

A MODERN SAMSON.

THE PRODIGIOUS FEATS OF A ST. JOHN NEW BRUNSWICKER.

Thomas, or Tom Gardner, as he was familiarly called, was born on the river St. John one mile above the mouth of the Mactaquik stream, in the year 1798. Viewed casually, Gardner gave no evidence of unusual power, but when stripped his muscular development was tremendous, and it is affirmed that instead of the ordinary ribs he possessed a solid bony wall on either side, and that there was no separation whatever. He stood five feet ten and a half inches, erect and full chested, and never exceeded 190 pounds in weight.

The late Charles Long informed us that at one time he saw Gardner lift from a tow-boat a purchase of corn, containing at least twelve bushels, and, swinging around, deposit it on the sand. In so doing he tore the sole off his boot. On another occasion a number of men were trying to lift a stick of timber. In all the crowd only one man could raise it about two inches from the skids. Gardner told four men to sit upon it, and then lifted it so high that the men jumped off to save themselves from the fall. Mr. McKean has frequently known him in lifting to break boom poles six inches thick. He has known him also with one hand to lift, by the rung of a chair, the chair itself and a man weighing nearly 200 weight. Once in attempting to lift a very heavy man he wrenched the rung entirely from the chair.

Gardner at one time was possessed of a balky horse with which he exercised great patience; but when patience ceased to be a virtue he would fell him to the ground with his clenched fist, striking him behind the ear. It is related of Gardner's sister that on one occasion a famous wrestler travelled all the way from Miramichi to Tom's home in order to "try a fall with him." Tom was absent, but the sister looking contemptuously upon the intruder, declared she could throw him herself, and suiting the action to the word, in a fair trial threw him three times in succession. The stranger's experience with the sister was sufficient; he never sought a future interview with the brother.

The greatest feat which Gardner was ever known to perform was on one of the wharves in St. John. Mr. McKean saw him lift and carry and anchor weighing 1,200 pounds, numbers of other witnesses standing by, some of whom are yet alive. Frequently he has seen him carrying a barrel of pork under each arm, and once he saw him shoulder a barrel of pork while standing in an ordinary brandy box. When about 40 years of age Gardner removed to the United States, and never returned to his native province.

It is commonly reported and believed that he met with a sad adventure on board a Mississippi steamer. A heavy bell was on board as a portion of the freight, and the captain, a great, powerful fellow, was concerned as to how he should remove it from its place in order to make more room on deck. While captain and passengers were at dinner, Tom, in the presence of the crew, to their utter amazement, lifted the bell and carried it to the opposite side of the boat. When the captain returned he asked how that had been accomplished, and when Gardner laughingly remarked that he carried it there, the former gave him the lie, and as one word brought on another, he presently hit Tom in the face. This was too much, and for the first time in his life the strong man gave blow for blow; but one buffet was sufficient. The captain never spoke again, killed dead on the instant. Tom made his escape, went West, and has never been heard of since.

SHAW, THE LIFE GUARDSMAN AT WATERLOO.

Of all the heroes of Waterloo, Shaw, the pugilist Life Guardsman, towers above them all. "The line of cavalry," says John Scott, "at the commencement of the engagement, was drawn up a little in the rear of the eminence on which our infantry was arrayed; they could not in this direction see much of the battle, but the shot and shells flew thickly among them, which they were compelled to sustain without moving." Nothing tries a gallant spirit more than this. Shaw was hit and wounded in the breast; his officer desired him to fall out. "Please God," said this fine fellow, "I shan't leave my colors out." Shortly after orders came down that

HUNTING OSTRICHES.

The greatest feat of an Arab hunter is to capture an ostrich. It is the largest of living birds, and probably the swiftest of living animals. Being very shy and cautious, and living on sandy plains, where there is little chance to take it by surprise, it can only be captured by a well-planned and long-continued pursuit with the swiftest horses. The ostrich has two curious habits in running when alarmed. It always starts off with outspread wings, against the wind, so that it can scent the approach of an enemy. It senses of smell is so keen that it can detect a person at a great distance, long before one can be seen. The other curious habit is that of running in a circle. Usually five or six ostriches are found in a company. When discovered, part of the hunters, mounted on fleet horses, will pursue the bird, while the other hunters will gallop away at right angles to the course the ostriches have taken. When these hunters think they have gone far enough to cross the path the birds will be likely to take, they watch upon some rise of ground for their approach. If the hunters hit the right place and see the ostriches, they at once start in pursuit with fresh horses, and sometimes they overtake one or two of the birds, but often two or three of the fleet horses fall completely tired out with so sharp a chase.

