

A MODERN SAMSON.

Louis Cyr, Who is Believed to be the Strongest Man in the World.

LOUIS CYR, the modern Samson, has given exhibitions of his marvelous strength in many of the villages along the Blackstone, during the past week. Every hall where he has shown has been crowded, and considerable interest has been aroused over some of his feats. He stands to-day as a modern representative of that well-known tower of strength, Samson. Cyr was born in St. Johns, Quebec, in 1865, and is the second child of a family of nine, composed of four boys and five girls. His father weighed 100 pounds, while his mother



LOUIS CYR.

was about 20 pounds lighter. At birth he weighed 17 pounds, and was large of bone. For the first 10 years of his life he lived with his parents on a farm in Canada, and then removed with them to Massachusetts. He went to school and assisted in work at the farm, for although he was but a child, he weighed 145 pounds, and could do as much work as an ordinary man. The family returned to Canada, and Cyr, at the age of 17 years, enlisted as a member of the police force of Montreal, being the youngest man ever taken on the force. While he was complainant of the fact that he was strong, it never dawned upon him that he was a Hercules. One night he was attacked by four ruffians. Bricks and clubs were used in the melee and he succeeded in arresting the quartet. He was badly used up, his head being split open by a brick and he carries the scar to-day. He left the police force and went to work in a hotel. Having a liking for weight lifting, and trying feats of strength, he began to test himself and was soon able to raise a 210-pound bell to his shoulder and put it up at arm's length. To this feat he added many others, including his masterpiece, the back-lift, and made a circuit of the New England and Middle Atlantic States and Canada. He had never trained, but his business now continued more fully to develop his muscles and he has been gaining in strength ever since.

A few months ago Richard K. Fox of the Police Gazette took an interest in him and sent for him to come to New York. Cyr appeared before Fox and gave an exhibition of his strength, putting up a bell weighing 265 pounds and lifting with his back 3935 pounds. His back lift is peculiar. A platform about six feet square is placed on wooden horses four feet high and on this 15 or 20 men are placed. Cyr then backs beneath the platform, rests his hands on a low stool and with the combined strength of his arms, legs and back, raises the platform. Fox was satisfied that he was the strongest man in the world and issued a challenge, backing Cyr for \$5000 and a diamond belt against any one in the world, the feats to be as follows: First, lifting 4000 pounds of pig iron without harness; second, raising to shoulder and pushing up at arm's length a 245-pound bell; third, shouldering a barrel of cement weighing 300 pounds; fourth, lifting with one hand a woman hanging on a ladder and balancing them on his chin in a perpendicular position; fifth, lifting with one finger a man weighing 150 pounds, a 235-pound and a 150-pound bell; sixth, lifting a platform weighing 750 pounds, 20 men and a 250-pound bell with his back; seventh, holding out a bell weighing 100 pounds. With this challenge it was hoped to get on a match with Sandow, Cyclops, Hercules, Atlas, Ajax or some of the other strong men of the day, but as yet the challenge has not been accepted. He has had but one contest in his life, and that was with David Michael of Canada, who lifted 2704 pounds, and then Cyr lifted the same load and his opponent also. A year ago when he exhibited in Montreal the athletic clubs of that city presented him with a belt which bears the word "Fortissimo" in gold filigree work.

In April Cyr will show in Providence, providing he does not accept an offer from Weir's agency to appear in England next season. The measurements of this man are wonderful and are as follows, as taken last week: Age 27, height 5 feet 10 1-2 inches, weight 316 pounds, neck 22 inches, biceps 21 1-2 inches, forearm 13 1-2 inches, chest, inflated, 58 inches; chest, reposed, 54 inches; circumference of shoulders 70 inches, shoulders 20 inches, waist 48 inches, thigh 31 inches, calf 21 inches. These measurements are taken on the right side and are from three to four inches larger than the measurements on the left side, which is due to the constant use of his right side. His muscles are well rounded and his body is very hard, showing remarkable development. J. H. Voyer is managing him this year and will accompany him to Europe should he go.



