

The giants wedding.

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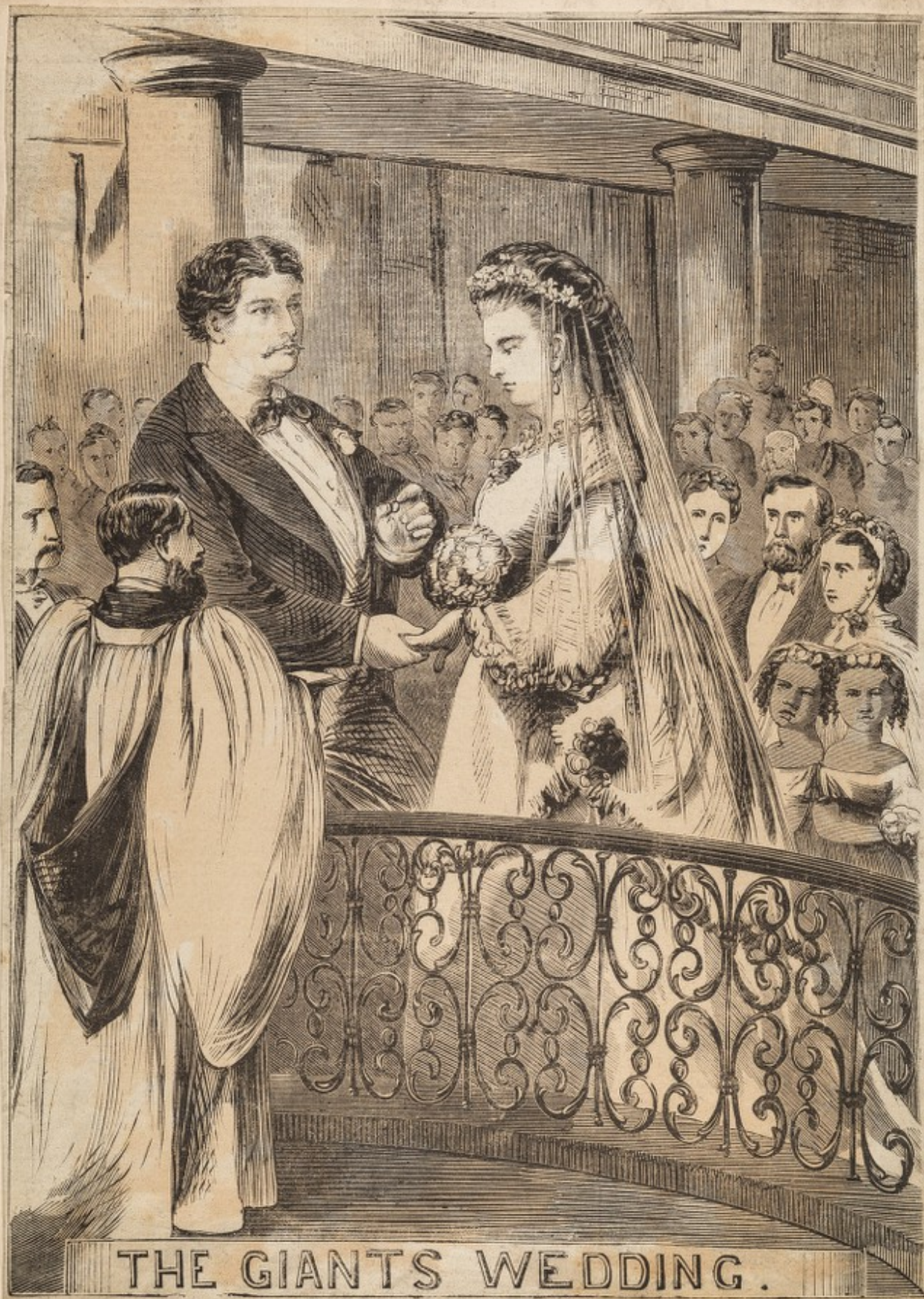
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THE GIANTS WEDDING.

AN EXTRAORDINARY EXHIBITION.—Several members of the medical profession and of the press were invited yesterday to a "reception" at Willis's Rooms. Amongst those who availed themselves of the invitation were Sir Charles Looch, M.D., Sir G. Duncan Gibb, M.D., Dr. Letticey, Dr. Owen Ross, Dr. Boycott, Dr. Goy, Dr. Priestly, Dr. Easton, Dr. Stallard, Dr. Macpherson, Dr. Alexander Prior, Dr. Tweedie, Dr. Kidd, Dr. Protheroe Smith, Dr. Stanley, Dr. Braithwaite, Dr. Cross, Dr. Little, Messrs. Henry Woodward (British Museum), Henry Lees, F.L.S., Tom Hood, B. Saelleton, &c. The exhibition was one of natural wonders, and such wonders as have not very often been looked upon before. The first was a Miss Anna H. Swan, a native of Nova Scotia, 23 years of age, and standing fully 5 feet. This gigantic fair one astonished the comparative pigmies, amongst whom she moved, as she paraded the room leaning on the arm of a young giant about her height and age. Captain "Martin" Van Buren Bates, is the son of a Kentucky planter, and at the outbreak of the American civil war took service as a private in the Confederate army. He was present at six general engagements, and at the close of the war came out a commissioned officer by the rank of captain. Captain Bates, who is an agreeable Patagonian in appearance, weighs 478 lbs. whilst his gigantic companion weighs 413 lbs. Both giant and giantess mixed and conversed freely with the company. The most extraordinary feature of the exhibition was, or were, Miss, or Misses, Christine, announced by the exhibitor as "the two-headed nightingale." And truly a wonderful freak of nature this is—much more wonderful, much more fearful, than the Siamese twins of world-wide fame. Two distinct intellectual individuals: two heads, two hearts, two sets of lungs; the bodies unite into one a little below the shoulders, and for the rest one set of organs performs for both those creatures the functions of nature. There is no deception here; the eminent physicians and other gentlemen present were permitted to inspect the marvel for themselves, and they all agreed that it was a *novus natus* of the most wonderful character. These children of negro parents are possessed of voices of different orders—one soprano and the other contralto, and sing in concert some pretty duets. They also dance gracefully, and seem in no way to be incommoded by their singular conformation. It is a sight more wonderful than pleasing; but it is a study and enigma in nature.