IN A CAR WITH A TIGER.

A recent incident on the Ogdensburg road is thus described by the St. Albans (Vt.) Messenger of the 7th inst.:—"A cage of tigers, which was on its way to a menagerie now exhibiting south of here, was placed in one end of the car, and a zebra tied in the other end. The watchman lay down on a box and fell asleep; when he awoke he discovered that one of the tigers had bent the iron bars of its cage, forced its way out, and was crouching in the opposite corner. The regular keeper of the animals was in the sleeping car at the rear end of the train, and there was no chance to communicate with him or with any one outside. The poor watchman was frightened into motionless silence, and in that awful suspense he made the long and weary journey to St. Albans. After the train came to a halt there, one of the train men, in passing the car, saw a cat-like nose thrust out of an opening, and not knowing that any one's life was endangered in the car, but fearing lest the animal should escape, ran to the sleeping car and aroused the keeper, who soon appeared, rawhide in hand, and lashed the beast back into his den, to the immeasurable relief of the poor fellow who had been curled up for hours on the box."

FATAL PRIZE FIGHT.

The London Times of Aug. 8 says:—"A prize-fight, which has resulted in the death of one of the principals, occurred on Sunday afternoon upon the race course at Aintree, a few miles distant from Liverpool. The Liverpool police authorities had received information on Saturday that such an event was contemplated, the place fixed being within the borough. Measures were accordingly taken by them to avert the mediated breach of the peace, and when a crowd numbering nearly 800 "roughs" came together in Love lane, shortly after four o'clock on Sunday morning, for the evident purpose of which warning had been received, they were made to move on. The mob left then and took to the country, and the borough police passed information to their country brethren of the country force of what was going forward. The "roughs," however, finding that the authorities had an eye upon them, suspended operations until the afternoon, when shortly after 4 o'clock, a sergeant and two constables of the country force had their attention directed to a steady stream of people passing from Liverpool to the Aintree course. After sending a messenger for assistance, the constables went upon the course, where the crowd passed some time in lounging about and running races, evidently with the intention of leading the police to believe that the meeting was a harmless one. Finding, however, that the police were determined to remain, they decided to put the small force to defiance, and formed a ring, in which two men named Looney and Mahoney commenced fighting. The ring was kept clear from invasion by a number of men armed with sticks and belts, and the three policemen could only look on while the brutal exhibition went forward. At length, however, as

THE THRESHER SHARK IN THE MANCHESTER AQUARIUM.

There is at present on exhibition at the Manchester Aquarium a member of the shark tribe with which landmen have but seldom the opportunity of making an acquaintance, except perhaps as a preserved specimen in a museum. This is an example of the Thresher or Fox Shark (*Isopneustes vulpes*), one of the greatest tyrants of the ocean, before whom the mighty Leviathan himself quails and seeks in vain respite from persecution. The terrible weapon of offence with which this fish is enabled to hold so high a position among other inhabitants of the deep so vastly superior to him in size consists not in the armature of the mouth, but in the extraordinary length and remarkable formation of the tail. This organ in the Thresher Shark equals or even exceeds the total length of the creature's body, and is, at the same time, (being constructed of the upper lobe alone,) remarkably thin and strap-shaped. To this is added a toughness and flexibility akin to that of whalebone or tanned leather, and which, taken with its scythe-like curvature, renders it almost as efficient in action to its possessor as a sabre in the hands of a skillful swordsman. The usual length of these threshers or fox sharks is only twelve feet, and yet a pair of these have been seen to attack and kill a whale sixty or seventy feet in length, the contest lasting many hours, and the larger animal succumbing at last through sheer exhaustion and the loss of blood consequent upon the terrible wounds dealt to it by its comparatively puny yet merciless assailant. An altogether unaccountable and implacable hatred seems to be maintained by this shark against all members of the whale tribe. A meeting never occurs without a battle, and witnesses of the combat describe the sea during such engagements as being discolored with blood wherever the poor whale goes; the sharks in the pursuit leaping out of the water as high as the masthead, and descending upon their victim with unerring precision and appalling momentum. The swordfish frequently acts in concert with the thresher in its attacks upon the whale, spearing it from below with its formidable sword or rostrum, while the shark belabors it from above. The specimen now on view at the Aquarium is about the average length, measuring within a few inches of twelve feet. It was captured recently by Mr. J. L. P. Evans in his salmon weirs at Colwyn Bay, and although unable, through the want of a sufficiently large receptacle to forward it, except with the life extinct, was sent by that gentleman as an appropriate object to exhibit at that institution. Visitors desirous of seeing this monster are recommended to pay an early visit to the Aquarium. The last sturgeon, also received from Colwyn Bay, is daily improving in health and activity, so that sanguine hopes are now entertained of securing this fine fish as a permanent resident of the Aquarium.

