

THE WONDER WORKER

Sources

Vocal score. *The Wonder Worker: a comic opera in two acts; words by Edward Cadman, music by Albert W. Ketèlbey.* London: Hammond, 1900 (H. 4473). Copy in the BBC Library in 1979.

Libretto. Copy in the Bodeleian Library.

Piano score. No copy has been located.

History

The following summary is given in Gänzl: *The British Musical Theatre:*

The Wonder Worker... produced at the Grand Theatre, Fulham under the management of Edgar and F. Sydney Ward, 8 October 1900, and toured.

Also in the comic opera vein was a piece called *The Wonder Worker*, produced at Fulham. It was not a success. *The Stage* described it as:

... a slender plot devoid of dramatic situations and wit, but few interesting incidents framed a theme which in spite of some clever and well-written lyrics set to tuneful sparkling and lively music, failed to rivet the attention...

Ketèlbey was to marry the actress playing Eleanor, Lottie Siegenberg.

No.21 (*The morning was bright*) was re-issued in 1902 as the solo song *Kildoran*, with new words by Clifton Bingham. Both words and music were revised by the composer in 1951 and published as *Kilmoran* by Manor Music.

Original cast list (from Source 1 and Gänzl)

Sir John Forrester	Tom Grove
Guy, his son	John M. Hay
Sir Walter Shirley, friend of Guy's	Philip Lincey
Bertram, a jester	Ernest Spalding
Master Bungay	Edwin Keene
Felton, steward to Sir John	S. Spears
Captain of the Queen's Guard	Stuart Ethell
Longstaff & Blades [Warders]	E. Church, George Hudson
Jack-in-the-Green	Edward Montelli
Queen Elizabeth of England	Annie Bernard
Eleanor, niece to Sir John, and adopted by him	Lottie Siegenberg
Marjorie, her cousin, and niece to Sir John	Faith Laborde
Hilda, maid to Marjorie	Connie Leon
Elsa, Mary, Pattie, Sallie [Village girls]	Nellie Harper, Ethel Thorne, Kittie Denton, Dora Weber

Chorus of peasants, villagers, courtiers, hunters, guards, etc.

The libretto has parts in No.14 for four Court Ladies, also described as Dancers, and for four Gallants.

The vocal score omits these, in fact omitting to specify any characters at all at the relevant point.

Brief synopsis

Sir John would like his son Guy to marry his neighbour Marjorie, and Bungay the astrologist takes it upon himself to assist this with predictions. Everyone else knows that Guy is in love with Eleanor. Guy has been put under house arrest by Queen Elizabeth (for no apparent reason?), but he has come back home without permission.

Elizabeth visits Sir John, and is asked to bless the union of Guy and Marjorie.

Bungay falls out of a tree in front of Elizabeth, and she makes him do a prediction.

When he again predicts that Guy will marry Marjorie, Guy comes out of hiding to refuse this. Elizabeth order the arrest of both Guy and Bungay.

At Windsor Castle, Elizabeth arranges it to be intimated to Bungay that he is to be hanged. Bertram the jester promises to help Bungay escape in order to win the hand of Hilda. Bertram and Bungay exchange clothes. Elizabeth finds out, and is much amused by the sight of thin Bertram in fat Bungay's clothes, and fat Bungay in Bertram's clothes. She has apparently freed Guy, and frees Bertram and Bungay, the latter on condition that he gives up astrology.

