

Leigh Hunt (1784-1859)

6 *The St. James's Phenomenon*

Being a surprising new ballad, on a most wonderful creature now
exhibiting in Westminster

Good people all, attend now,
And I'll tell ye of such a monster,
As shall make your eyes
Be double their size,
And the hats that ye have on stir. 5

I'm aware there've been before this
As pretty frights as may be,
Two sisters in one,
And babes like a tun,
And much worse things than they be. 10

For I've heard of an unlegged body
That went about on castors,
And a head that would come
Bolt into a room,
And cry, 'How now, my masters!' 15

But Lord! all these were handsome
To the one I'm going to mention;
To whom a shark
Is a perfect spark,
And an ogre deserves a pension. 20

Hard by St. James's Palace
You may see this prince of shockings,
But not before three,
For at one, d'ye see,
He begins to put on his stockings. 25

His head, or else what should be
In the place that 's on his shoulders,
Is nothing but hair

Frizzed here and there,
To the terror of all beholders. 30

That it has a mouth, is clear from
His drinkings and his vap'rings;
But all agree
That he cannot see,
For he'll take a pig for a prince. 35

To tell you what his throat is,
Is a matter a little puzzling;
But I should guess,
That more or less,
It was forty yards of muslin. 40

His shoulders are very curious,
And really none of the wildest;
For both are made
Of cane inlaid;
And here, they say, he 's mildest. 45

Of his fingers a tailor tells me
(For one here and there the truth picks)
That the right, when they span,
Are a lady's fan,
And the left a start of toothpicks. 50

His legs are just like barrels
With butts of leather on 'em;
Yet some declare
That without great care
He can't stand long upon 'em. 55

But his body, — his body 's the wonder,
For a lady who touched the surface,
Look'd pale and said,
'Twas a positive bed: —
I wish you had seen *her* face. 60

His organs of digestion
Make a noise like the wheels of mangles;

His tongue 's a skin,
And hollow within;
 And his teeth are dice at angles. 65

For the rest there 's no deciding;
 But it 's fully believed on all hands,
That his brains are veal,
And his heart of steel,
 And his blood rum-punch and hollands. 70

N. B. Behave respectful;
 For if he thinks you flout him,
He 's got a big
Old Judge's wig,
 Wherewith he lays about him. 75

1814

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