

## Our Beaches a Proof of Our Civilization's Decay?



A Type of Open Air Demonstration on the Beaches Much Objected to.

### Why the Scanty Attire and Free Conduct of Modern Bathers Is Being Condemned Throughout the Country, and How the Critics Are Answered

**T**HE attire and conduct of bathers at the beaches this year have again given rise to an ever-increasing wave of comment and criticism. On the one hand, it is protested that never before have the limits of decency been so completely ignored, while, on the other hand, the departure from conventional ideas in bathing costumes is hailed as a necessary reform in order to facilitate swimming and promote physical exercise.

The fact that women's bathing attire this season is scantier and designed to reveal more of the figure than ever before is evident to every one who has visited the shore resorts. Photographs of actual scenes taken at random on beaches in the vicinity of New York are shown on this page.

It cannot be denied, either, that the craze for the modern dance, which developed originally in the ballroom, then spread to the roof garden and gradually became an attraction at the restaurant, has now revealed itself on the beaches. There are those who see in these developments convincing evidence of our civilization's decay.

The degradation of society through luxury, indulgence and the pursuit of earthly pleasures, it is pointed out, was the forerunner of the fall of Greece and Rome, and there is no reason to hope that, exhibiting the same symptoms, we may escape the same fate.

On the other hand, it has been widely contended that while in a few cases the proprieties have undoubtedly been ignored, prudish people have been raising a tempest in a teapot. Abbreviated bathing attire is essential if the valuable sport of swimming and bathing is to be properly enjoyed, and leap-frog and dancing on the beach are extremely use-



The Old-fashioned Bathing Costume, Which Is as Offensive in the Eyes of Some as the Scanty Modern Attire Is to Others.

ful exercises, which ought not to be restricted.

Because physical exercise of this character has been impossible on the beaches in the past, owing to the hindering attire which women have been timid enough to tolerate, is no reason why it should be neglected now, it is pointed out, when more sensible attire has been adopted.

Nevertheless, many influential people have become so incensed at the 1915 brand of beach conduct that a censorship of bathing attire is being strongly urged.

Perhaps the most outspoken critic of the new order of things at the beaches is the Rev. Father John L. Belford, of the Church of the Nativity, Brooklyn, N. Y., who believes that these things are certain signs of our moral decay.

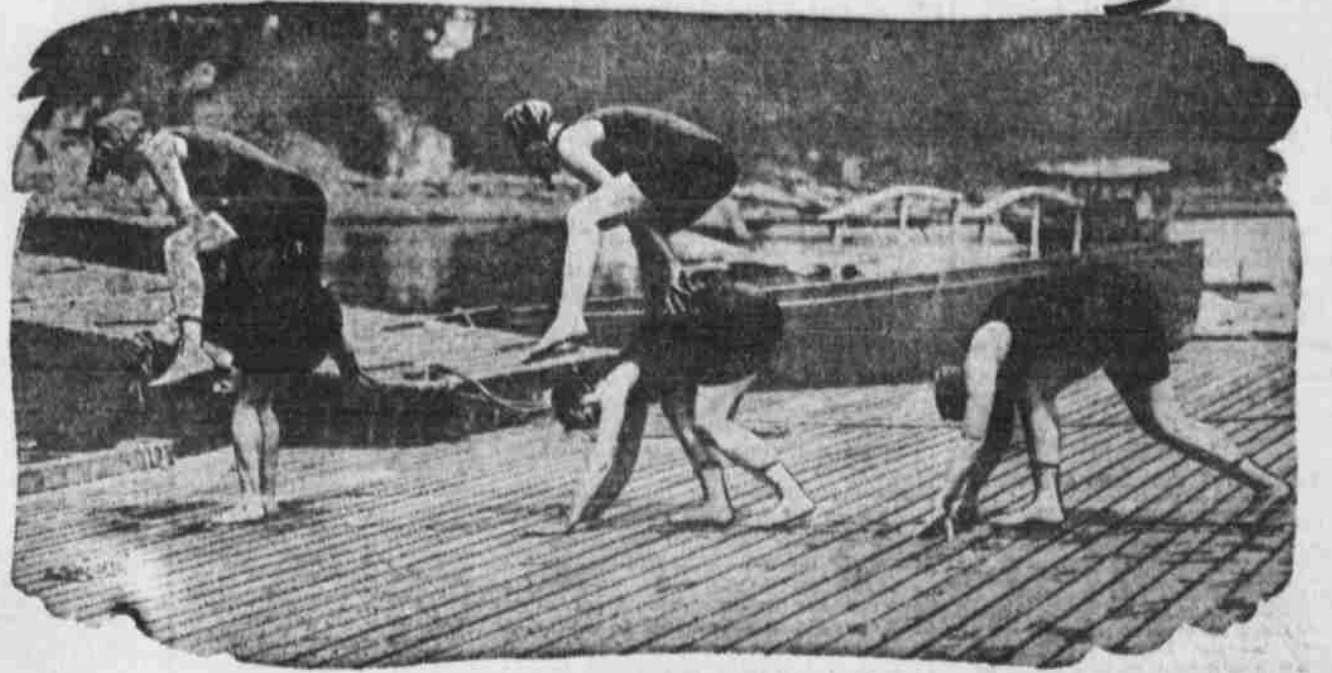
In a scathing tirade Father Belford recently declared:

