

Gone is the Old Swimming Hole

What a change! The old swimming hole of happy memory is an extinct as the dodo. It has been commercialized into a bathing beach. Even the park pool has cast off its proletarianism to become the community natatorium. Men who once clad like September morn defied chiggers, mosquitoes, biting gnats, and horseflies on land, and leeches, sea nettles, and snakes in the water, for a swim are no more, or, like Ferdinand, are content to sit in the shade. Some of the frog catchers of other days have become indulgent fathers of daughters in ultra-modern beach pajamas, girls whose aquatic performances are as strenuous as having wavelets ripple between the toes of their "athlete's feet." Or worse, they are the proud sires of sons who hide themselves on the beach in sand beneath stylish umbrellas to listen to swing music from their portable radios.

Yesterday, the instructor in swimming was a coach. Today, he is a professor of natation. Tomorrow, he will be a natatorial artist. A few years ago he taught diving and strokes. To this accomplishment he has had added life saving according to the gospel of the Red Cross. Now he must be able to select a Miss America with the diplomacy of a Paris deciding between a Juno, a Minerva, and a Venus. He must be prepared to step before the microphone on a moment's notice to sell a beach with the conviction of a Bill Hay promoting Campbell's soup, or he must be able to outline the fine points of beauty judging with the clarity of a Lady Esther distinguishing between the various shades of lipstick.

Swimming is a Big Business

Swimming is a "magnificent" enterprise resting securely on the customs, shifting styles, social ambitions, fads, and foibles of a delightful and "bejittered" people. It requires engineering, architecture, and art to construct its pools, protect its beaches, and beautify their surroundings; bacteriology and sanitary chemistry are essential to provide safe water and to keep it free from pollutions.

Bathing places, to be successful from the standpoints of health, recreation, and finance, must be planned carefully, located wisely, and thoroughly safe. Neglect of any of these important factors will doom them to failure. Around swimming pools and bathing beaches there should be an atmosphere of wholesomeness which leaves little to be desired when measured by standards of health, recreation, social progress, and moral excellence. Swimming, like all Gaul, may be divided into three parts, namely sanitation, safety, and the swimmer.

Sanitation

In having a doctor look at swimming, I shall reduce to a minimum consideration of the many details involved in the operation of swimming pools and the management of bathing beaches. These are adequately covered in the latest edition of "The Report of the Joint Committee on Bathing Places of the Conference of State Sanitary Engineers and the American Public Health Association" or in "The Minimum Sanitary Requirements for Swimming Pools and Bathing Places," of the Illinois State Department of Health. Both of these pamphlets are readily available. If you have not already read them carefully, I would advise you to do so, since the first is the Bible of the operators of swimming pools and the second is an excellent bulletin which contains the law of the land if the pool is in Illinois. The measures used to insure the safety and sanitation of swimming pools and bathing beaches, like the basic sciences of medicine, are physical, chemical and biological.