

POINTS ON SWIMMING.

Anybody Can Learn but All May Not Get Record for Speed and Distance.

Every one can learn to swim, even cripples and deformed persons. Self-confidence only is required. The toy who really desires to learn can do so either at a natatorium, or by watching a swimmer and picking it up for himself. After two or three attempts, either by crawling off a stieling shore, till his hands cannot reach the bottom, when he is bound to take a stroke or two, or possibly by placing under his chest a board or a plank, he will have made some headway, and proficiency then is only a matter of practice.

To become a speedy swimmer is, however more difficult. This, as well as long distance swimming, requires considerable muscular effort and good staying powers. One of the great mistakes made by persons when they first begin to practice for speed is in trusting to their arms for principal impetus. Any professional swimmer will tell you that this is wrong; that you should depend upon the muscles of your leg to shoot you forward. The muscles of the chest are bound to become wearied if they are depended on for all the work.

The question as to the movement of the legs is an important one in connection with fast swimming.

Captain Webb, who swam across the English Channel from Dover to Calais, a distance of thirty five miles, in 21:45:00, contended that the best speed was to be had by moving the legs scissor fashion, while others have trusted entirely to the resistance offered by the soles of the feet to the water for the propelling force. Fast swimmers nowadays combine these two methods into a powerful stroke, which consists in straightening out the leg with a peculiar flip, the scissor action being combined with the downward or opening stroke of the leg.

The fastest stroke for the arm is the "hand over hand." One hand is lifted out of the water, exposing the entire arm and shoulder, and swung through the air forward as far as the water edge, and the other arm thrown out in the same fashion. A knowledge of the stroke is valuable in swimming a short distance to reach a drowning person. It requires great muscular effort, and cannot be maintained long. Another fast stroke, which requires less exertion, consists in swimming on the side and taking but one arm out of the water. This may be relieved by turning over on the other side, or by using the common broad stroke.

Among the famous swimmers on record is that of Captain Webb, mentioned above, and his second one of four miles in the Thames river, was accomplished in 9:51. Gus Sundstrom, instructor at the New York Athletic Club, swam thirteen miles, from Macomb's dam to the Battery, New York, in August, 1895, in 3:37. The best record ever made by a woman is that of Agnes Beckwith, who swam twenty miles in the Thames river, in July, 1878.

Among the great bugbears in the sport is the cramp, which is likely to seize the best of swimmers. Every one should know, however, that there is positively not the slightest danger from an attack of cramp if the swimmer does not lose his head. It can frequently be relieved by change of position, by a vigorous stroke or two of the limbs affected, or by rubbing.

If the cramp occur in the calf of the leg, elongate the knee, and draw the toes up toward the body, regardless of pain. If relief does not come float quietly or paddle toward the shore, without trying to use the limb affected.

Learn to swim in clothing and to undress in the water, and in swimming under water remember to keep the eyes open.

Any boy who takes a daily plunge will find no difficulty in developing a speedy stroke, as well as acquiring some of the fancy strokes and tricks. Swimming on the back, floating, treading water in an upright position, and swimming under water are soon learned. Tricks should not be exhibited until they can be performed easily and gracefully. The "steam tug" act consists in lying on the back, with both legs in the air, the hands propelled and the body rotating. In "marching on the water" the performer lies on his back with arms crossed, and legs moving as they do when walking. The "torpedo" means swimming on the back, with feet and ankles only above the water, and moving feet first. In doing the "spinning top" the knees are brought up to the chin, and you turn over and over rapidly. In addition to these there are tricks such as swimming with hands and feet tied, swimming like a dog, sculling, porpoise, swimming, smoking under water, picking up coins with the mouth, revolving on the surface, hands over head and thumbs locked, and swimming on the breast, with feet first, all of which, if acquired, make neat little accomplishments of which any boy may be proud.

Cards at a Funeral.

Cards were played at a funeral in March last at the little village of Noms-at-Val, near Amiens, in the Department de la Somme, in France. The deceased was passionately fond of card-playing, piquet being his favorite game. By the terms of his will, a pack of cards was placed in his coffin, which was borne to the grave by the four best card players in the district. While on the road to the cemetery, a halt was made at a small tavern which the dead man had been in the habit of frequenting, and where, to quote his words, "he had spent so many agreeable evenings at cards and the mourners, as directed by the will, played a game at cards and had a glass of wine apiece to drink to his memory. Everything being thus carried out as the deceased had wished, all those who took part in this strange proceeding were entitled to receive a certain sum of money out of the estate.

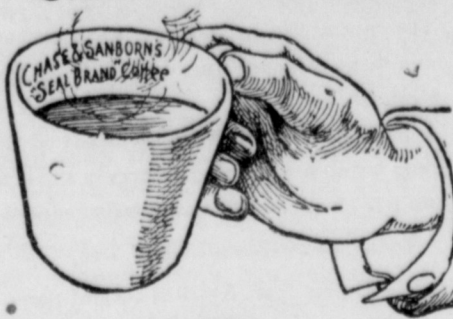
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VAGARIES OF THE COMPASS.

