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MAKING MILLIONS of ATHLETES

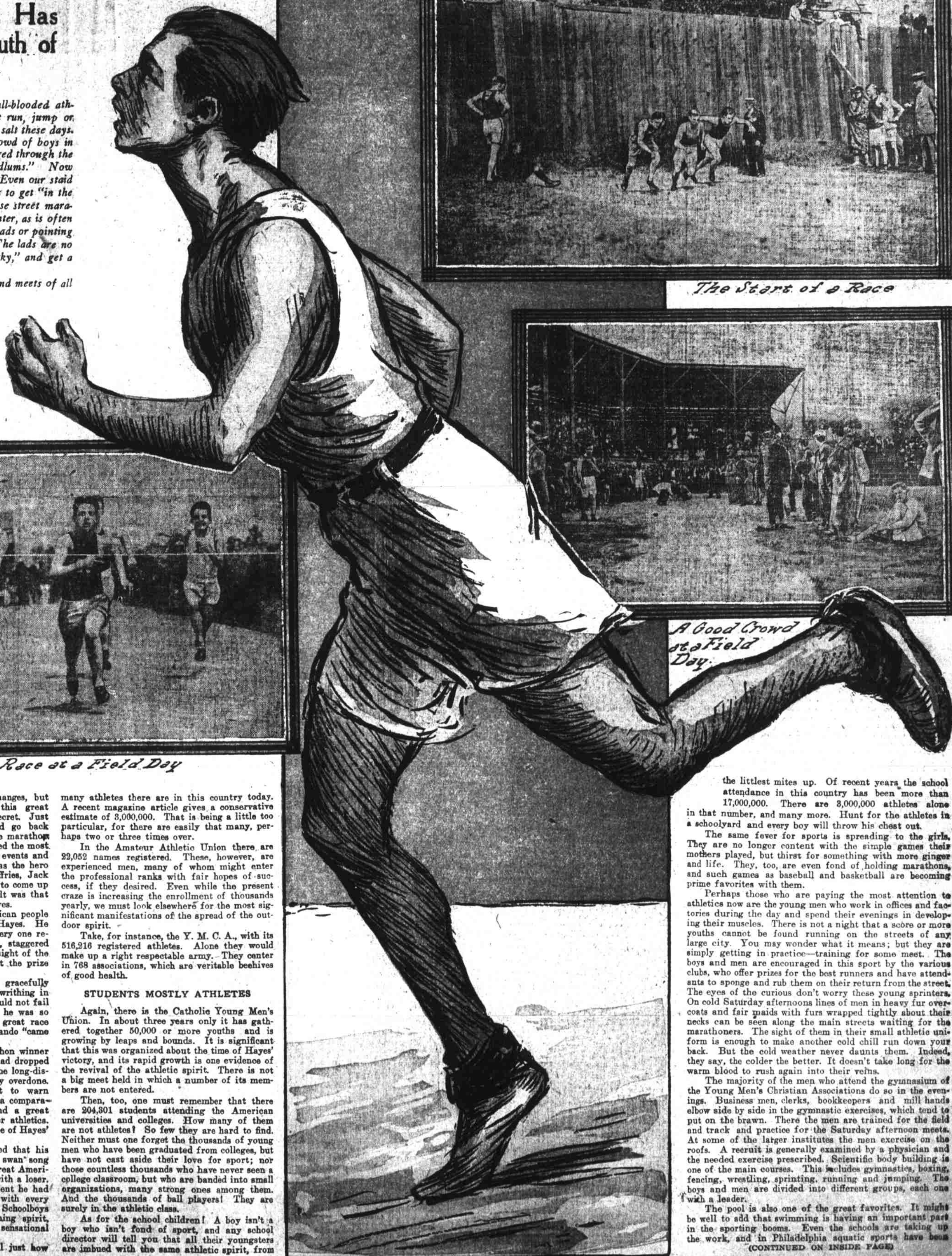
How Prowess on Foreign Fields Has Inspired The Youth of This Country

YOUNG America is a full-blooded athlete. A boy who can't run, jump or play ball isn't worth his salt these days.

A few years ago when a crowd of boys in bathing suits or running togs jogged through the streets they were called "hoodlums." Now every one looks on with pride. Even our staid neighbors are allowing their boys to get "in the swim" with the rest. When these street marathons are held in the dead of winter, as is often the case, there is no shaking of heads or pointing of fingers to the gray matter. The lads are no longer "crazy." They are "plucky," and get a pat on the back.

The same is true of games and meets of all kinds. There is always a crowd to greet them. A few years ago if the participants were not full grown they were only "kids" and nobody wanted to bother with them. Now the athletic lad is everybody's friend.

There are millions of him, and many millions of dollars are being expended for him.



