

AN EASY METHOD OF LEARNING TO SWIM

by ALICE CAVILL



THIRD POSITION



SECOND POSITION



FIRST POSITION



PHOTO'S BY BAKER

ABRAD

The surface. As the left arm is pulled back the legs are brought sharply together, the swimmer taking care to use the flat part of his feet as much as possible for propellers.

The side stroke is, of course, very difficult to learn, but once you have mastered it you will employ the stroke considerably and pronounce it easy, graceful and pleasant.

Now, in the overhand stroke the head sinks lower than in other styles of swimming and the feeling is not so agreeable.

Presuming you are on your right side, the only difference between this and the ordinary side stroke is that the left arm is thrown forward above the surface of the water to its utmost extent. Then placing it in the water, a strong, powerful pull is taken, letting the arm go back to its full length. The exertion is much more severe than for the common side stroke.

By this time you are a good swimmer. Not by the time that you have read to the bottom of this page, but by the time that you have implicitly followed these directions. You have been brave and you have been accurate; the rest was easy.

Now that you have learned, you are investigating the matter of bathing suits. I'll tell you what I think about them. I much prefer a knit garment modeled after a man's suit. I use, however, for public exhibitions (and so will you) the loose blouse, short skirt and long hose common to patrons of the surf. Some may consider the former very bold, but I consider it the best, when I think of my health. The more they play the arms and legs have, the more the benefit derived. We should wear suits to swim in, not to make a display. Try to consider swimming as a sport for your own benefit. Never mind other people and whether they admire your costume. I know you won't pay any attention to this advice, but I throw it away just the same.

Swimming is one of the most beautiful sports that there is in the world as well as one of the most useful. You girls—those of you who don't swim—ought to begin the learning the very first chance you get. You need it. With your present mode of dressing, your sedentary habits, exercise is what you need. This is the best kind.

It expands the chest. This strengthens the lungs and heart and gives each muscle a certain amount of exercise which keeps the frame in a healthy condition, preventing headaches and bilious attacks.

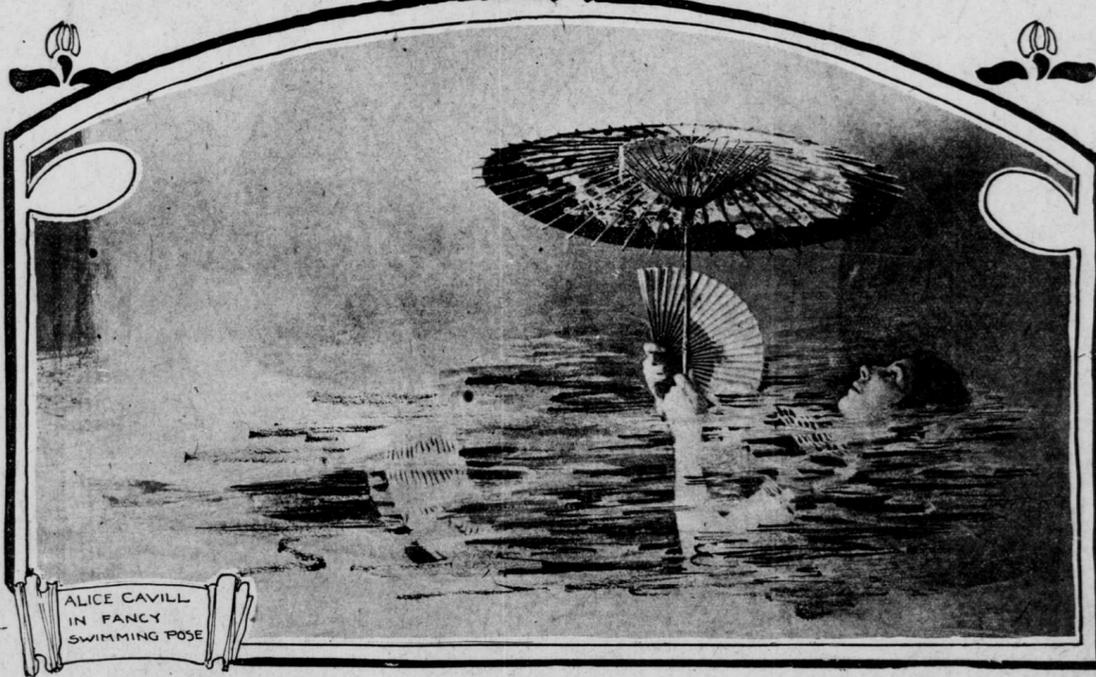
In any accident on the water a person who is unable to swim constitutes a real danger to those who have to do the saving. The lives of innumerable good swimmers have been sacrificed to save their drowning companions.