Contents

<i>Title from caption (singers)</i>	<i>Opening line</i>	<i>Tempo</i>	<i>Key</i>	<i>Time</i>
[Act I]				
Introduction		Andante pesante Allegretto	Am G > E	C 6/8
1. Opening chorus (SATB)	Come with us ye laughing lassies	Allegro moderato	A	2/4
Recit (Steward=Felton)	Ho cease your merry song			C
(SATB)	Tripping so prettily	Allegro giocoso	D	3/8
(SATB)	So let the brave old oaks resound	Marcato	G	2/4
Recit (Squire=Sir John)	My friends, I thank you			C
2. Squire's song (Sir John)	A gallant companie	Allegretto pastorale	F	6/8
[Refrain] (with SATB)	Chanting our lay			C
3. Solo (Jack-in-the-Green)	Come merrily sing	Allegretto	Eb	6/8
[Refrain] (with SATB)	For I'm jolly old Jack-in-the-Green			
4. Trio & dance (Marjorie, Hilda, Bertram)	Oh, lady fair I fain would warn	Allegretto grazioso	F	6/8
5. Song & dance (Bertram)	Oh bauble mine, come open wide thine ears	Moderato	D	C
6. Song & dance (Bungay)	I'm the person that you should consult	Moderato	F	C
[Refrain] (with 4 Village Girls)	Oh, I'm very well read in astrology			
7. Song (Eleanor)	EreCupid breathes upon a maiden's heart	Moderato espress.	D	C
[Refrain]	Oh, laughing heart	Tempo di valse		3/4
8. Song (Guy)	Brighten'd by sound of mirth	Molto espressivo	Ab	C
[Refrain]	Come sweetheart, come to this loving breast			
9. Quintett (Sir Walter, Eleanor)	A merry heart is the heart for me	Molto grazioso	F	C
[Refrain] (with Marjorie, Guy, Bungay)	So let's be happy while we may	Meno mosso		
10. Song & chorus (Sir John)	Come join in happy melody	Marziale	Db	C
[Refrain] (with SATB)	Tho' years roll o'er			
11. Entrance of Queen Elizabeth (SATB)	Upraise each heart and voice	Maestoso	C	12/8
12. Song & chorus (Bungay)	Stand back, ye great and small	-	C	C
[Refrain] (with SATB)	Abracadabra, chicketty chump	Tempo l'istesso	C	6/8
13. Finale Act I				
(Bungay, Bertram)	All because of fortune fickle	Allegretto	G	6/8
(Bungay, Bertram, SATB)	Here's a sorry end	Vivace	D	2/4
(Bungay, SATB)	Oh, my figures were merely at fault	-	G	6/8
(Guy, Eleanor, SATB)	Tho' bolts and bars in grim array	Molto espress.	Bm	C
(Queen)	Enough of this, I must be gone	Agitato		2/4
(Sir John, Queen, SATB)	Farewell, farewell	Maestoso	C	C
(SATB)	Speed the gay cavalcade	-	G	3/8
Act II				
14. Introduction & opening chorus				
(TB)	Come sound the horn	Allegretto	D	6/8
(SA)	Belles of the court are we	Moderato grazioso	D	C
(SA)	Bending lowly	Un poco più mosso	G	C
(SATB)	Belles of the court are we	A tempo	D	C
(SATB)	Come sound the horn	[Allegretto]	D	6/8
15. Duet (Queen, Sir Walter)	Love is but a fancy fair	Andante graazioso	C	3/4