The Start of a Race

A Good Crowd at a Field Day



Finish of a Boys Race at a Field Day

TIME may have wrought changes, but what is the reason for this great athletic craze? It isn't a secret. Just consult your calendars and go back three years. There you have it—the marathon race in England, when Hayes captured the most treasured prize of all the Olympian events and brought it back to America. He was the hero of the day, and not even Jim Jeffries, Jack Johnson or anybody else could begin to come up to him as a popular idol. The result was that every one wanted to be a second Hayes.

It is characteristic of the American people that such a to-do was made over Hayes. He had literally killed off his man. Every one remembers how the Italian, Dorando, staggered into the arena and collapsed within sight of the goal, like the Greek of old who got the prize and promptly died with it.

The American who could lope gracefully home while his chief opponent was writhing in the throes of complete exhaustion could not fail of being considered a hero. True, he was so tuckered out that he never won a great race afterward. Like many another, Dorando "came back" better than the victor.

Perhaps there is many a marathon winner who would have been better off if he had dropped out a few miles from the finish. The long-distance game is one that can be easily overdone. Experienced athletes are the first to warn against it. Nevertheless, there are a comparatively few that run marathons and a great many millions that go in for milder athletics. Taking that view of it, the importance of Hayes' victory is not to be underestimated.

As soon as he had demonstrated that his English marathon was his athletic swan song Hayes dropped out of sight. The great American public will have nothing to do with a loser. But still the impetus of the movement he had started gained force rapidly, and with every evidence that it had come to stay. Schoolboys were filled with the marathon-winning spirit, even though they forgot the most sensational victor of modern times.

It would be pretty hard to tell just how

many athletes there are in this country today. A recent magazine article gives a conservative estimate of 8,000,000. That is being a little too particular, for there are easily that many, perhaps two or three times over.

In the Amateur Athletic Union there are 22,052 names registered. These, however, are experienced men, many of whom might enter the professional ranks with fair hopes of success, if they desired. Even while the present craze is increasing the enrollment of thousands yearly, we must look elsewhere for the most significant manifestations of the spread of the outdoor spirit.

Take, for instance, the Y. M. C. A., with its 516,216 registered athletes. Alone they would make up a right respectable army. They center in 768 associations, which are veritable beehives of good health.

STUDENTS MOSTLY ATHLETES

Again, there is the Catholic Young Men's Union. In about three years only it has gathered together 50,000 or more youths and is growing by leaps and bounds. It is significant that this was organized about the time of Hayes' victory, and its rapid growth is one evidence of the revival of the athletic spirit. There is not a big meet held in which a number of its members are not entered.

Then, too, one must remember that there are 204,301 students attending the American universities and colleges. How many of them are not athletes? So few they are hard to find. Neither must one forget the thousands of young men who have been graduated from colleges, but have not cast aside their love for sport; nor those countless thousands who have never seen a college classroom, but who are banded into small organizations, many strong ones among them. And the thousands of ball players! They are surely in the athletic class.

As for the school children! A boy isn't a boy who isn't fond of sport, and any school director will tell you that all their youngsters are imbued with the same athletic spirit, from

the littlest mites up. Of recent years the school attendance in this country has been more than 17,000,000. There are 8,000,000 athletes alone in that number, and many more. Hunt for the athletes in a schoolyard and every boy will throw his chest out.

The same fever for sports is spreading to the girls. They are no longer content with the simple games their mothers played, but thirst for something with more ginger and life. They, too, are even fond of holding marathons, and such games as baseball and basketball are becoming prime favorites with them.

Perhaps those who are paying the most attention to athletics now are the young men who work in offices and factories during the day and spend their evenings in developing their muscles. There is not a night that a score or more youths cannot be found running on the streets of any large city. You may wonder what it means; but they are simply getting in practice—training for some meet. The boys and men are encouraged in this sport by the various clubs, who offer prizes for the best runners and have attendants to sponge and rub them on their return from the street. The eyes of the curious don't worry these young sprinters. On cold Saturday afternoons lines of men in heavy fur overcoats and fair maids with furs wrapped tightly about their necks can be seen along the main streets waiting for the marathoners. The sight of them in their small athletic uniform is enough to make another cold chill run down your back. But the cold weather never daunts them. Indeed, they say, the colder the better. It doesn't take long for the warm blood to rush again into their veins.

The majority of the men who attend the gymnasium of the Young Men's Christian Associations do so in the evenings. Business men, clerks, bookkeepers and mill hands elbow side by side in the gymnastic exercises, which tend to put on the brawn. There the men are trained for the field and track and practice for the Saturday afternoon meets. At some of the larger institutes the men exercise on the roofs. A recruit is generally examined by a physician and the needed exercise prescribed. Scientific body building is one of the main courses. This includes gymnastics, boxing, fencing, wrestling, sprinting, running and jumping. The boys and men are divided into different groups, each one with a leader.

The pool is also one of the great favorites. It might be well to add that swimming is having an important part in the sporting boom. Even the schools are taking up the work, and in Philadelphia aquatic sports have been

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