singing load for such experienced soloists, compared with the heavy musical parts written for Howarde, Winston, Wooldridge and Leopold. Kitts has no solo, and Lascelles only one in the first act.

10 Love and Pask contain material on the careers of the Leopold family, whose real name was also Wooldridge.

11 John Ford(e) — 'Ford' appears the more frequent spelling — was possibly no relation to the Mr Ford who did the costumes. James Hogan died in 1889 aged 74, having arrived in Australia with Barry Sullivan in the 1860s. He played old man and Irish comic parts until he joined Lyster, remaining with him until the latter's death. Hogan's career than went downhill and he died in the Actors' Almshouses in Clifton Hill (*The Lorgnette*, 25 May 1889). Harry Daniels was more versatile, playing such roles as the Artful Dodger (Melbourne, Princess's, September 1872); a 'truculent mandarin' in the *Willow Pattern Plate* burlesque (*Age*, 8 October 1872) and straight parts opposite Mary Gladstane in her acclaimed *Marie Antoinette* at the Prince of Wales in October 1872. The *Australasian* of 15 November 1873 (p. 626) reports him as 'a careful and judicious actor' and by

1874 the *Argus* claimed he was 'becoming more popular every performance' (16 January 1874). Daniels played the villain in *Her Evil Star* in 1881.

12 *The Argus*, 20 May 1905, p. 5.

13 *The Argus*, 3 June 1905, p. 4.

14 *The Argus*, 10 June 1905, p. 4. Carey contributed an amusing anecdote 'Acting Under Difficulties', recounting the adventures of a small stock company at 'Vegetable Creek,' in *Harry Emmet's Theatrical Holiday Book* (Melbourne:[Rae Bros.], 1885), pp. 1–3.

15 *The Weekly Times*, 3 January 1874, p. 9. The Zeplin family of G. Zeplin and sons arrived in Melbourne as a Quadrille Band in 1859 (*The Argus*, 18 September 1859). F. Zeplin, presumably the brother of Thomas and the music arranger of *Australia Felix*, had no luck at management, as both the Varieties (1870) and St James Music Hall (1873) burnt down under his ownership (*The Era*, 23 March 1873 and 5 October 1873).

16 *The Weekly Times*, 10 January 1874, p. 9.

17 Barbara Jefferis (p. 31) locates Alice's birthdate as 1857. Jeanie (or Jeannie) Winston (real name Bruce) was according to the *Australasian Sketcher* (15 May 1875) born on 28 July 1850.

18 The poverty and savage labour competition which drove many children and adults into the labour-intensive and frequently dangerous theatrical industry are grim aspects of the nineteenth-century stage. *The Herald* of 1 December 1873 however noted that while the usual crowd of a hundred children gathered at the Theatre Royal for auditions (not one accompanied by a parent), they seemed to be 'respectable' rather than of the poorest classes.

19 Pask, pp. 38 ff.

20 *The Leader*, 3 January 1874, p. 18.

21 *The Weekly Times*, 3 January 1874, p. 9.

22 *The Australasian*, 3 January 1874, p. 18.

23 *The Leader*, 10 January 1874, p. 18.

24 *The Weekly Times*, 17 January 1874, p. 9.

25 *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 December 1873, [p. 3]. Miss Wren, whether Jenny or the Miss A. Wren advertised in the cast of the Opera House's *Spectre Bridegroom* of February 1874, seems to have returned to the chorus for *Nemesis*, Lyster's next production after *Australia Felix*.

26 *The Australasian*, 10 January 1874, p. 50.

27 *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 January 1874, [p. 3]. In Lyster's lavish

production of Walch's 1874 pantomime *Adamanta, the Proud Princess of Profusia and her Six Unlucky Suitors* the 'transit of Venus' was effected by Sarah Ford as Venus, 'a young lady of classic shape,' wafting across the large upstage 'sun'. As 'Autolycus' remembered, 'Her costume was classically economical in respect of material; it suited well with her supposed proximity to the sun. The transit of the goddess was carefully observed through opera glasses by hundreds of amateur astronomers' (*The Argus*, 10 June 1905, p. 4).

28 *Sydney Punch*, 30 January 1869, p. 1. The writer also grumbles about the new practice of a double set of pantomimists; if the magician doesn't become Clown and the prince Harlequin, what is the point of the transformation scene?

29 The last scene was basically a tableau. 'Ixion' in the *Argus* (4 January 1913, p. 4) says 'The final scene exhibits more Dutch metal and revolving multi-coloured wheels, and red fire, with Clown, Pantaloon, Harlequin and Columbine forming a pyramid.' An illustration of this classic pose is reproduced in Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, *Pantomime: A Story in Pictures* (London: Peter Davies, 1973), plate 77. After Clown's head popped out for a final 'goodnight' the show was over.

30 *The Weekly Times*, 3 January 1874, p. 9.

31 *The Leader*, 3 January 1874, p. 18. The *Herald* devotes an article on 30 December 1873 (p. 3) to 'Locals,' which criticises Clarke without specifically naming him.

32 *The Australasian Sketcher*, 21 February 1874, p. 202.

33 *The Era*, 22 March 1874, p. 10.