16. Trio (Bungay, 2 Warders)	Oh, happy dreams of wealth to come	Amdante con moto	Am > A	6/8
17. Duet (Bungay, Guy) [Refrain]	I think you're a trifle unkind All your trouble's like a bubble	Vivace	Em E	6/8 2/4
18. Song (Eleanor)	'Twas in a merry month of May	Allegretto grazioso	A	6/8
19. Duet (Guy, Eleanor) [Refrain]	When shadows fall aournd us Tho' dark be the hour	Andante espressivo [Tempo di valse]	D	C 3/4
20. Duet (Hilda, Bertram) Refrain Dance	I want of wealth a goodly store A steady, steady heart is thine	Allegretto grazioso	D	3/4 2/4 3/4 2/4
21. Song (Guy) [Refrain] (with SATB)	The morning was bright as I hastened to see My dear one, my dear one	Moderato espressivo	F	C
22. Song & chorus (Sir John) [Refrain] (with TB)	Let others strive for wealth and fame Thro' life's allotted span	Moderato deciso	Am A	6/8 C
23. Concerted piece(Hilda, Captain Bertram, Guards TB) Refrain (TB)	Good sir, a soldier here you see Oh gentle master of astrology	Marziale Meno mosso	A > Am Am	C C
24. Song (Bungay) Refrain	A man of rare gentility For I've always made a rule	Moderato	Em E	C
25. Glee (Sir Walter, Guy, Eleanor,) Marjorie Refrain	Now brightly gleams the happy morn Sing a merry roundelay	Andante grazioso	F	6/8
26. Concerted piece (Bertram, Sir John, Queen, Guy, Walter, Marjorie) [Refrain]	This dress, tho' a study in black When folly grows suddenly wise	Allegro con moto	Am F	C 6/8
27. Chorus and concerted piece (SATB) (Captain, Eleanor, Marjorie, Queen, Bertram, Sir Walter, Sir John, Guy, SAT Recit (Bungay)	Make way, make way for a jester rare Your Majesty, be pleased to see Had I my way	Agitato	Am F	2/4 2/4 C
28. Song &chorus &concerted piece Song (Bungay) [Refrain] (with SATB) Recit (Queen) [Double chorus](SATB)	Your Majesty, I plainly see Oh, I long for a life in dungeon deep Despite your explanation Despite his explanation / Oh, he longs for a life	[Andante pesante] Più mosso	Am C C C	C F
29. Finale Act II (Bungay, SATB) (SATB)	Oh I'm very well read in astrology Gladly we will dance a measure	Moderato [Allegro moderato]	E A	6/8 2/4

Contemporary references

THEATRICAL GOSSIP

The Era (London), Saturday, August 4, 1900; Issue 3228

MR WILLIAM OLSWORTH will shortly send on tour a new comic opera by Albert W. Ketèlbey entitled *The Wonder Worker*. The book is by Mr Edward Cadman, and a company of forty will be travelled.

THE THEATRES

The Graphic (London), Saturday, September 22, 1900; Issue 1608

The ambition of our new suburban theatres appears to be boundless. The management of the GRAND THEATRE at Fulham propose to produce on Monday, October 8, an entirely new opera entitles, *The Wonder Worker*, with new scenery and costumes. The action of the story is laid in Elizabethan times. The books is by Mr Edward Cadman; the music by Mr Albert W. Ketelbey.

THEATRICAL GOSSIP

The Era (London), Saturday, September 22, 1900; Issue 3235

A new comic opera, entitled *The Wonder Worker*, will be produced at the Grand Theatre, Fulham, on Oct. 8th. This piece is written by Mr Edward Cadman, and composed by Mr Albert W. Ketelbey, and in it will appear Miss Lottie Siegenberg, Miss Faith Laborde, Miss Connie Leon, and Miss Annie Bernard; Mr Ernest Spalding, Mr John H. Hay, Mr Tom Grove Mr Philip Landy, and Mr Edwin Keene..

THEATRICAL AND MUSICAL NOTES

The Morning Post (London), Monday, October 08, 1900; pg. 6; Issue 40046

... the only novelty is to be found at the Fulham Grand, where to-night will be produced the comic opera "The Wonder Worker", whereof the book is by Mr Edward Cadman and the music by Mr Albert W. Ketelbey. The good singing cast that has been [gathered] bids one hope that the piece is real comic opera, a [genre] which just at present is not being overdone.

GRAND THEATRE, FULHAM

The Standard (London), Monday, October 08, 1900; pg. [1]; Issue 23801.

TO-NIGHT, and During the Week at 8.0. MATINEE WEDNESDAY, at 2.30. FIRST PRODUCTION on any stage of a New and Original Comic Opera, entitled THE WONDER WORKER. Written by Edward Cadman. Composed by C.W. Ketelbey. Doors open 7.45. Early doors 7.15. Telephone 376 Kensington.

OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENCE

Glasgow Herald (Glasgow), Wednesday, October 10, 1900; Issue 243

The new comic opera "The Wonder-Worker", which was produced at the Grand Theatre, Fulham, last night, is understood to be intended chiefly for provincial touring purposes, although it will doubtless be improved in its comic interest before it has a run in the country.

The wonder-worker of the story is a friendly astrologer, who, for the sake of his master, Sir John Forrester, foretells that the stars ordain the marriage of the knight's son to that gentleman's niece, a lady of considerable wealth. The young people, however, have their own views of matters matrimonial, and upon this a slight story is founded.

Mr Cadman is the author, while the music is furnished by Mr Albert W. Ketelby [sic], a young Londoner, who has published some songs, and three years ago produced at Queen's Hall a more important concertstuck or concerto for pianoforte and orchestra. His music to "the Wonder-Worker" is, of course, less pretentious, but it is light, and some of the numbers are melodious and taking. Mr Edwin Keene plays the part of the Wonder-Worker, and Miss Lottie Siegenberg is the principal lady.

"THE WONDER-WORKER"

The Era (London), Saturday, October 13, 1900; Issue 3238

[cast list]. One regrets that the attempt to revive the legitimate form of comic opera at the Grand, Fulham, on Monday, was not of an encouraging nature; but if there is no chance of a run for Messrs Cadman and Ketelby's [sic] composition, *The Wonder Worker*, in London, there is no reason to despair of its prospects in the provinces. A similar theme, though it differed widely in its treatment, by Gilbert and Sullivan, strengthened the foundation of that successful series of works that occupies such an honoured place in the history of English music in the nineteenth century. We refer, of course to *The Sorcerer*.

Mr Cadman, to judge by his methods of writing, and by the triteness of his dialogue, has not yet slip the shackles of mere convention, but he is young yet, and will probably do better. The composer, Mr Albert W. Ketelby, a former student of Trinity College, London, has undoubted facility in writing melody, and has already been heard in public in a Concertstuck for pianoforte and orchestra, produced at the Queen's Hall in February, 1897, and other works.

The story revolves round an astrologer – one Master Bungay – whose pretence to a knowledge of the influence of the planets makes him a person whose advice is sought after by Sir John Forrester, an Elizabethan baronet. Sir John has two nieces, Marjorie and Eleanor – in the days of Good Queen Bess they had apparently as much contempt for surnames as Charles Surface. The project of marrying

Marjorie to Guy, his heir, is dear to Sir John's heart; but Cupid, who always upsets the best laid schemes of unromantic guardians, has done his best to thwart the baronet's arrangement of the young people's affairs. Guy has fallen in love with Eleanor, who reciprocates his affection; and Marjorie has chosen young Sir Walter Shirley; therefore Marjorie's estates will not be added to the Forrester demesne. Master Bungay is called upon in the first act for a proof of his skill by no less a person than Queen Elizabeth, who demands of him that he shall cast a horoscope, and this gives an opportunity for an incantation scene. Bungay fails lamentably, charlatan that he is, and is taken prisoner by order of Elizabeth, along with Guy. The way is eventually cleared for the happiness of the young couples by the release of Guy.

The best music of the opera is in the concerted pieces. The quintet "A merry heart is the heart for me" shows a capacity for vocal part writing, and the finale of the first act is framed with a sense of the dramatic needs of the situation.

The librettist is at his best in a duet for Bungay and Guy – "All our trouble's like a bubble" – and in Eleanor's dainty song to a bird, "Gay was his dear little twitter." Mr Elwin Keene, an experienced comedian, showed much resource in the part of the astrologer, Master Bungay, and was specially good in the incantation scene and in the song "I'm the person you should consult." He worked zealously for success, and is entitled to praise for his readiness and *savoir faire*.

