

THE GYMNASTIC POLYMACHINON

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The Gymnastic Polymachinon by James Chiosso

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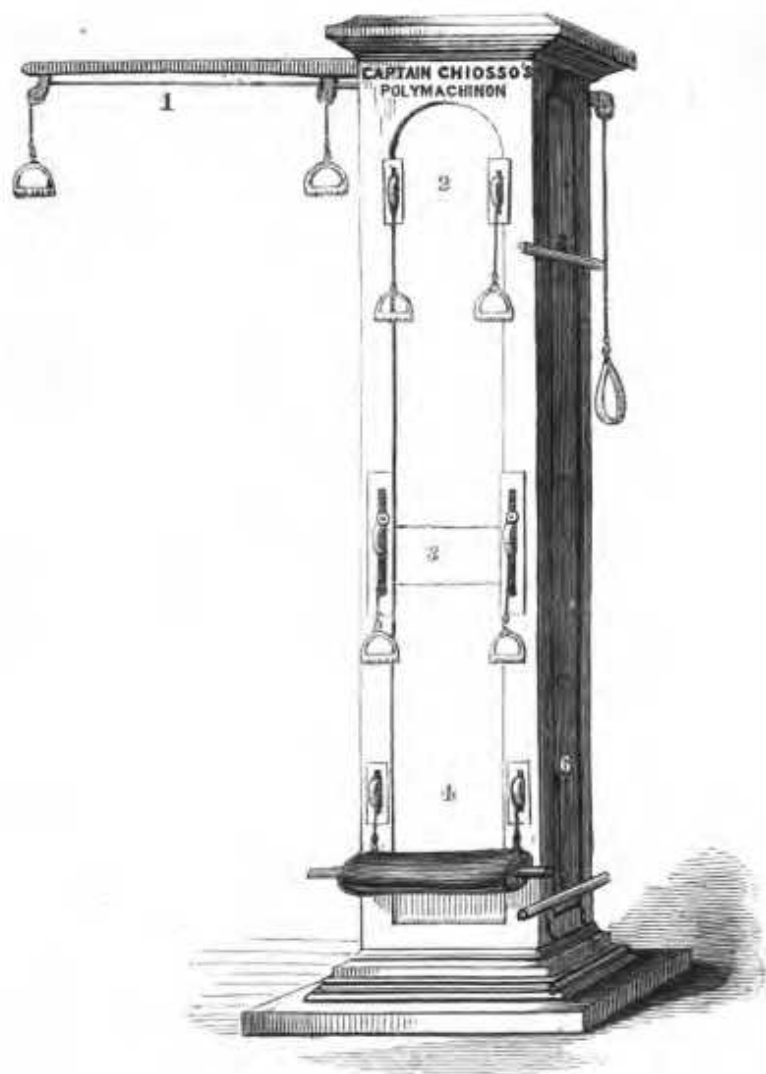
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JAMES CHIOSSO

**THE GYMNASTIC
POLYMACHINON**



THE
GYMNASTIC POLYMACHINON.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PERFORMING

A

SYSTEMATIC SERIES OF EXERCISES

ON THE

GYMNASTIC & CALISTHENIC POLYMACHINON.

BY CAPTAIN CHIOSSO, *James*

THE INVENTOR, PROFESSOR OF GYMNASTICS AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE SCHOOL, LONDON,
AND AUTHOR OF SEVERAL TREATISES ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

" Ah! what avail the largest gifts of Heaven,
When drooping health and spirits go amiss?
How tasteless then whatever can be given!
Health is the vital principle of bliss,
And exercise of health." THOMSON.

LONDON: WALTON & MABERLY,
UPPER GOWER STREET, AND IVY LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW;

PARIS AND NEW YORK:—H. BALLIÈRE.

To be had also at Capt. CHIOSSO & SON'S London Gymnasium, 123, Oxford Street, near Regent Circus,
and 21, New Road, corner of Gower Street North;

or at Capt. CHIOSSO'S Private Establishment, 38, Baker Street, Portman Square.

1855.

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INTRODUCTION.

In a former Treatise* I considered Gymnastics as an essential branch of popular education, and an invaluable remedial agent in many forms of chronic disease; and the favourable reception of that work by the press and public, together with the daily extending interest manifested in this important subject, have induced the publication of this little manual.

For while the Author views with pleasure the advance of physical education, he is aware that many, who would willingly adopt exercise as a hygienic or curative medium, either have not access to gymnasiums, or are deterred through ignorance of the movements they should adopt, as well as from fear of the evils resulting from indiscriminate and violent exertion; and for such, the following series of scientifically arranged exercises will be found admirably suited, as the Polymachinon combines perfect safety, with all the essential elements of the most elaborate gymnasium.

HISTORY OF THE POLYMACHINON.

Bodily exercise, to be of use, not temporarily but permanently, must be of such a nature as to act gradually on the various complicated sets of motors of the body in every possible way, from the head to the feet, without the chance of their receiving the least strain; and the first efforts to produce an instrument, by which this might be securely effected, were made by the author in the year 1829.

These met with signal success, and were fully appreciated by all who placed themselves under his care; amongst whom might be mentioned many eminent members of the medical profession. Still, these attempts, though essentially good, lacked many

* Rationale of Gymnastics.

requisites for carrying out his views. Sensible that injury of a serious nature was likely to accrue to young persons, as well as adults, in attempting the performance of feats of strength on *immoveable* resisting substances, before the various muscles were rendered fit for such exertion, it was not until 1831 that an instrument was devised, which appeared to possess the desired virtues.

This consisted of a rough and strong frame-work of wood, of rather large dimensions; to which were attached blocks, through which cords passed to the different weights (required for the various movements), situated on a platform at the base of the machine; handles being attached to the other extremity of the cords, by which the weights were set in motion. Although possessing advantages, it was found, after some time, to be deficient in many respects. First, the weights being all exposed, and the danger likely to arise from children or young persons touching them while in motion. Again, the rough and clumsy appearance of the whole; the requiring a great number of weights, regulated to the powers of different individuals, and the very limited amount of exercise that could be performed, proved it far short of what was required. Perceiving these faults, the Inventor endeavoured to surmount at least some of the chief difficulties; and in the year 1836 another apparatus was conceived. It consisted of two simple upright planks of good strong deal, about thirteen inches wide and one inch and a-half thick, placed opposite to each other, with an intervening space of about seven feet and a-half; these were fixed firmly into the floor, and joined at the top by means of a transverse beam of the same width as the uprights. In this frame-work of wood pulleys were fixed at different correct points, to take the place of the blocks in the old instrument, through which the different cords passed to the weights; the arrangement of which, also, differed materially. To the two uprights were fixed two plates of wrought iron, each carrying two strong levers of the same material, about two feet and a-half in length, by three inches wide, each having two rows of holes running the whole length, one placed above the other; the lower being for the