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A WEDDING OF GIANTS.

(SUBJECT OF ILLUSTRATION.)

At the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields—those very stony fields which have produced a somewhat straggling growth of peculiarly national sculpture—a remarkable marriage was solemnized last Saturday morning. Trafalgar-square put on an early garb of gaiety; which may mean that the morning sun condescended to shine in a transitory and fitful manner; that the dumpy fountain, supposed to be replenished from the neighbouring baths and wash-houses, would have seemed to a fanciful view somewhat unusually inclined to sparkle; and that an inquisitive crowd gathered on and about the steps of Gibb's over-praised portico. A wedding was to all appearances imminent, and the rumour soon spread that both bride and bridegroom belonged to "high life," as indeed they did, each measuring very little short of eight feet. In point of fact, the lady and gentleman who daily add to the attractiveness of the "Two-headed Nightingale" exhibition at Willis's rooms had made a match of it, and were about to be married by special licence. Nova Scotia, famous for the production of tall persons, had produced not only the bride, Miss Anna Hansen Swan, but the clergyman destined to unite her in the holy bonds of matrimony with Captain Martin Van Buren Bates, the Kentucky giant. The reverend gentleman, who is not connected with the church in which he was called to officiate on Saturday, is a man of extraordinary height, measuring some three inches over six feet; but he was completely dwarfed by proximity to the happy pair. It was said that this gentleman was chosen as priest not on account of any fanciful fitness of stage, but simply because he had been an acquaintance of his countrywoman, the bride, before either of them left Nova Scotia.

We may fairly say that there was no undue attempt to make an exhibition out of the ceremony in St. Martin's Church. That edifice was full, of course; but, if any indecorous curiosity was shown by any part of the crowded congregation, it certainly was not provoked by the behaviour of the group near the communion table. It is true that the strangely-joined pair of beings who are commonly spoken of as one were present, but it may be well understood that Miss or the Misses Millie-Christine felt some friendly interest in the occasion, and that they might reasonably desire to witness the marriage. They wore a blue veil, and were otherwise attired as for a bridal, but they did not act as bridesmaids, and, indeed, the friends who took part in the service were evidently averse from being implicated in its unavoidably public character. The bride's dress became her well, and there was something of stateliness and dignity in the skill with which she managed a most imposing train—a train, indeed, that, when she knelt at the altar steps, seemed to flow far away out of her control or cognisance. Captain Bates, the bridegroom, may be pardoned for having looked rather less at his ease in a blue coat, white waistcoat, and grey or light-tinted trousers. A man may get used to being eight feet high, but to be eight feet high and to be stared at by a devout congregation of idlers on the occasion of marrying a lady who is eight feet high also is a trying conjunction of matters. However, Captain Bates got through his difficulty tolerably well, being perhaps encouraged by the example of his amiable partner: and when the ceremony was finished, and the register signed, the bridal party made its way through the congratulatory crowd inside and outside the church—first to breakfast in Craven-street, with the enterprising Messrs. Ingalls, Smith, and Beany; and a select company of wedding guests, and then a couple of days' retirement at Richmond, in lieu of a regular honeymoon.

A GIGANTIC WEDDING.—On Saturday morning a large crowd of curious persons were attracted to Trafalgar-square by the rumour that the Kentucky giant and the Nova Scotian giantess were about to be united in the bonds of wedlock. The hero of the day (and, as says the poet, "a hero should be tall, you know") is about eight feet high, but the heroine is still taller, and fairly looked down upon her gigantic spouse. The clergyman who performed the ceremony was also "a man of stature bigger," and it was altogether a most gigantic affair. Amongst the witnesses was Miss Christine Milly, the two-headed girl, but whether she performed the duties of bridesmaid or maid did not appear. There was much whispering and muttering in the crowded church, but the principals appeared to be deeply impressed with the solemn rite. The bridegroom signed the register as Marten Van Buren Bates, captain in the American army, and the bride as Anna Hansen Swan, spinster. On leaving the church the bridal party was received with several rounds of congratulatory cheering.

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