When Two Needles Are on a Ship They Seldom Point in the Same Direction.

A poem has recently been printed in Scribner's Magazine, called "The Compass." It was written by Edith M. Thomas. The concluding line of each stanza is "North points the needle." From a poetic standpoint the poem is very effective, but when read by the severely practical eye of an old salt it has many flaws, for the compass is a thing as whimsical as the wind. Two of them on the same ship rarely agree and seamen are always looking out for some evidence of their eccentricity. The editor of the Marine Review thus handles the poem of Miss Thomas:

"Miss Thomas might have learned by conversation with an 'old salt' that, on the contrary, many marine disasters have occurred from the fact that north not always points the needle, and if it could be depended upon to act fairly and squarely all the time, some of the greatest dangers to navigation would be averted.

"It is unfortunate that the numberless vagaries of the compass have rarely been called to public attention, but so well known to every navigator are its freaks that one never thinks of trusting it implicitly without bringing a knowledge of both mathematics and astronomy to bear upon it in criticism of its actions. Many landmen who have read about new vessels have doubtless noted that a ship is sometimes reported to have gone outside to 'swing ship for correction of compasses,' yet few have any idea as to what the term means, although it is one of the prime necessities in order to get the slightest confidence in any compass. The necessities for this operation lie in the fact that the metal in a vessel's hull and rigging always more or less affects a compass, and there is also local deviation according to the land, and the atmosphere consequently a ship is 'swung,' that is, it is headed to each point of the compass in turn and the needle's difference from true north noted. The size, height and position of a steamer's smokestacks often affect her compasses, and so do very many other things two compasses in actual use at any given moment seldom point in the same direction, and none of them would adhere to the one direction for more than a few hours at a time. A compass fairly reliable on a wooden ship becomes crazy and irresponsible if transferred to an iron ship, and if it may perchance point fairly well while the ship is on a level keel, it may suddenly change its mind and exhibit symptoms of dizziness when the vessel careers on one tack or the other, probably contradicting itself without a blush when the vessel 'comes about.'

This is called the 'heeling error,' and besides this there are the regular customary errors of variation and deviation, and partially controllable errors of local attraction, all of which must be taken into consideration when the navigator wants to calculate as to how near the truth the compass is actually telling him a course.

"Miss Thomas had crossed the Atlantic in company with a shipmaster who would explain these things to her she could comprehend them better, and much more so if she could make a trip around the world. In crossing the North Atlantic, for instance, the captain would inform her that the regular variation of the compass from true north was, when off Sandy Hook, about one-quarter point westerly, which gradually increased as the ship sailed eastward. Off Sable Island it would be about a point, increasing until on the Banks it would be a point and a half, in longitude 20 degrees west about two points, and off Cape Clear about two and a half points, while in making up the Irish channel it would amount to from two and a half to two and three quarter points, this without taking into consideration the heeling error, influence of cargo, etc. If the cargo had enough metal in it forward it would not appear to affect the binnacle compass so long as the ship was heading north, but if the ship were headed to the east or west the compass would show the local attraction until the vessel's head let the N end of the needle revert to its natural magnetism, when it would probably get to the general direction of the pole with a jump. The captain might also tell her that the only absolutely true calculations of the compass were either the pole star or the position of the sun at noon, observations of the moon and various fixed stars offering also methods for determining the true direction by means of mathematical computations.

"So deep a study have these peculiarities of the compass become that many intricate and interesting tables have been prepared for the use of mariners in regard to them, so that it is now fairly possible to guard against ordinary errors, by means of careful watching and the free use of a lead pencil, if a man knows how to do it. There are other errors, however—'errors' is the polite term that sailors use in referring to maddening freaks of this little exemplar of constancy—for which no excuse can be found and no computations at all applicable can be made. In approaching land sometimes a compass has been known to swing right around on its own pivot within an hour, or with an approach of a thunder cloud the needle has likewise sometimes been known to absolutely neglect its duty. When these things happen in a fog or dense darkness the state of mind of the mariner who has been led to put his trust in the compass may be imagined. In fact the madness of the compass at sea is so utterly without method that its simile to constancy is really sarcasm to those who know it best, while the typical habits of Jack ashore are virtuous in comparison. Indeed if there were no sun, nor moon, nor polar star nor other 'fixed' stars upon which the mariner actually could depend for the correction and verification of his course, running a ship by compass would be about as unreliable as running her solely by dead reckoning. Of course the compass is useful, and when it is watched it answers a purpose, but it is liable to so many temptations that it actually hasn't any right to such fame as Miss Thomas' poem would ascribe to it. Hence this wall at its 'errors' and the fact that the delusion about its constancy is so popular."



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IT GREW IN A SEWER.

The Remarkable Story of a Broom that was Lost Down a Sink Hole.

Pickville is the name given to a section of the Twenty-seventh ward of Brooklyn, lying between Flushing and De Kalb avenues, and extending from Broadway out to the city line, says the N. Y. Sun. Some strange things happen in Pickville, and some remarkable stories have been told there. According to the story told in Pickville, a sink broom that had been lost in a sewer many years ago sprouted there and grew, stopping up the sewer pipes and costing a Brooklyn property owner \$120 to have it removed.

