

ORIGINAL.

[FOR THE BEE.]

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DANIEL DANDLE—A TALE.

"What a Beauty I did grow."—Old song.

EVERY country affords some peculiarity in the human figure. The south of Africa and some of the Northern parts of the world, produce a race approximating to Lilliputians, while Patagonia is said to rear humanity in its utmost magnitude, affording a parallel to the Giants before the flood. To the reports of travellers on this point I am not disposed to yield implicit credit, though nature has, to my own certain knowledge, produced some very extraordinary beings in the human family. The village of O—— has long been celebrated for its monstrous productions. Length of legs is the chief characteristic of its inhabitants, though some are also blessed with many other peculiarities of longitude. Daniel Dandle was one of those nondescripts, who can boast of six feet two inches, in their stocking feet. Nearly two-thirds of his ungainly person consisted of huge under-standings, which, as if in defiance of the laws of the human figure, appeared to the critical observer, like the trunk of a tree, to grow gradually smaller from the ground upward. The latitude and longitude of his immense pedestal, would set at naught the calculations of even a very skillful mathematician—while all the bootmakers in the country, with one voice, declared that they would make no more boots for Dan, without an express stipulation for double soles. His emaciated and shrivelled arms seemed to imitate his legs in their length. Like those of an Ouran-Outang they protruded from shoulders which deviated not an inch from rectangularity, though his meagre body was far from being so celebrated for its perpendicular property, as that of Sergeant Bunting, in Bulwer's Eugene Aram. On the contrary, his body was very much stooped. This circumstance probably arose either from a desire to contract his long gaunt figure, or an anxiety to hear what was transacting in the valleys over which he reared his mountain summit. But the oddest parts of his system were his neck and head. Had these alone been visible, the stranger would have imagined him to be some distant connexion of an inhabitant of marshy grounds, ycleped the hither, or more vulgarly designated by a less agreeable name. All objects in nature, however, in some respects, differ. This wonderful neck was apparently incapable of any bend, save that which it received by the extension of his head. But what added to its natural stiffness, was an immense shirt collar, possessing, as the laundry maid used to say, neither bounds nor limits—so that in its starched condition, it even overtopped our hero's ears.

With such a conformation and appearance, you cannot well imagine Dan to have been wonderfully expert. Yet so it was that this uncouth mortal boasted of his agility. He could walk and dance with equal grace. In the former department, his stride might be said to rival that of Jack with his three leagued boots, so that, in going to, or returning from the country church, his fellow pedestrians wondered at his locomotion, and inwardly execrated their own shortness of legs, which in these cases, was evidently a great disadvantage.

When this wonderful phenomenon first made his appearance in the world, his relations, struck with the unnatural appearance of the prodigy, held a council to determine upon the future sphere of his action. Nothing determinate, however, was done. When he arrived at the age of sixteen, a second council was held with the like success. One proposed that he should no more be a Soldier, but: his natural disposition

beginning about this time to develop itself, they concluded that he was too indolent to march and too great a coward to fight. Another mentioned the life of a Sailor, but this employment was as incongruous with Dan's disposition as the other. A third the law, but it appears, at the period alluded to, our hero had some scruples of conscience respecting the profession—probably arising out of his natural love of ease. It was finally determined that he should be left to the choice of his own profession.

"The village all declared how much he knew,

"'Twas certain he could write and cipher too,

and accordingly Dan in a few months made his debut as a pedagogue. In this employment, he had numerous difficulties to encounter. Many were the threats and grimaces which he used to preserve order and decorum in his little band of gigglers, but these efforts frequently increased their suppressed laugh into a general cachinnation. In this predicament we must do Dan the justice to say that he did not stare, like Dominic Sampson, and exclaim *pro-di-gious*; but he had recourse to the birch which, however, produced sundry rebellions among his hopeful pupils. One instance, in which an Inkstand was discharged at his head, and produced as great a metamorphosis, as any Ovid relates, in our hero's physiognomy and haen, terminated in his total discomfiture and disgrace. But without dwelling minutely upon these trifling incidents of his life, which indeed produced much merriment and ridicule at his expence, we proceed to the more grave and important features of his history.

