

**EL CID CAMPEADOR: AN  
OPERA IN THREE ACTS, EIGHT  
SCENES. SPAIN, LATTER PART  
OF THE ELEVENTH CENTURY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649225231

El Cid Campeador: An Opera in Three Acts, Eight Scenes. Spain, Latter Part of the Eleventh Century by Henry Washington Lee

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Cover @ 2017

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**HENRY WASHINGTON LEE**

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Acts, Eight Scenes

Spain, Latter Part of the  
Eleventh Century

By

HENRY WASHINGTON LEE

Published by  
RITZMANN, BROOKES & CO.  
Chicago

Ms 573.316.295

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## INTRODUCTION

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Around the personality and the exploits of Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, El Cid Campeador, have clustered more ballads and legends and folk lore than have fallen to the lot of any other Spanish hero of romance. The Cid is the national hero of Spain and he flourished and wrought mighty deeds in that golden era "when knighthood was in flower," when chivalry was at its height, the age of the crusades, when Moor and Spaniard contested for possession of the Iberian peninsula.

There is such a wealth of legend and chronicle and ballad, as well substantiated as such traditions can be, that the dramatist is reluctantly put to it to leave out much that is thrilling and romantic and even theatrical, instead of—as is usually the case—having to search for available material.

Drama and opera have been written around the Cid perhaps a score of times. But the fact that none of them survives upon the stage today is sufficient evidence that in some way or other they have fallen short of the mark. The tragic finale of the Cid is one of the greatest and most dramatic episodes in history and other thrilling exploits of the Spanish Campeador form a background for it, the presentation of which is designed not only to delight and to entertain, but also to bind together in one sheaf typical exploits

of this Spanish knight, who with all his human faults showed also characteristics of noble honor, chivalric devotion and an ecstatic courage that will hold him for all time among the world's greatest heroes.

His headlong dash and intrepid bravery were well exemplified early in life when he took up the quarrel of his aged father with Count Gomez (father of Ximena in the opera), which proud noble he slew, although at the time he was but a youth in his teens. His other victories, touched upon in the opera, are all historic feats, celebrated in song and story.

The incident of the chests of sand, chronicled in "The Poem of the Cid," is a beautiful touch, showing the scrupulous honor of the champion.

"Quedó soterrado en ella  
El oro de mi verdad—"

"The gold of my truth lay buried there."

This famous poem is unquestionably the oldest document in Spanish literature, written early in the Thirteenth Century, a little more than a hundred years after the death of the Cid. It is the first of hundreds of songs and legends celebrating his exploits. "Gesta Roderici," a Latin chronicle, together with the poem, form the basis of most of the legends which were gathered and edited best, perhaps, by Robert Southey early in the Nineteenth Century.

Wonderful and masterful was the personality of El Cid Campeador when "no Moor could



stand unabashed in his presence." Countless incidents exemplify this characteristic. The episode of the cowed lion which he led back to its cage, incapable of stage presentation, is a case in point. An imposing personage was Myo Cid with his brave beard, his proud bearing and his tremendous force of character, making up a personality indelibly impressed upon the page of romantic history.

The sources of the plot are indicated above, the "gesta," the "poem" and Southey's chronicle. John Ormsby's translation of the poem was used together with H. Butler Clarke's compilation, and several others. All the incidents in the opera are historical and the characters as named, except certain unimportant dramatic adjustments. The Moorish girl was in truth taken by the Cid in the manner indicated, but, history says, was presented by him to his sovereign. Her adaptation is the only indulgence in dramatic license.

The opera must have evolved itself subconsciously, for after nearly a year's study, the libretto was written in a single night.

This work is for the reader as well as for stage production. Its condensed brevity will be adequately expanded for production by the choral repetitions, as well as by the various marches, dances and other "business" indicated in the text.

Chicago, February, 1917.

H. W. L.

# El Cid Campeador

## Dramatis Personæ.

Pero Bermudez, nephew of El Cid	} knights .....tenor retainers..barytone of El Cid...tenor
Gil Diaz	
Don Alvar Fañez Minaya	
Don Hieronymo, Bishop of Valencia.....	bass
Almamon, a Moor.....	barytone
Doña Ximena, wife of El Cid.....	contralto
Sancho II, King of Castile.....	bass
Mulei-Hassem, Moorish general.....	barytone
Don Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, Cid Campeador .....	tenor
Hafza, daughter of Mulei-Hassem.....	soprano
Rachel, Jewish money lender.....	barytone
Vidas, Jewish money lender.....	barytone
Don Arias, a grandee of Spain.....	tenor
Vellido Dolfos, a knight.....	bass
Urraca, sister of Sancho.....	mezzo soprano
Ibn Abdus, Herald of King Bucar.....	tenor
King Bucar, Moorish potentate.....	bass

Attendants at the Court of Castile, visiting nobles, grandees, ladies, minstrels, gentlemen, fool, musicians, acolytes, priests, Moorish soldiers, Spanish soldiers, attendants of El Cid, Moorish dancing girls, Moorish attendants, Black Queen and attendants, Egyptian slaves, Turkish bowmen.

## El Cid Campeador

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### Synopsis of Scenery.

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ACT I, Scene 1, Ante-room, King Sancho's Court.

Scene 2, Camp of the Moors.

Scene 3. King Sancho's throne room.

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ACT II, Scene 1, Room in King Sancho's Palace.

Scene 2, Street in Zamora.

Scene 3, Outer Walls of Zamora.

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ACT III, Scene 1, Room in El Cid's House, Valencia.

Scene 2, Courtyard, Moorish Palace at Murviedro, a suburb of Valencia.