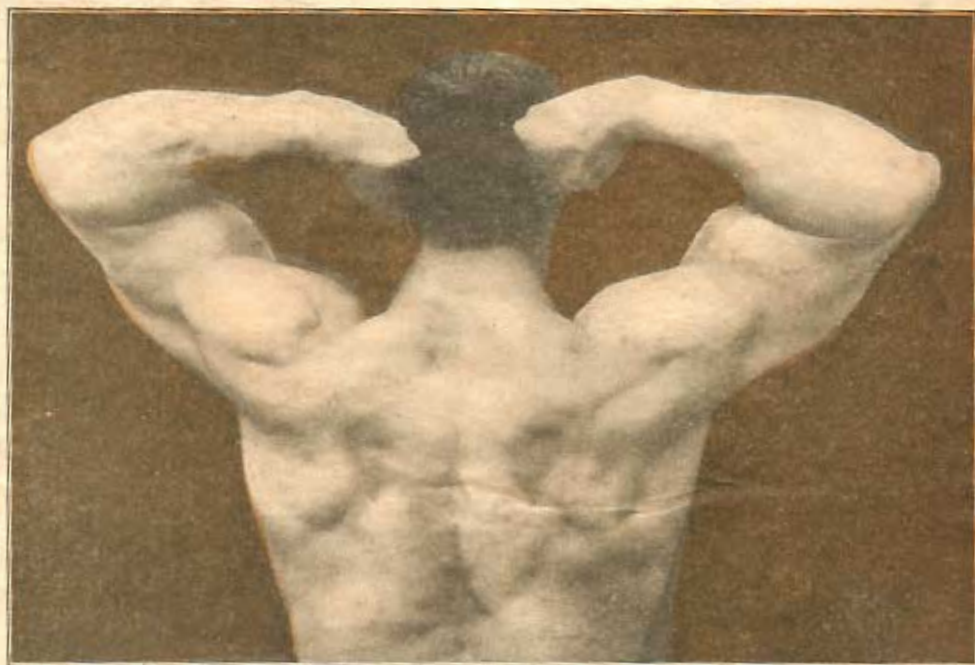


Francis Gerard, the Austrian Strong Man

By LORINDI



The Powerful Arms and Shoulders of Francis Gerard, the Austrian Strong Man

THE public at large, and physical culture enthusiasts in particular, are interested in the appearance in this country of Francis Gerard, the Austrian strong man. The writer has obtained an interview with this physical wonder, and a description of some of his feats of strength, and some of his ideas on physical culture, may be of interest to readers of this magazine.

Mr. Gerard opens his performance with a series of muscular poses, in a brilliantly lighted cabinet. He introduces many novelties in his act, and the old tricks of lifting huge dumb-bells, which nobody knows the weight of, and breaking chains which everyone suspects of having weak links in them, are replaced by genuine feats of strength and skill. Perhaps the most notable of these feats is the one in which he balances on his hands, fifteen feet above

the ground, on the tops of two ladders, and supports a man and a bicycle by a chain, the end of which he holds in his teeth. Another act is one in which Gerard holds a rung of a chair, in which a man is seated, in his mouth, and extends his arms straight out to the sides, with a heavy iron weight in each hand, while a large man hangs on each shoulder.

One thing is particularly noticeable about Gerard, and that is that he combines the grace of the acrobat with the huge muscles and clean-cut development of the professional weight lifter. His feat of turning a somersault over the head of a tall man, sitting in a chair, is especially remarkable. Every muscle in his body seems to be under perfect control, and when relaxed, his arms are soft and pliable as a child's, but when flexed, they become hard as steel, and