Mr Tom Grove looked the part of Sir John Forrester admirably, though his singing of the number "An English Gentleman" was scarcely robust enough. Mr Ernest Spalding scored most unmistakably in the Jester's song addressed to his bauble "Thou'rt a fool and I'm a fool." In his song and dance with Hilda he had the lively and effective co-operation of Miss Connie Leon, whose bright, attractive style did much to enhance the gaiety of the part.

To Eleanor, the heroine, is allotted several ballads of a conventional type, and similar remark applies to the music of Guy. Both Miss Lottie Siegenberg and Mr John M. Hay are endowed with vocal resources that enable them to do full justice to the composer. In the bird song, to which we have already referred, Miss Siegenberg, by expressive singing and skilful phrasing, put a deal of charm. The sentiments of the love song for Guy, "My dear one, I long for thee," must of necessity lack originality, but they were given with warmth of vocal feeling by Mr Hay, who manages his voice nicely.

Mr E. Montelli as Jack-in-the-Green gave significance and point to his lines; Miss Annie Bernard was stately and dignified as Queen Elizabeth; Mr Philip Lincey was well placed as Sir Walter Shirley; and Marjorie had a graceful and vivacious representative in Miss Faith Laborde. The Lottie Stone Quartet enlivened the scenes with some well-executed dances; and the Courtyard in Windsor Castle, which is painted from original Elizabethan drawings in the British Museum, realises the architectural features of that noble pile.

At the conclusion of the opera the librettist and composer were called before the curtain and highly complimented by a friendly audience.

HOW THE WORLD WAGS.

The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times (London), Saturday, October 13, 1900; pg. 230; Issue 2055

"The Wonder-Worker" is a new comic opera written by Mr Cadman and composed by Mr Ketelby [sic]. It was produced at the Grand Theatre last Monday. The period is Elizabethan, and the music is tuneful and pleasing. A little more drollery in the libretto would have been welcome.

LOCAL GOSSIP.

Treman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser (Exeter), Saturday, October 20, 1900; Issue 10378

There is to be a very special attraction at the Theatre next week, when there will be an entirely new comic opera in two acts entitled "The Wonder Worker", by Edward Cadman, with music by Albert W. Ketelbey, L.Mus.T.C.L. It deals with the Elizabethan period, and claims to be an opera, and not a musical comedy – terms which are often confused.

When produced in London a few days ago it met with every mark of approval from both Press and public, and the business played is said to be enormous. The music is described as bright, charming,

and catchy, some of the numbers being encored again and again.

The company, which is an unusually strong one, includes such well-known artistes as Messrs. Edwin Keene, Ernest Spalding, John M. Hay, Misses Faith Labordi, Annie Bernard (late of the Savoy Theatre), Connie Leon, and Lottie Siegenberg. The orchestra, which will be largely augmented, is to be under the personal conductorship of the composer.

Full houses are anticipated, so that early booking is advisable. Country patrons should note that there will be an afternoon performance on Friday.

"THE WONDER WORKER" AT THE GRAND, FULHAM. [by EOTHEN].

The Bury and Norwich Post, and Suffolk Standard (Bury Saint Edmunds), Tuesday, October 23, 1900; pg. 6; Issue 6328

Mr Henderson may be congratulated on the success of the first production of the new comic opera *The Wonder Worker*, by Edward Cadman, who furnishes the book, and Albert W. Ketèlby [sic], who is responsible for the music, and excellent work it is, catching and sparkling.

It is laid in the time of "good Queen Bess", who appears in due course. The first act is the interior of Sir John Forrester's Manor House, with the revelries of "the month of Maying" in full swing, dances on the green, Jack-in-the-Green, and all the fun of the first of that merry month. Master Bungay, who by his horoscope and astrology, has managed to take his master Sir John Forrester in his net, is, to put it plainly, a fraud, and to suit his own book, he tries to persuade him that his son Guy is in love with Marjorie, his niece, and not with Eleanor, another niece, and insists on it that Sir Walter Shirley loves and is loved by Eleanor, and not Marjorie.