"These two months are the worst in the year. The intense heat makes them physically bad and the general relaxation makes them morally bad.

"It is unfortunate that so many people believe that badness is the chief constituent of a good time. Rest and change are good for everyone, but when they entail dissipation and vice they become real evils. It is an old saying that 'Satan always doth some mischief find for idle hands to do.'

"The busy man is not tortured with temptation. But as soon as he drops his

Playing Leap-frog on the Beach. A Healthful Sport Made Possible by the New Abbreviated Bathing Costumes, but Which Is Angriely Condemned in Many Quarters as Being Too Immodest.



Leapfrog Has Become a Popular Sport at Most Bathing Beaches This Year Owing to the Freer Costumes Worn by Women.

business and runs away for a vacation he finds danger on every side. The books he buys to read on the way, the companions he meets on the train, the amusements provided at his destination, the conversation and the atmosphere are simply charged with moral poison.

"When we leave home, let us bear in mind that we do not leave God. 'In him we live and move and have our being.' The Ten Commandments are not bounded by city limits.

"Propriety and decorum are guardians of virtue, and nothing should induce us to set them aside.

"Style may demand certain concessions but it may never demand the sacrifice of modesty or decency.

"Prudery is contemptible, but we may never disregard St. Paul's injunction, 'Let your modesty be known to all men! The Lord is nigh!' Read the Epistle to the Ephesians, especially the fifth chapter, where the apostle tells us that immodesty should not be so much as named among us, nor obscenity nor foolish talk nor scurrility.

"Let people say what they will about dancing, the fact remains that it is always dangerous and often positively sinful. Promiscuous dancing is inexcusable. Dancing with strangers is worse.

"A visit to the beaches is quite enough to convince the most broad-minded that there prevails a degree of immorality that is absolutely inexcusable.

"No one will dispute the fact that a certain degree of undress is essential for bathing, but when that degree is used to spend the day or a large

part of it on the sands, where the sexes mingle with a degree of freedom that would not be tolerated on the street or even in a ballroom, it is time to cry out in protest.

"The spectacle of half-naked women and men lying about the beaches, and, often in each others arms, should not be tolerated in any civilized community.

"Canon Liddon has a passage which we may well read and ponder:

"When Greek thought was keener, and Greek art most triumphantly creative, and Greek political life so organized as to favor in a degree elsewhere unknown among men, the play of man's highest natural energies, Greek society was penetrated through and through by an invisible enemy, more fatal in its ravage to thought, to art, to freedom, than the sword of any Persian or Macedonian foe. And already in the age of the early Caesars Rome carried in her bosom the secret of her impending decline and fall in the coming centuries.

"St. Paul detected and exposed it in terms which are more explicit than those employed by Tacitus and Juvenal. The life-blood of a race may be drained away less nobly than on the battlefield. Every capacity for high and generous exertion, or for the cheerful endurance of suffering at the bidding of duty, all the stock of moral force on which a country can rely in its hour of trial, may be sapped, destroyed, annihilated by a domestic traitor.

"So it fared with imperial Rome. The fate of the great empire was not really decided on the Rhine or on the Danube. Before the barbarians had as yet begun to muster their savage hordes along the frontiers of ancient civilization, their work had well-nigh been completed, their victory had been won, in the cities, the palaces, nay, in the very temples of the empire.