Perhaps if they had some time employed a friend and a few yards of rope these might have been other stories.

The Bushmen, or low-grade Hottentots, of the plains of South Africa have a language which has been proved by Garner to be a close approximation to that of the higher apes. It consists of hissing, clicking and grunting sounds.

Birds That Bind Their Own Wounds.

YOU are not accustomed to think of birds as surgeons, but it is true that the woodcock, the partridge and some other birds are able to dress their wounds with considerable skill. A French naturalist says that on several occasions he has killed woodcocks that were when shot convalescing from wounds previously received. In every instance he found the old injury neatly dressed with down, plucked from the stem of feathers, and skillfully arranged over the wound, evidently by the long beak of the bird. In some instances a solid plaster was thus formed and in others ligatures had been applied to wounded or broken limbs. One day he killed a bird that evidently had been severely wounded at some recent period. The wound was covered and protected by a sort of network of feathers, which had been plucked by the bird from its own body and so arranged as to form a plaster completely covering and protecting the wounded surface. It had evidently acted as hemostatic in the first place and subsequently as a shield covering the wound. The feathers were fairly netted together, passing alternately under and above each other, and forming a textile fabric of great protective power. Birds are often found whose limbs have been broken by shot, with the fractured ends neatly joined and ligated. M. Dumontell tells of a woodcock that had been shot by a sportsman on the afternoon of a certain day. After a long search the bird was given up, but it was discovered the next morning by an accident. In the meantime the wounded legs were found to be neatly ligated, an exquisitely neat bandage having been placed around each wounded limb. The poor bird, however, had, in dressing its wound, entangled its beak with some long soft feathers and had it not been discovered it would have died of starvation.



ALICE CAVILL IN FANCY SWIMMING POSE

water, and the movements of arms and legs are for propulsion only.

The most common fault with beginners is their anxiety to keep their heads too much out of water, which necessitates great efforts—efforts which should be directed to propelling the body along. The lower your head is in the water the better; just keep it sufficiently above the water to breathe.

Before entering the water practice drawing the hands up to the breast, palms downward and thumbs together, with the lower arms and elbows close to the sides. Next shoot out the arms well in front of the breast, as if trying to touch something out of reach, taking care to stiffen the joints. Then turn the palms outward and take a circular sweep with both arms until they are square with the shoulder. These three movements constitute a stroke and should be performed in one continuous motion.

As for your legs, you won't have to worry about them. In all my experience I have found that the legs fall in line naturally when the arms have learned their duty. You need not teach them to kick; they will do it automatically. For you know swimming is almost natural to you, anyway. Your cousins, the other animals, swim by instinct. If Darwin is true, probably you used to do the same.

Now that you have practiced the stroke on dry land so that you have the idea of it a little, you are ready to try the water. Obtain a small rope about twenty-five or thirty feet long, make a running knot in it and let your friend place this around your waist with the knot in the center of the body in front, so as to balance you nicely; then haul the rope in while you make the stroke at the same time. Enter the water with a resolve to make three long steady strokes and increase the number as progress is made. I lay great stress on the steadiness of the stroke, as all beginners seem to be possessed with the idea that they can only keep up by a succession of quick, jerky strokes, which only have the effect of jerking the head out of the water at one moment and immersing it the next, besides quickly exhausting the learner's strength. Great care should be taken to keep both hands and feet, when taking a stroke, under the surface of the water. The inhaling of the breath should be done at the moment when the arms are being shot forward from the breast.

After you make yourself thoroughly acquainted with the breast stroke, you should learn to float. Some people learn this before swimming. Place yourself on your back, throw your head back, your chest well out, straighten your limbs and you will float with the lightness of a cork. Be careful not to throw the head up after getting into position.

Many lives would be saved if people could keep a cool head and place themselves in floating position when a ship is wrecked. People who could not swim have often floated for hours, waiting for succor.