The two-story-and-basement frame house at 1,249 De Kalb avenue is owned and occupied by Mrs. Cook. The house was erected about twenty years ago by Mrs. Mary McCormack. As the story goes, Mrs. McCormack one day, many years ago, was cleaning a trap beneath a sink in her kitchen with a sink broom. The broom slipped from her hands and disappeared down the waste pipe. A few days later the drained pipes became stopped. Mrs. McCormack sent for a plumber and told him the story of the lost broom. Search wires were pushed into the pipes and the plumber succeeded in forcing the obstruction twenty feet out toward the street. Then the water flowed freely, and the plumber went away. A year later the same trouble was experienced and another plumber was called in. He forced the obstruction along the pipes, beneath the sidewalk along the main sewer. This gave temporary relief, but in a short time Mrs. McCormack was again compelled to send for a plumber. The sewer pipes continued to prove troublesome, and one plumber finally advised the owner of the house to have new drain pipes laid in the street. Mrs. McCormack died and the house was sold to Mrs. Cook. The new owner experienced the same trouble with the drain pipes and spent considerable money with plumbers.

On Saturday Mrs. Cook sent for William Moore of the plumbing firm of Moore and Hamersley. Moore was familiar with the history of the troublesome sewer pipes. He had heard that the broom that Mrs. McCormack had lost was made of green bamboo; and, supposing that the roots were still attached to the bamboo, he suggested that the broom might have grown in the sewer. He said he had known of similar cases. Mrs. Cook ordered the plumber to get rid of the obstacle even if he had to have all the pipes in the block removed. She would pay all the expenses.

A permit to open the street was obtained, and ten men were put to work digging from the house line to the sewer main in the middle of the street.

Nearly every one in Pickville had heard of the troublesome sewer, and a crowd gathered daily to see the men search for the cause of the trouble. Twenty-six lengths of pipe were taken up and found to be perfectly clear. Then Plumber Moore went down in the sewer near Evergreen avenue, and his partner went down another manhole 200 feet away. Two sewer inspectors were there, with a crowd of more than fifty Pickville residents. The plumbers searched with lanterns and found that the main sewer was clear as far as the branch pipe leading to the Cook residence. Then they decided to remove this branch pipe. There they discovered the obstruction. The pipe was hoisted up with a derrick and placed on the street. An unsuccessful effort was made to get rid of the obstruction. Sledges were brought and the pipe was smashed into pieces.

A mass of material resembling the roots of a tree was discovered and the broom handle was found attached to this. The mass was four feet in length and had grown round in form swelling to the size of the interior of the sewer pipe, which was eight inches in diameter.

Franz Sichel, took the broom, as a curiosity and carried it into a stable yard near by. Sichel acted as a guide to those who called to see the broom that had grown in the sewer. The plumbers went to work and laid new pipes, while Herr Sichel and other neighbors told the history of the wonderful broom. On Tuesday it is estimated that fully 500 persons called to look at the curious broom, and as the news spread yesterday the visitors kept increasing in numbers.

Classification of Perfumes.

Perfumes are of three distinct classes when derived from plants, and there is a fourth class which is of animal origin. The first class consists of the various odoriferous gums and resins, which exude naturally, or are produced by wounding the trees which yield them, such as camphor, myrrh, benzoin, etc. This is the simplest and most ancient class of perfumes, and is often employed in incense. The second class includes those perfumes which are procured from distillation. This art was known to the ancient Greeks and Romans, and is still resorted to. An essential oil thus obtained (formerly called a quintessence) is soluble in water, though it is in alcohol. The best and most expensive is the attar, or otto, of roses. The third class of perfumes is obtained by maceration, or as it is termed by the flower-farmers of the Var, in the South of France, enfleurage. The fourth class of perfumes consists of those of animal origin, such as musk, ambergris, etc. Musk is taken from the musk deer, a native of India; it is highly prized as a perfume, and is much used to mix with vegetable perfumes.

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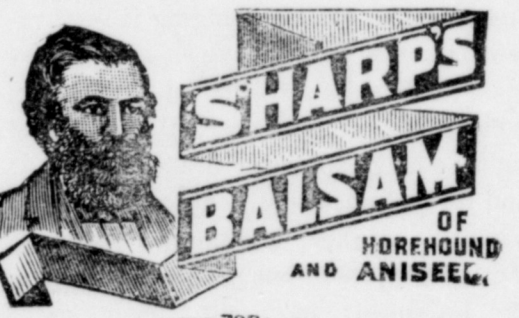
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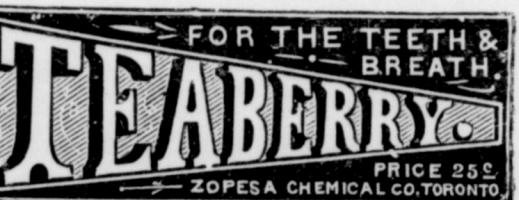
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