PHYSICAL TRAINING.

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of early physical training; and, considering we somewhat pride ourselves on being a nation of athletes, it is somewhat surprising so little account is taken of this part of our education. True, almost every school has its cricket and athletic clubs, and where opportunity offers, as at Eton and Westminster, its boat club likewise. But the joining of these clubs is perfectly optional, and many a weakly youngster, who might grow up into a strong and hearty man, is left out in the cold from shyness or indisposition to join in the sports. It is desirable, if only on the well-known principle of developing the *mentem sanam in corpore sano*, that every school in England, should have attached to it one or more skilled instructors in physics—not the physics with which the medical practitioner supplies us, or the physics which some reverend or irreverend wrangler does his best to instil in our feeble boy-minds, but the proper use of the limbs with which Dame Nature has furnished us. This necessity is recognized abroad, in countries which, athletically, are far behind us. In Germany and Holland especially, whose cricket and rowing would raise a smile of mingled pity and contempt in the average English schoolboy, physical training is a part of the system. To nearly every school a gymnasium is attached, and a high standing of proficiency in gymnastic exercises is pretty generally attained. A large section of our population habitually goes down to sea in ships, strong and deep rivers intersect our island in all directions; yet instruction in swimming is the exception rather than the rule.

A REMARKABLE YACHT RACE.

At Philadelphia, a few days ago, occurred the most remarkable yacht race on record. The race was between two third class yachts. These are boats built very sharp, carrying a single immense sail. This sail is so enormous in proportion to the hull that the boat is liable to capsize upon a very trifling provocation. Consequently the crew run a plank out to windward, and sit on it, to balance the craft. In sailing this race, one of the yachts was a mile ahead, when her mast broke short off. The other yacht immediately reefed her sail, to do which her sail had to be lowered completely, and proceeded to leisurely sail the course. But the yacht which had broken off her mast, being near a small island, ran a line ashore, was hauled to the land, lifted out and emptied of water, and then she borrowed a mast and sail of another boat, shipped the new mast, set sail, all inside of 15 minutes, ran out again, caught her opponent napping, passed her and won the race. The match not being sailed under the rules, which required a yacht to abide by her accidents, and accept of no assistance, the affair ended in a hot dispute.

HORSE NOTES.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

ALBERT.—Mr. Fawcett's black gelding Albert, that cut himself so badly in his race at Buffalo, that his owner decided to withdraw him and send him home, has been doing so well during the last week or two, that it is hoped he will again enter his engagements in the central circuit.

Mr. Shaw sold at 642 Craig street, Montreal, 8 horses, one fine bay mare, suitable for draught purposes brought \$111 and the hammer fell at \$119 for an excellent draught bay horse. The prices secured for the remaining 6 were: \$53, 25, 32, 71, 65 and 93. In each case the prices represented the full value of the animal.

AMERICAN HORSES ABROAD.—In addition to the entries of Mr. Sanford's two American-bred colts, by Baywood and Lexington, in the English Derby and St. Leger of 1877, he has also entered them in the Grand Prix de Paris of that year, and has entered his brown filly, by imp Glenelg out of Stumps, by Lexington, in the Oaks of 1877.

A CHALLENGE.—I will match my stallion Western Fearnought, against any stallion now owned in the State of Michigan, bearing Mambrino Gift, to trot a race of mile heats, best 3 in 5, in harness, to rule, for \$1,000 to \$2,500 a side, half forfeit. This challenge to remain open for two weeks from this date.—Detroit, Aug. 20, 1875.