"And upon what resources could the old Pagan society fall back in its alarm and struggle with this formidable foe? It could not depend upon the State. The Emperor was the State by impersonation; and not infrequently it happened that the Emperor was the public friend and patron of the State's worst enemy. Nor could any reliance be placed upon philosophy.

"Doubtless philosophy means well in some of its phases, in some of its representatives. But philosophy is much too feeble a thing to enter the lists successfully with animal passion; and, as a matter of fact, philosophy has more than once been compelled or cajoled into placing her intellectual weapons at the disposal of the sensualist.

"This enemy is our enemy. It is not imaginary. It is real. It is at our doors. It stalks abroad without disguise. Its agents are legion. Its power grows apace. Never was it so bold, so strong, so impudent as it is here and now. Nor are these manners confined to the vulgar East Siders.

"Under the flag of the Knights of Columbus some of our own young men and women spend Sundays and holidays in bungalows and tents at Coney Island and Rockaway in this less than half dress, dancing and amusing themselves on the sands.

"Let others do what they will, we who have the light to know evil and the power to overcome it should do all we can to limit it.

"Evil is not to be trifled with. There is only one way to handle it. That is to avoid the places where it prevails and the persons who practice it."



Tangoing on the Beach, a Common Sight This Season.

### Why Love Is a REAL PAIN and a Broken Heart CAN KILL

By William Lee Howard, M. D.

**C**HARLES LAMB, in one of his poems describing the feelings of lovers, says: "That they do not rightly wot, whether it be pain or not." Cowley sings: "A mighty pain to love it is," while Dryden states:

"Pains of love be sweeter far Than all other pleasures are."

But the cold-blooded psychologist sees in the pains of love only one of the many symptoms of man's and woman's changing natures necessary to keep the world populated and progressing.

At first thought it would not appear that there was any connection between the pains of the body and the pain of the soul-lyre. But the causes are related; the effects the same.

Pain in the body can destroy the soul. Pain in the soul can destroy the body. Both sorts of pain mean that you should search for the trouble and apply the remedy. But too frequently soul and body pain are so overpowering as to destroy self judgment.

As examples: One who suffers from constant and racking pain which cannot

be relieved and whose cause cannot be stopped commits suicide. Another suffering from the pains of unrequited love and from which there can be no relief also commits suicide. It is a scientific fact that the pain of the soul can cause a heart literally to break. The reason is that real love is a powerful emotion. Emotions produce shock. Most natures rebound to ordinary shocks. But sometimes, as in a physical shock, the effect is deadly.

In the cases of powerful soul shocks the pains are too severe, controlling, to live under. It is no reflection upon the unfortunate girl who destroys her life to say she lacked moral courage; that she should have held up under the great pain of injured love. We cannot place ourselves in her awful state. To those who never have really suffered, talk and advice are easy to utter.

All pain means there is distress somewhere in body or soul. Pain is an alarm clock; a messenger call from the affected part asking for help. Pain is also doctor and nurse.

When you break your arm, if there was no pain upon moving it you would soon injure the fractured ends, set up in-

flammation and prevent healing. The pain tells you first to keep the arm still, then to send for the doctor to put the ends together and keep them there, so they cannot rub against each other.

Pain always means that some further inflammation and possible death; for fearful pains occur if you try to move about. They send you to bed and call for the surgeon. The whole body in any abdominal inflammation is able to aid in a cure on account of the severe pain compelling quiet. The pain causes temporary paralysis of the abdominal muscles, puts your body in a natural splint, this being necessary to avoid spread of inflammation.

Without pain as a warning, emergency doctor and nurse, not one of us would get out of childhood alive.

Pain always means that some sort of relief is needed to a disturbed organ or function, feeling or desire.