This tangled thread runs through the first act, until at the end Guy appears, in spite of Queen Bess's behest, and clears up the imbroglio, and Queen Bess, who has been Guy's confidante, commands them all to attend her at Windsor, *nolentes volentes*, Guy, who has been arrested by the Queen's commands, coming under the former category.

Act 2 is "A courtyard in Windsor Castle," the scene being painted from original drawings in the British Museum, *temp.* Elizabeth, by R.C. Durrant with happy effect.

The Queen, dismissing her courtiers to the chase, questions the Captain of the Guard about the prisoners, and reveals that there is a soft spot in her heart for Guy, for whom Sir Walter Shirley pleads, and not in vain, for after giving the astrologer a cold douche by the significant pantomime of his guards, suggestive of *sus. per coll.*, she restores him also to favour on condition that he forswears the stars for ever.

Both the collaborators have done their parts well, the libretto being sufficient, and the lyrics above the average of such poetic efforts, and the music is decidedly sparkling and effective. Its performance did them both full justice.

Miss Lottie Siegenberg was an admirable Eleanor, singing and acting with good effect, her song "Ere Cupid breathes upon a maiden's heart," being sung with artistic appreciation, an effective cadenza being introduced in the finale, but its effect was somewhat marred by undue self-assertion on the part of the orchestra, the brass being the chief offenders. The same commendation and the same abatement holds good of her charming song, "'Twas in the merry month of May," with its taking refrain, passing from lively to severe with artistic contrast.

Miss Faith Laborde acted with good success, but her voice is scarcely powerful enough for the demands of opera, and therefore it was well to use it only in concerted work.

Miss Annie Bernard, every inch a queen, was a very competent representative of Queen Elizabeth, her fine contralto voice giving due effect to her share in the duet "Love is but a fancy fair," and the solo "Despite your explanation."

Miss Connie Leon was a sprightly and well-favoured waiting-maid, teasing Bertram within an inch of his life, which ended, as such teasing usually does, in her accepting the object of her ridicule.

Mr John M. Hay won golden opinions as the love-lorn Guy Forrester, his fine tenor voice and

impassioned delivery doing full justice to the intensity of the songs “Brightened by sound of mirth” and “The morning was bright,” in which the refrain gained an added charm by the unaccompanied chorus “off.”

Admirable, too, were the duets between Guy and Eleanor, as interpreted by their respected representatives.

Mr Tom Grove’s fine stage presence added dignity to his personation of the old Baronet, and his songs “Now once there rode through leafy lanes,” with its effective refrain, with *bouches fermées*; and “Let other strive for wealth and fame” with its soupçon of an old English melody were admirably rendered.

Mr Philip Lincey’s personation of Sir Walter Shirley was manly and convincing, and his singing in the glee “Now brightly gleams the happy morn,” with its happy reflection of the old Madrigal, suggested the wish for more.

Mr E. Mentelle’s excellent rendering of his one song “Jack-in-the-Green,” must not pass unnoticed.

Mr Ernest Spalding’s acting as the Jester was all there, but his voice was certainly not of the robust character, but his dancing was a great treat.

Mr Stuart Ethall made the most of his once chance of vocal display in the opening concerted piece “Good sir, a soldier here you see.”

But the chief honours of the play are certainly carried off by the Wonder Worker himself. His song “I’m the person you should consult,” with the eccentric dance of the four girls, and the emphasis of his remark “Oh the girls,” caused much amusement. His song “Stand back ye great and small,” as he circles round the cauldron to the cabalistic refrain, was one of the hits of the play, and his woebegone look when his fraud is discovered and he is in durance vile, were all good.

The Chorus of Guards was excellent fooling and the choruses generally were admirably written and sung. Miss Lottie Stone’s quartet of dancers “did wondrously.” It is a safe prophecy to predict that *The Wonder Worker* will be heard again.

(Tom McCanna 2012)