

Caught in the Undertow.

How to Get Out of It—"Keep Your Head All the Time."

EVERY surfer takes a risk. No beach is absolutely safe—some are worse than others. A combination of winds and tides will turn the quietest mill-pond into a surging, whirling maelstrom. The obvious thing to do in the circumstances is to sit under a tree—do anything but go in the water.

The trouble is that to the novice all beaches look alike—he can't differentiate between safe and unsafe conditions until the tow has him firmly in its grasp, and when it seems to him that the shore is racing way from him at the rate of 100 miles an hour.

When that heart-quake experience comes to him, if he is built on ordinary lines, he tries to get back to the beach by the nearest route. That is the worst thing he can do. It means death. The strongest swimmers can't make headway against undertow. You might as well try to break a minute through 100 yards of treacle. What, then, is the best thing to do in the circumstances? It is assumed that you are a fair swimmer—that is to say, that you are about as good as the ordinary run of surf-bather. That means that you won't get any medals for it.

Don't Call for Help.

We propose to put you in all positions. For a start we will assume that you are in the tow off any beach where life savers are always on the watch. Don't waste your breath yelling for help. The booming of the surf would drown a thousand pany voices like yours. Just hold up your right hand. That is the signal that you are in distress, and need help. Someone will be on the watch. Help is at hand, and in a few minutes you will be a water-logged wreck lying on the beach. You will fancy that half the ocean is contained in your "innards," but you will be safe.

But during the few minutes that must elapse before you are grabbed by the life-saver—it will seem like hours to you—you must do your part. If "you do your block" (you know what I mean) you may drown in half a minute, even if you are a comparatively strong swimmer. Don't swim against the current that has got hold of you. Don't do it. DON'T DO IT. DON'T DO IT. Do you get that? Well, then. Now your nerve is to be tested; perhaps tested as it was never tested before. You must go out

the first one will be, "Another Surfer Drowned." The first thing, and the middle thing, and the last thing in all of this is to keep your wits. The instinct is to struggle, and to struggle desperately. That is the natural thing to do. But man is endowed with brains and reasoning power, and in these circumstances he must use them. What is it you have to do?

A Few More Don'ts.

Don't swim against the current. Don't swim at all, except to save yourself from sinking. Just keeping your hands moving, with an occasional kick or two, will suffice for that.

Watch the oncoming waves and hold your breath as they race over you. And fortify yourself with the know-



HOLD UP YOUR RIGHT HAND AS A SIGNAL THAT YOU ARE IN DISTRESS.

ledge that in doing this you are doing your part of the operation that will presently have you out of danger.

As a general thing an unskilled surfer should not take risks. Don't overrate your capabilities. Stay with the mob. Don't go so far out as to make people



HIS RIST MAY LAND ON YOUR JAW.

call you "shark bait." There are enough Innatics about now without you joining the band. If you can't swim at all, or if your powers enable you to swim only about 50 yards in still water, don't go out at all. Stay along with the ladies. There's nothing to be ashamed of in doing that, and you will be safe.

But if you are carried out, and the life-saver has hold of you, help him. Do as he tells you. Follow every instruction implicitly. You won't have to do much—perhaps only keep still. If you struggle you are in for trouble. These life-savers are husky young fellows, and they don't always follow the printed advice as to how to escape from the death-grip of a

drowning bather. Generally they buy an arm free, and if they haven't they get it free, and then they hit you on the jaw hard. That'll take the kick out of you. And you will be on gravel for a week because of your indiscretion.

How to Get in Without Help.

The best advice to the ordinary bather is "don't" when there are no life-savers on the beach. But, assuming that you are caught in the tow, and no help is at hand, much of the previous advice holds good, and there are some additional things to be done. As before, you must not fight against the current. Swim diagonally. You will then go out a little



IF YOU CAN'T SWIM YOU CAN FLOAT.

with that horrible thing that has you in its grasp. Don't be frightened. Remember help is coming. If ever you had tickets on yourself, have them now. You can swim. You can float. Well, float. And watch the oncoming waves. That's your job. Other people are doing the rest. When the wave comes—it probably looks as high as the Town Hall tower, but it isn't—don't try to float over the top of it. Take a big breath and hold it till you find the wave has gone past. Don't get scared when you see another one coming at you like a battering ram. Take another breath, and it will pass you without doing the slightest harm. But if you have been struggling, and one of them hits you when your mouth is open, and you inhale water instead of air, you will have a couple of headings in the papers, and

SMOKE
WINFRED
CIGARETTES
AND SMILE