Love is that part of existence which makes it worth while. It is the stimulating function of all living things. Without some kind of love supporting and feeding the hungry soul the pain is distressing and destroying. It may be slight at first, but soon increases unless satis-

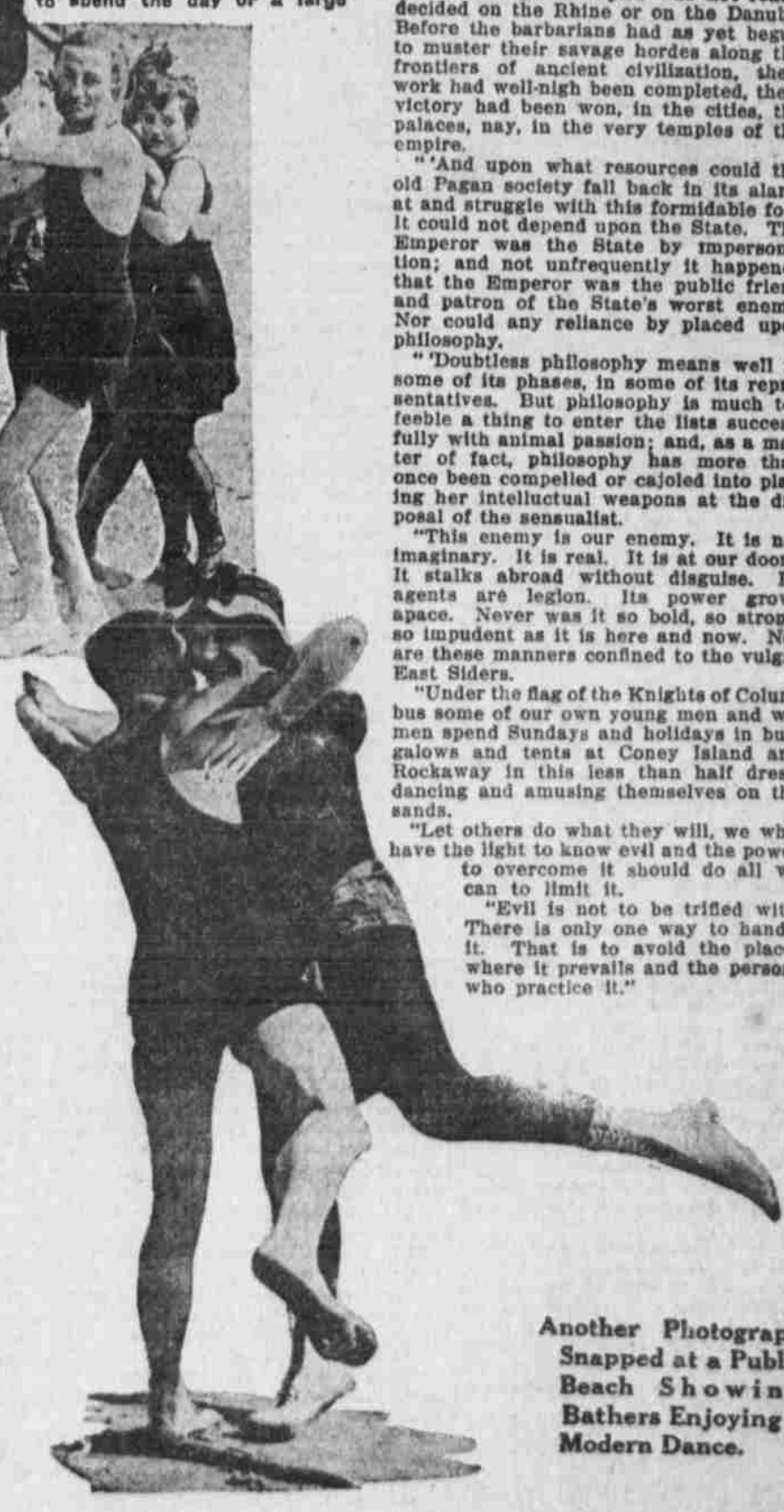
fied to an intolerable degree.

It may be mother love or the natural love for mate. In either case if it is unsatisfied it causes pain. Do not forget that mental distress, longings, loneliness, the hunger for sympathy are only degrees of soul pain.

Pain may come from another kind of love—or, better said, a longing, a hunger to attain some object in life. Such soul pains come from a dissatisfied ambition to make a name in literature or art, to be a carrier of God's messages, to give to the world some valuable invention or discovery.

When a man or woman is possessed of these impulses and desires to the exclusion of all other really important matters in life, and fails to release or obtain them, most obsessing mental and soul pains are certain to follow.

This pain calls for relief. Relief only can come through attainment. This being considered impossible, the suffering individual commits suicide or else sinks into a state of mental and moral lethargy. Many of the sad tales related in the daily papers have at their bottoms these deplorable conditions.



Another Photograph Snapped at a Public Beach Showing Bathers Enjoying a Modern Dance.