Public

même grandeur



OUR SPORTING PANORAMA.

A TRIO OF NOTABLE AND INTERESTING EVENTS, CAREFULLY CULLED FROM THE MANY THAT HAVE OCCURRED DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS.



120P-010/24-25.58
 Fonds d'archives Louis-Cyr.
 Service des archives et de gestion des documents.
 Université du Québec à Montréal.

LOUIS CYR TO RETIRE.

THE WORLD'S STRONGEST MAN TO BREAK NO MORE RECORDS, AFTER A YEAR MORE IN ENGLAND.

Louis Cyr, the world's strongest man, returned home this morning after a five-months' stay in England.

Montreal should be proud of him, but when the train pulled in only Cyr's ex-manager, Mr. A. J. Labatt, and a couple of other intimate friends of the champion were waiting to receive him. Perhaps this was because the train was late and the time of her arrival uncertain.

Cyr, however, never seemed to notice this. He was too delighted to get home once more to notice such a delinquency. With him was his brother who has been sharing in a small degree the homage of the English people as a middle-weight lifter.

Cyr has lost his Samsonian locks. The change is an improvement.

"How did you enjoy your visit?" queried a *Witness* reporter a short time after his arrival.

"Oh, splendidly," replied the champion. "We had a great deal of fog at Christmas time which made me quite sick, but that lasted only for about two weeks, after that I was all right and the weather was very good. Why, do you know, during that two weeks it was so foggy that you



couldn't tell night from day, and we had to have the gas lit all the time. The people received me in crowds and with enthusiasm. I drew very large audiences, and was paid the highest salary ever given to an athlete there, from \$600 to over double that amount weekly."

"You must have made quite a sum of money while away?"

"Yes; so much that when I finish my engagement in England next season, which opens in the fall and continues for twelve months, I will retire to private life. While in England I learned a number of new feats of strength which I had never seen performed before. Among these was the bar-bell lift. I have brought back two of these with me. One weighs 301 lbs., and is 34 lbs. heavier than Sandow's. I raise it from the floor with both hands; the other I elevate while in a kneeling position.

Cyr has lost 33 lbs. in weight since quitting his native shore. His weight in costume is now 278 pounds. He will rest all the time between the present and the time of his departure for England. While absent he was kept very busy exhibiting his enormous strength, appearing in Liverpool, London, Newport, Birmingham, and in Cardiff, Wales. "When I revisit England," said he, "it will be simply for the purpose of breaking all previous records and establishing new ones in feats that are yet new to me. As the records I made while away have not been approached you will readily see that I will require to compete against my own previous records. That done I will retire and allow some one of the rising strong men of Montreal to take my place. My brother will also compete for the middle-weight championship of the world, upon which he has already a promising hold."

The records broken by him lately were the 274 lb. dumb bell lift, beating his previous record of 265 lbs.; and that of elevating a bar bell weighing 301 lbs. The bell was raised from the floor to the chest with one motion, and then slowly pressed to arm's stretch above the head. It is far ahead of anything ever shown by any other athlete. Then, with a sweep from the ground, he raised to arm's stretch above his head a dumb-bell weighing 174 1/2 lbs. The right hand only was used. Then the same feat was successfully tried with the left hand, making two more world's records.

THE NATIONAL POLICE GAZETTE: NEW YORK.

Louis Cyr, the "Police Gazette" champion strong man, has been creating quite a sensation through Maine and New Hampshire. At nearly every exhibition the theatres and halls are packed. Cyr intends to shortly visit New York and give the public an opportunity to see that he is, without doubt, the strongest man living. He will attempt to lift 4,000 pounds with his back and hands, a feat no man living but Cyr can accomplish.

MAY 2, 1892.

Retour

SANDOW SPEAKS.

THE GERMAN CHAMPION IS IMPRESSED WITH THE CANADIAN.

SOME TRICKS OF THE STRONG PEOPLE.— GYMNASTICS AND MUSCLE COMBINED.

