

the art of swimming. I have seen persons "tread water" by making the same movements with the legs as in walking up stairs, and thus keep the entire head out of water for a long time. If a person will add to this certain corresponding movements of the hands,—in fact, *make the same movements of both arms and legs that he would in climbing a vertical ladder* but without lifting the arms out of the water and without closing his hands in the downward movement of the arm, he may keep his head out of water even if the waves are running high, and may keep from drowning for hours. Whenever a person finds himself in the water and in danger of drowning, let him assume as speedily as possible a vertical position, and at once begin the same movements as in climbing a vertical ladder,—*let him climb for life*,—and he will be surprised to find with what slight exertion he can keep his head above water; let him be satisfied with this, for he may exhaust himself in vainly attempting more.

PADDLING THE WATER AS A MEANS OF PREVENTING DROWNING.

The following communication from Dr. MacCormac, of Belfast, is inserted as imparting valuable information on this important subject: Already the season has been ushered in by a number of deaths, some of them occurring in our very midst, from drowning. The means of safety, or relative safety, which I have to point out are so very simple and, as I believe, so effective, that I am lost in wonder that no one has thought proper to insist upon them, as in the following remarks it is my intention to do so. Swimming, as ordinarily practiced, is not the most sufficing means for escaping the dangers of the water. It needs some instruction to be able to swim, and practice to be able to swim well. No doubt it is desirable to swim and to swim well, but the great majority of persons of both sexes do not know how to swim at all. Yet unless people can swim, and swim well,—and even then they are not always successful, when the emergency comes, in preserving life,—swimming is, I am persuaded, not so effective a preservative as is con-

joint paddling and treading water. As a rule, subject to few exceptions, persons precipitated into the water do not swim without previously learning. But paddling with the hands and treading with the feet require no prior instruction, and in the great majority of cases would save life. In swimming, the mouth is on a level with the water in the intervals of the strokes; in paddling, the head is well elevated, the individual is able to look about, he can deliberate as to what is best to be done, and he is much less liable to take water into the larynx or glottis, a casualty which, I am persuaded, causes the destruction of many. Without prejudice to the art of swimming, I would have children exercise in household tanks from the tenderest age, in the act of paddling and treading water, so as to impart the confidence which unreasoning dread tends to lessen or take away when one is suddenly immersed in an unusual medium. The animal, the quadruped, begins to paddle at once when cast into the water, but as man does not habitually employ the anterior limbs as organs of locomotion, reason must tell him that he may, if he pleases, employ them as organs of locomotion in the water, just as readily as any four-footed animal. To be sure a man has not the habit of using his hands and arms for locomotion, as the brute has, but otherwise how much more available is the paddle-shaped hand than a hoof or a paw. Again, the man with little or no instruction, by throwing his head well back, can float and rest at pleasure, a thing of which the brute has no conception whatever.

Of course a little preliminary habitude is desirable, but without any preliminary habitude or instruction whatever, there is nothing to hinder man, woman, or child, were they unable, in common parlance, to swim a stroke, from beating water with the hands and feet, just as the lower animals do, and so keep themselves afloat for a protracted period, a period that in a multitude of instances would be found sufficient to invite rescue and preserve life. The action of the feet down will sustain the body; the action of the hands down will do so; *a fortiori*, the action of both