

Its significance "I have no expectation that any man will read history aright, who thinks that what was done in a remote age, by men whose names have resounded afar, has any deeper sense than what he is doing to-day." So wrote the philosopher Emerson some three-score years ago in his essay on History. A moment's reflection ought to convince any thoughtful man that this is eminently true of the accomplishment of the young Canadian athlete, who alone, and practically unaided, set out manfully to gain the wild olive wreath of Marathon, in competition with the athletic chivalry of two hemispheres. It was a splendid confidence and, if typical of our young nationality, it promises for Canada a future that shall command for her the respect and admiration of the world.

I cannot look upon Sherring's twenty-six mile run from Marathon to Athens as merely a sporting event. It is at once significant of the awakening of Greece from her long sleep, by the revival of the Olympic Games, to the appreciation of her unrivalled past, and too, that Canadians are year by year seeing a little further beyond material things to the higher and better.

Sherring's victory on the classic ground of Greece, has made many a money-grabber fan into a generous enthusiasm the spark that had almost gone out. It will, too, do more. There will be an awakening here and elsewhere of young and old in the deeds done in the hoary past by a people who almost realized in themselves perfection of body and mind. The Greek possessed the finest physical organization in the world. Adults participated in athletics like boys. They made good statues, verses and tragedies because they were an eminently healthy people both in mind and body. How history repeats herself! Long before our era occupants of thrones honored, in common with all the peoples of Greece, the winners in the great tribal and intertribal games. After a lapse of fifteen hundred years a Greek King places the victor's wreath on the brow of a young man—not a Greek by birth—but a Canadian with the determined spirit and lithe limb that marked the successful Grecian contestant when the world was young. Even before our young Mercury had so run that he might obtain the prize, Britain's King and Queen had shown that genuine interest in the welfare of our representative that characterizes them in all things worthy. William John Sherring's emulation of the Greek soldier who, running o'er hill and dale to convey the glad tidings of the triumph of Greek over Persian arms, expired in the presence of the Senate with "Rejoice with the victors!" is an event that will be written into our history, and although no Temple of Wingless Victory may be erected to his honor, yet his name will not be lost to posterity by Canadians to whom he has brought so great an honor.



The Field of Marathon

Here the Athenians utterly routed the Persians in the year 490 B.C.

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