

An extraordinary birth.

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AN EXTRAORDINARY BIRTH.

They write from Oxford of the 12th of November, 1664, that about three weeks before, near the city of Salisbury, capitol of the County of Wilts, the wife of a Groom was delivered of a Girl, and an hour after was delivered of a Female Child, which had two heads diametrically opposite one to the other; four arms and hands, but one belly, and all the rest of the body downwards perfectly well shaped and proportioned.

There was a dispute amongst the father, mother and company, whether they were two children or but one, and it was agreed that they were two children; they were baptized by the names of *Martha* and *Mary*. The two heads were perfect and lively, eat and drank by their two mouths, and excremented very orderly as other children. Their two heads were very handsome and well shaped, but one of them seemed much more gay and lively than the other, and much brisker, but they lived but two days. *Martha*, who appeared the least vigorous and lively than *Mary*, died the first; and *Mary* died a quarter of an hour after. The bodies were opened by a learned and experienced physician and anatomist, who upon strict examination found the two heads and the two stomachs perfect, and separated and distinct one from the other, but the belly was not so, the entrails were united at the Ductus Communis, and having but one intestine. *mumcaecum caelum*, one bladder, and one matrix, but there were two livers, two spleens and two stomachs. This Monster was embalmed and very carefully preserved.

Sloane MSS. Paris, Brit. Mus. 5246. p. 105.

A similar case is related by James Rueff, in *Conceptii, &c. Gen. Hom.* printed at Zurich in the year 1554, which was born in 1552, near Oxford, and that one lived 15 days after the other.

ib. fo. 107.

Pepys, in his Diary, gives the following account of this extraordinary human creature.—
“ November 11, 1664, a gentleman told us he saw the other day (and did bring the draught of it to Sir Francis Prigeon) a monster, born of a hostler's wife of Salisbury, two women children perfectly made, joyned at the lower part of their bellies, and every part perfect as two bodies, and only one pair of legs coming forth on one side from the middle, where they were joined. It was alive 24 hours, and cried, and did as all hopeful children do; but being shewed too much to people, was killed.