When Charles P. Sampson intimated in the Sporting Life Office on Monday afternoon that he could produce an athlete who would beat Cyr in anything of weight lifting and dumb bell elevating all eyes were at once turned on Eugene Sandow, who is, by right of his championship belt, generally conceded to be one of the most powerful men that England has ever seen.

"There's his key: I do not know when he will be home. When you rang, I thought 'twas Eugene. You see, we've been on the outs ever since Saturday. Mr. Sandow did not wish me to go to the South London Music Hall on Saturday, and when he learned that I had been there he was very cross, because he did not want anybody belonging to him to be present.

After the usual greetings were over between the strong man and the journalist dinner was served, and between the mouthfuls an interesting interview was obtained. Sandow, being a most accessible individual, talked very freely on the subject of his latest and most powerful rival.

What a pity it is that I could not go to the matinee on Saturday. I did so wish to see Cyr work. Of course, my friends may be sincere in what they tell me, but I would prefer to see the feats with my own eyes before I pass any opinion.

"Do you think he is really the strong man that the papers represent him to be?" "Yes, he must be a powerful man to do what he does, but I do not agree with him when he says that my performances are of the gymnastic order, or are tricks. In my opinion there is more legitimate feats of strength in my work than in the Canadian's exhibition.

The writer could only tell the strong man how a New York newspaper explained these tricks, and Sandow being of a practical turn of mind said: "You take the part of the strong girl, and I will be the spectator." The old loose and projecting elbow business was gone through, and Sandow for the first time in his life found a weight less than his own which was impossible to move, as the hinge of the arms prevented the strong man from getting any "purchase point."

"That's different. I thought no man would be so foolish as that. Some time I will drop in at the South London, and you need not be surprised if I accept Louis Cyr's challenge, but I shall just have to see what he can do." "What is your opinion of so many strong men in the field, will it tend to run the business into the ground?"

"I am very tired; my work has been very hard to day." "Do you mean to say that you exercise every day in addition to what you do at night?"

"Yes; I usually spend a couple of hours each day in my private gymnasium. You see, I am all the time practising new feats, and some of them take me a long time to perfect. Several of my new feats may not be seen for more than a year."

When asked what he thought of the accusation that Cyr was not a showman or graceful in his movements, Sandow said: "That is all right, so long as he can do what no one else can he is all right, but as soon as someone else does his feats in the same style or better, then the public will magnify his unwieldiness.

The perfume of Sandow's ten shilling cigars having overcome the young giant, the Sporting Life representative withdrew, and sought out Louis Cyr to get some opinions from him concerning his detractors on the other side of the water.

In an interview with Louis Cyr at the South London Music Hall last night he said that the Montreal story, which accuses him of having been beaten by Cyclops, is made out of the whole cloth. "I went on the stage, and lifted Cyclops' weights better than he did himself, and I aimed the 100 dols. which was offered to anyone doing these tricks, but I never got the money. Then I challenged Cyclops to a match for money, but it never came to anything. As soon as I turned my back on Montreal they began to circulate stories about me, and said that I had run away from a match, but my money is up in the Sporting Life Office, and that is the best answer that I can give to my detractors. It is a strange thing that none of these men want to meet me in a legitimate match, but they all want to frame the conditions to suit themselves, so that they can win or make a draw of it, and share in a big gate. I want the whole thing or nothing."

ATHLETIC CLUB.

CONDUCTOR

1 team in the Club Cup, as

LOUIS CYR SHOWS A NEW FEAT.

In addition to the usual feats shown by Louis Cyr at the South London Music Hall, the Canadian introduced his celebrated feat of elevating the 101lb dumbbell while in a kneeling position. Grasping the bell in the right hand, he put it up three times without interruption, and then taking the bell in his left hand, he put it up three times without once dropping it below the elbow.

After the show Cyr said, "When my cold is better I will astonish them with the weights that I will lift." W. France, the amateur, waited until after the people had left the show, and he tested the weights, which he was satisfied were genuine.