W. R. ARMSTRONG.

ETHAN ALLEN.—Old Ethan Allen is a miracle of healthy, vigorous old age. Although 26 years old, he looks like a colt, and is certainly the youngest looking horse of his years ever seen. He served last year thirty-seven mares, and got thirty-two foals, and this year he has been permitted to cover fifty-one. He is still at the Kansas Stud Farm, at Lawrence, Kan.

DISCOVERIES.—An exchange says, it was till lately held by naturalists that the horse never existed native on this continent, but recent investigations have discovered the remains of the horse, in the marl beds of the Carolinas. In Dakota Territory, the skeleton of a horse only thirty inches high has been found. The bones were petrified, and in a good state of preservation. They show the animal to have been of mature age and well formed. But it is evident that the horse became extinct on this continent before man inhabited it.

MOLLIE MORRIS.—It was stated that Mollie Morris had a record of 2:26 prior to this season. The facts are, that she stands credited with a heat won in 2:26 at Chicago, but the Board of Appeals, after an investigation, found that the time so announced was that of Brother Jonathan, and that Mollie Morris was not timed. The heat was taken from Jonathan, and given to the mare, and the record of Jonathan wrongfully followed it. Her best record, prior to this year, was 2:27.—Wilkes.

A RARE CURIOSITY.—S. Gordon, of Washington, N. J., writes us that he has a colt, two months old, that has got five well-formed legs. He walks on three of them, and carries one fore leg up, the other fore leg branches into two perfect legs, from the knee down. To add to this curiosity of the formation, one

PINNATED GROUSE SHOOTING.

by "curino."

At last the season of field sports has opened with the excellent Pinnated Grouse shooting. The season in the United States opens Aug 15th and 20th, and in a few States as late as the 25th of the month and even the 1st. Various reports are favorable, and the birds are generally plenty in all the States except the Eastern, where they are usually scarce.

Woodcock shooting has been fair since the opening of the season, July 4th, and many suggest the abolition of Summer Woodcock shooting to secure a surer supply and finer shooting.

If the true sportsmen would prevent all illegal shooting, it would be an excellent move to prolong the close season, but if they allow Pot Hunter and Market Gun to destroy the birds out of season, the result of making the close or breeding season a matter later would only be to put so many more birds into the hands of the poaching, snaking class of Market Gunners and take the sport from the sportsman instead of improving the matter. This is the true cause of insufficient game protection, viz., the sportsmen are afraid of offending the lawless gunners, and therefore, rather than create a feeling by having the illegal shooting punished, let the perpetrator off and let the feeling must give place to one of unwelcome justice to all, before any great results can be attained by protective laws, as with it properly enforcing the game laws, the latter come merely a nuisance.

Of late, however, owing to the vigilance of genuine sportsmen and sporting clubs, Pinnated Grouse have been but little disturbed during the breeding season. Many who rank the Grouse as the finest game bird, wait at all hazards protect them until the laws allow the shooting. Let the interest of an extended to Woodcock, Ducks, Geese, and other game, as well as Pinnated Grouse, and the long wished for result will be attained. Truly this is "a consummation devoutly to be wished," and we are sure that game may be protected by public action as well as law.

SUICIDE OF A SCORPION.

A scorpion was caught near the American Flat Tunnel, the other day by some of the railroad boys, and tormented by them until, in its rage, it struck itself on the back with its poisoned dart. Immediately after it lay so it grew quiet, and in less than ten minutes died from the effect of its own sting. The body did not swell up or become inflamed, and the only discernible mark was a small inserted sting, at which point a small black spot about the size of an ordinary head was visible. Some people assert that the sting of a scorpion is not more deadly than that of a bee, but the above incident, which several of the railroad men say they would go to show that, however the sting may affect other animals, it is not the kind of medicine to be taken by themselves.

THE JUDGE PRYOR RACE.

To the Editor of the Mail.

We have been requested to publish the following letter, addressed to the Mail.

SIR,—I notice in your paper of the 1st letter over the signature of Mr. E. R. Wells, respecting the horse Vespa carrying his proper weight at the race Stewards' Purse at the Newmarket. I did not, and do not accuse Mr. Wells of improper conduct, but certainly a victim of misplaced confidence. I believe the rider of Vespa did not see the scale after the race. But it should be considered in the future when I assert that the trainer of Vespa himself told me that the horse did not carry his proper weight at that race. The following letter speaks for itself.