When commencing to learn the side stroke, turn the body over on the side,

laying the side of the face flat on the surface of the water, so that it just reaches the side of the mouth, keeping the head in exactly the same position in relation to the body as when walking, taking care not to move it up or down. The body and head should be kept rigid and the arms and legs used as propellers.

Supposing the pupil to be lying on his right side, his first movement is to place the left hand as far advanced as possible, the thumb being tightened over the forefinger to form a kind of scoop to enable the swimmer in the next movement to get a good "grip" of the water, the right hand being held at the breast and the legs opened as wide as possible. This is movement No. 1. The next movement, No. 2, is to bring the left hand, sharply past the breast, getting a good hold of the water in so doing, throwing the hand back to its full extent, the right arm being shot straight forward, palm downward. Take great care not to allow any part to come out of the water, but to be just beneath

A Human Calendar For Last Half Century.

A 16-YEAR-OLD boy of Bloomington, Ind., carries in his mind a permanent calendar for at least the last half-century, although by many of the citizens he is considered mentally deficient.

To everybody in Bloomington and around the quarries he is known as the "weasel." When asked his real name he gives any of a half-dozen which he has at his tongue's end for the purpose of satisfying the curiosity of the questioner. So far as known the boy has never attended school and knows nothing about the system by which past and future dates are calculated. When asked on what day of the week a date twenty years back came, the "weasel" answers the question correctly within the space of one minute and often in much less time. He gathers up many nickels and pennies by "selling commercial travelers" at the hotels on what day of the week they were born. The day of the month on which one was born is given the boy and he immediately supplies the day of the week. To the questioner this is in many cases known, so that it is at once known that the boy has given a correct answer. Every ruse has been made use of to mislead him in his calculations, but in each case he gets the best of the undertaking. The other day he was asked on what day of the month would come the second Tuesday after the first Monday of a month of a year in advance. His answer came in forty seconds and it was found to be correct.

Nobody in Bloomington claims to know the secret of the "weasel's" method of calculating dates. When asked a date he raises his hand to his mouth, mumbles something through his thin lips, and works the fingers of one hand.

When commencing to learn the side stroke, turn the body over on the side,

Colonel James Bowie and His Knife That Never "Missed Fire"

THERE are men who seem especially created to fill a certain place in the affairs of their time. This has been particularly true in American history. The man that in the storm and stress of the period was most needed has always come to the fore at the supreme moment. If ever this was demonstrated by circumstances it was in the early history of the Texas republic—that storm-born State evoked from the local revolution of 1836.

In his remarks concerning the early history of Texas that President McKinley made in his recent tour he referred most felicitously, though briefly, to the four men who, under Providence, had been most prominent in the early days, when the greatest State in the Union in the matter of territory was a young and struggling republic—Houston, Travis, Crockett and Bowie. He spoke of classic ground, too, for it was at the Alamo, where he then stood, that three of the four crowned with their lives their devotion to the young State, whose foundations they had laid deep and wide, and sanctified its cornerstone with the seal of their blood.

Of this group of heroes as worthy of place in song and story as any who so gallantly died under shield before Troy the least known of them all and yet in many respects the greatest was James Bowie, famous only by reason of the world-renowned knife called by his name. A few words touching his ancestry may not be out of place. He was not from Maryland, as has been stated, but was born in Burke County, Ga., in 1799. In 1802 his father emigrated to Louisiana. That country was then still under French domination. There had been large tracts of land granted by the French crown in the territory named for Louis XIV, and one of these, in the parish of Cataboula, was acquired by the elder Bowie. He was a man of substance, owning nearly 100 slaves. He soon had his estate well opened out and was growing superb crops of cotton and corn. His son James he sent first to a famous private school at Natchez, Miss., and afterward to the Jesuit college, then located in New Orleans.

James Bowie in 1827 was challenged to a duel with Norris Wright. The pocket pistols of that day were uncertain. It was long before the percussion cap had been brought into common use, and the flintlock arm was the only firearm known. It was liable to miss fire just when it ought not to. Bowie determined to rely upon a knife he had caused to be made for just such a contingency. He had taken a 14-inch long file, such as was then used to sharpen crosscut saws and the upright saws used for turning out planks from logs. He had the file marks carefully ground off the file and the smooth piece of steel skillfully reduced by the grindstone until it was about the thickness and weight he desired. Then he took it to a Spaniard in New Orleans known as "Pedro, the skilled cutler," a man who had learned his art in Toledo, where the finest sword blades in all Spain were forged. He tempered and finished the knife, fitted it with a crosspiece and haft. When it was done James Bowie had a weapon "fit to fight for a man's life with," as he said to Governor Wells. It was beautifully balanced, and the artist had hollow-ground it like a razor, with a double edge for three or four inches from the point.