ANOTHER WEIGHT LIFTER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPORTING LIFE." SIR,—I see in your issue of Monday in the account of the performance of Louis Cyr, the strong man, at the South London Music Hall, that Mr. K. K. Fox said he would give Sampson £100 if he could lift Cyr's 242lb bell a foot from the floor. Whatever was Sampson thinking about that he did not accept this offer? If Mr. K. K. Fox will repeat the same offer to me, I will endeavour to lift the same under the same conditions, and I will also lift 600lb with both hands a foot from the ground. Allow me to say that I am no professional, but a mere untried amateur at weight-lifting.—Yours, &c., ARTHUR J. BADDLEY.

SKITTLES.

Handwritten signature or scribble.





LOUIS CYR.
THE CANADIAN STRONG MAN.

(See page

THE CANADIAN STRONG MAN.
(See Portrait, page 8.)

Louis Cyr, the latest addition to the already large contingent of strong men, hails from Canada, and is a man of enormous muscular development, with a closely knit, thick-set frame, every line of which is indicative of great physical power. He has a fine round, open, and pleasant countenance, and is stated to be 28 years of age. He weighs 235., and measures 58 in. round the chest. His display of feats of strength were boldly claimed at the outset as destined to break every previous record, whether of Sampson or of Sandow. The record of the Old World, as testified by the Earl of Lonsdale, Mr. Atkinson, and many eminent sportsmen, was Sandow's 79lb. for a lift with the arm straight out from the shoulder, but Louis Cyr had made a record of the same kind of 103lb., and it was generally known that he intended, on the evening of his first appearance in London at the South London Palace, to attempt to pass even this record by lifting at arm's length 105lb. and 240lb. up over the shoulder, and he invited representatives of the press or eminent sportsmen present to come up and verify the weights. The excitement, which before the close of the display became tremendous, now commenced. Representatives of all the sporting organs climbed on to the platform, and at the unanimous call of the balcony, Sampson, of weight-lifting fame, mounted among the first. Mr. Fox, coming to the front of the stage, said he was willing to back Cyr to any amount to lift against any man in the world, and he would give 1,000 dollars down to any man who could rival the feats he was about to perform. An enormous dumbbell was put on the scale and weighed, under the scrutiny of representatives of the *People* and the *Sporting Life* and a host of other competent witnesses, the dumbbell bumping down with a 56lb., a 28lb., a 14lb., a 4lb., and a 2lb. weight, all duly stamped with the official stamp, the total reaching just over 104lb. The formidable dumbbell was grasped by Cyr, who, as he stood, stripped, to the front, presented the appearance of a mountain of muscle, which would probably have put both "Hereward" and "Front de Bouc" to the blush. Slowly, fairly, and squarely, except for a very slight inclination, of certainly not more than 10 degrees from the horizontal, went up the weight to the delight of everybody but Sampson, who seemed obviously uneasy. After the next performance, the lifting of another little toy which ranged on the scale four 56lb., a 14lb., and a 4lb., or 242lb. in all, put right up above the shoulder at the full stretch of the arms, had been completed, Sampson asked to be allowed to address the audience amid extraordinary excitement. Mr. F. Law, the general manager, by a few adroit words, secured silence and a hearing for Sampson, who claimed to be a Frenchman, like Cyr, whose great strength he acknowledged, but he disputed his claim to have surpassed Sandow. The latter had lifted his 79lb. squarely at arm's length, but Cyr's arm, he said, was never horizontal, and in lifting the larger weight he had made use of the knee and the chest. Mr. Fox offered Sampson £100 on the instant to rival either feat, but Sampson, so far from accepting the offer, said he was obliged to go, and he went, accompanied, as might be expected, by jeers and hisses and ironical cheers. The next feat of strength was still more surprising. A barrel of cement was put on the scale which was certified by the four referees to weigh 230lb. Seizing the barrel with the right hand, without touching it with his left, the young giant turned it over, first on to his thigh, then on to his chest, and finally on to his shoulder, with as much apparent ease as a labourer would shoulder his hod of bricks. He walked a few steps along the stage, and was finally, but by no means hurriedly, relieved of the burden by half a dozen men. A man of the certified weight of 173lb.