Cupid is a wayward boy—for such was Dan's singular fate that he had not laboured long in his vocation, when he actually became enamoured of a girl, who, in her most erect posture, was little more than half his height. To him she was all lovely. In her little grey eyes he saw unrivalled brightness. Every glance darted love—every movement was grace. No appellation was sufficient to convey his idea of her excellence. At one time he called her a nymph—at another, a maid—and anon, an Angel. Though formerly he possessed a cold disposition, he now became suddenly enthusiastic. Once a foe to all the fine arts, he was now unaccountably transmutated into a poet. Formerly, a heretic to the more tender feelings of the human heart, he felt the instantaneous change of conversion, and became the warm advocate of sentiments which he formerly rejected, as the absurd vagaries of madmen. From some of his compositions at this period, the following may be given as a specimen of the nature of his sentiments:—

TO MY LOVE DOLLY DIMPLE.

Who'er has seen thy angelic frame,
Bedeck'd with graces ample,
And has not felt a holy flame,
My love—my Dolly Dimple!

Thine eye, a star—thy cheek, a rose—
Thy neck, of ivory whiteness—
Thyself, like to a flower that blows,
To shame Apollo's brightness!

Who would not live to die for thee,
In form and dress so simple;
But past the power of rivalry,
My love—my Dolly Dimple!

This is perhaps an inferior specimen of our hero's poetical efforts. In fact, he frequently breathed out his whole soul in verse, in strains so pathetic and tender, as almost to melt the heart of his fair enchantress. But, alas! he had a rival, of a very extraordinary nature. This was John Sylvertree. If Dan was at one extreme of the human stature, John was at the other. In shape and appearance, he very much resembled a pair of tongs. Yet, notwithstanding his diminutive head, he boasted of his literary acquirements, and had actually received a diploma for his wonderful performances on some

of the most useful bones of the human system. Of his physiognomy, his nose was the most prominent feature. It was truly Roman. His eyes looked as if they had been taken from an owl's head, and dropped carelessly into their sockets; and his mouth could once boast of demolishing a whole pound of pork, at one meal. But his owl's eyes were suddenly converted into sheeps, and his mouth rejected its wonted food and beverage. He had actually been scorched by Dan's flame, Dolly Dimple. Sylvertree's musical powers first brought him into great repute with the ladies. Through his nasal organ he could imitate every species of sound; and this wonderful protuberance seemed, at times, to possess all the qualities of the bugle, in the hands of a master player. The constant attentions of these two individuals to Miss Dolly Dimple, could not but attract their mutual notice and awaken mutual jealousy. To whom the young lady would have given the preference was a matter difficult to be determined. Her attempts to please both seemed to be equally balanced; and she acted the part of a skilful diplomatist, to increase the attentions of her lovers, and their devotion to herself.

But Dan's nature could not long brook this awful state of suspense; and he determined boldly to tell Miss Dimple the state of his mind. An opportunity, for this purpose, soon after occurred. He called one morning at her father's house, and being ushered into the parlour, he found Miss Dimple seated on the sofa. After an awkward bow and a bashful blush, he took his seat on the sofa beside her.

"Miss Dimple," said he, while his harsh discordant voice trembled with emotions, "will you forgive my presumption, when I tell you that I have dared to love—yes! I adore you—and oh! let me ask, does your heart utter one response in unison with my feelings?"—and he dropped on his knee beside her and caught her hand. But alas! in the fervour of feeling, he forgot the tremendous length of his supporters, and through haste to express his adoration, his knee came into contact with sundry protuberances on Miss Dimple's toes; which caused her to scream with agony, to the no small discomfiture of our agitated hero. Had this accident not occurred, what might have been the fair lady's answer, it is difficult to decide. She had now, however, for some time, maintained a sullen and obstinate silence, when Sylvertree entered the apartment—Dan was still in his supplicating posture, so utterly horrified was he, at the effects of the disaster. His eyes were firmly rivetted on those of the fair damsel, and his face was the counterpart of that of a condemned criminal when led to the place of execution.

When Sylvertree saw the posture of his rival, he knew not whether to advance or retire—but the female relieved his embarrassment by motioning him to be seated on the sofa beside her. Dan, whose jealous eye, noticed this last political movement, lost all his previous emotions in envy and resentment; and, in a moment, disappeared from the room.

"On the following morning, the sun rose bright to every eye in the village, but that of "Dandle and Sylvertree. The slight that had been cast upon the addresses of the former, and the interruption with which he had met, could not be overlooked; and, under the maddening influence of disappointed love, his rage actually rose to such a pitch that he was induced to send a challenge to his diminutive rival. The place was appointed, and the time immediately after sunrise. Never did our two worthies view the appearance of the bright orb of day, with such melancholy feelings.

"Each looked at sky and hill and plain,
"As what he no'er might see again.

They arrived at the appointed place. On this memorable morning, Sylvertree showed that what he wanted in physical strength, he possessed.