The knife was fitted with a wooden scabbard, covered with leather, and was sharp enough to shave the hair off the back of one's hand. This was the original Bowie knife, though it was somewhat modified subsequently in shape. Bowie, while a student in New Orleans, had studied other

things besides the humanities, as the dead languages of Greece and Rome were then called. By accident he found in his fencing master a man who could not only use the sword but was a master in the use of the cuchillo, the Spanish fighting knife, a weapon not unlike the Bowie. Our young student entered enthusiastically into the training and science of old Spain in that nation's once national weapon. And so he was much better equipped for the deadly fight that was so near at hand. Natchez Island, where the fight was to be, was midway between the Louisiana and Mississippi shores of the great Father of Waters. Therefore it was a favorite meeting place for gentlemen who had to adjust affairs that might have a fatal ending, as the authorities of neither State could interfere. "I stayed all night with James Bowie," said a friend of his who died over twenty years ago, in his ninetieth year. "On the night before the fight was to take place I never saw a man sleep more soundly than he did, nor eat a better breakfast the next morning."

It was understood that each of the principals should have but one friend, and certainly not more than two, on the ground. But Mr. Wright had five or six

present. The fight began with pistols. One of Bowie's missed fire, while both of Wright's bullets took effect upon his antagonist.

Thinking he had Bowie at his mercy, Norris Wright sprang upon him. In a moment Bowie had drawn his deadly knife, and though two or three of Wright's friends were shooting at him and hitting him, too, Bowie made one awful slash at Wright's neck. The keen steel hit into the very neck bone. The blood shot out over Bowie, and Norris Wright was dead before he touched the ground.

Seriously wounded himself, it was for some time a very doubtful question whether or not he would ever get well. But youth, a temperate life, and an excellent constitution finally brought him around, and in a year from that time he killed General Crain with the same knife he had used in his first encounter. "The knife doesn't miss fire," he said to an intimate friend, Mr. Bynum of the parish of Rapides; "the pistol does." This, of course, was long before the perfection of the percussion cap or the invention of the Colt's revolver, the first revolver ever made. James Bowie was engaged in the purchase and contest of claims for great tracts of land that had been granted made by the French crown. When Louisiana was ceded to the United States and finally became a State there was a good deal of trouble on this account over some of the titles to land along Red River and its tributaries. A man often had to fight for his plantation, as frequently he would not give it up to somebody with an old French or Spanish grant. It was in these contests that James Bowie did the most of his killing. He had sixteen lives on his hands from the use of that one bloody knife. After much consideration he had made a knife that has been the model and pattern for all the real Bowie knives that ever had the sanction of their originator. In 1835 Colonel Bowie sold his Louisiana property and went to Texas. The Lone Star State was in the throes of a bloody revolution. The gallant resistance of the Texans so exasperated General Santa Ana, who was chief in command of the Mexican forces, that he swore he would take no more prisoners. When Bowie arrived in Texas and offered his services to the young republic, he was at once made a colonel of riflemen in the army of Texas.

In January, 1836, Colonel Bowie was ordered to San Antonio de Bexar to assist in holding that place against Santa Ana's coming forces. The siege ran along until March, when San Antonio, trusting in the pledged word of honor of Santa Ana, with a starved-out garrison, surrendered. A general massacre took place. Travis, Crockett and Bowie were murdered in cold blood, a stain on General Santa Ana's memory that time can never blot out. Colonel Bowie was badly wounded three times, and was in a room of the main work of the place called the Alamo. He opposed the surrender as long as was possible. He was lying on his bed when he heard the triumphant Mexicans coming in. It was the first hint he had had of the surrender. He knew his life was ended. He could, however, move about a little. The instant the Mexicans came into the room they began shooting at him. He grasped his knife and leaped among them like an enraged tiger. And when the firing ended six of his enemies had crossed the Styx with James Bowie and gone with him to the shades. Charity's argument is short, but it has a long reach.