

# FOR EVERY BOY AND GIRL

## A Boy of Galatia Samuel Scoville, Jr.

BY

It was court-day in far-away Galatia, northernmost of all the Grecian provinces. Before the great gate of Ancyra, the capital, a long line of accused and accusers passed the ivory chair of the archon, or ruler, who judged every cause that touched not the life of a freeman. Now a thief was scourged, now a pledge redeemed, and case after case was heard and passed upon in a few brief words.

Finally a pathetic little group, that seemed oddly out of place in the line of petty criminals, came before the judgment-seat. A tall woman, with the noble oval face, that marked the highest type of Grecian beauty, leaned on the arm of a youth, while a little fair-haired boy clung to her skirt. In the background stood a lame slave with eyes fixed on the ground, while the edge of a ghastly scar running underneath his tunic gave a reason for the withered limb.

The archon regarded the four for a moment in silence, and then addressed them in a voice cold and impassive as his face. "Ladas and Nestor, children of him that was Milo, captain of the soldiers, and Egeria, wife of the same, hither have you been summoned at the instance of your creditors. Debts to the amount of the half of one talent are recorded against you. Your home is but a hovel, your land untilled and barren, and your one slave a worthless cripple. Therefore the city allows one year for the cancellation of these lawful debts. At the end of that time, the same remaining unpaid, this family shall be sold as slaves in the public mart for the benefit of its creditors. Thus saith the law of Galatia."

"'Tis a hard law," cried the boy, facing the archon unflinchingly, while the mother sobbed aloud, "that enslaves the family of one who died in battle for his city, and whose friends are in exile!"

"Speak not evil of the law, boy!" responded the archon, sternly. "No fault of the law is it that thy father became surety for those who belonged to the accursed Athenian faction and were rightly driven into exile, or that the family of a man are liable for his surety debts."

It was a sad home-going for the little family. That night, after the little boy had fallen asleep, Ladas and his mother sat long in the wavering firelight before the hearth, that sacred heart of a Grecian home. Back in the shadow sat their slave, Phraanes the Dumb; for never since the time that his wound had healed, leaving him with a shrunken limb, had he been heard to speak. Captured in some foray of the city against a tribe of the desert, he had been assigned to Milo, the leader of the hoplites, in the division of the spoil.

For a long time Egeria gazed at the fire with hot dry eyes. Ladas strove to console her, his heart nearly broken the while.

"A year is long," he said, striving to speak hopefully, "and I have a plan, mother mine. Before the time has gone come the great Olympic Games. By toiling mightily, perchance I can gain enough to pay Timon the trainer to teach me the lore of racing. For I am fleet of foot, and the family of him who could win the race need, as thou knowest, never fear debt nor want throughout all Greece, even to the farthest province."

Suddenly from out of the darkness came a voice unheard throughout long years—the voice of the slave. Into the circle of the firelight strode Phraanes, no longer the Dumb.

"Art sure of the words thou saidst, O Ladas, son of my lord?" slowly questioned the slave, in a voice hoarse and faltering from long disuse.

"Ladas was too startled by the transformation to do more than nod assent.

"O my Ladas, thou speakest of Timon the trainer. I say to thee that to his mind omens avail more than practice, and sacrifices than speed. I, too, have viewed the Olympic Games and the racers therein, and have marveled that such running should win. Slower are the Grecians in the start than the wild dog of the wilderness, who must follow his prey from sun to sun ere, wearied, he be overtaken. In the race they wave their arms and waste breath crying on the gods to grant them speed. To you Greeks running has been but a pastime; for your nation speed means life or death, for, as thou knowest, we desert-dwellers of the north have no horsemen, and the fate of battles must turn on the swiftness of our warriors' feet. Among a nation of runners my father, Aisnax, was swiftest.

"To me, Phraanes, his son, he told all the wile and wisdom of the track, and the traditions of our tribe, until it came to pass that in the races I was ever at his shoulder. And, O my master, all this within the year can I teach to thee, and thou shalt win the race, and thou wilt take old Phraanes as a trainer."

Months after this speaking of Phraanes came the day, long proclaimed by a herald throughout the length and breadth of the province, when every athlete of Galatia met in the games of the city. The winners of each event would be sent with their trainers to Olympia, there to contend in the great quadrennial games for the glory of the province.

Each runner, as he took his place, was greeted with shouts of applause from his friends, save one alone, who, attended only by a dimpling slave, came to the line almost unnoticed. Only when, at the second word of the starter, the long rank of runners stiffened into position, did he attract any attention. All the others bent forward, one foot on the starting-line, one arm outstretched, the other back—the regulation starting position of a Grecian runner. The last youth alone crouched, and with both hands on the line and muscles all tense, awaited the final signal.

At the first sound of the word he was off, and yards ahead of the rest before they fairly came into their stride. The fleetest runners of the province heretofore, they strained every muscle to overtake the flying body that flashed along ahead of them, gleaming in the sunlight. But in vain, in vain, do they cry to Hermes of the winged feet, god of runners, or on the swift Apollo. Like the smooth movement of a coursing hound is the long, even stride of Ladas, while the white arms swinging alternately and the lithe and even poise of the body show the effects of Phraanes' training. As the boy crossed the line marking the finish, easily a winner, the spectators thronged about him, and inquiries as to his name and blood were on every tongue. The Elders, the member of the Council, and all the

notables of the city pressed up to congratulate one whose speed surpassed any ever seen on a Galatian course.

Long months passed—months to Ladas of the sternest training and the most rigorous practice. At last came the eve of the one hundred and thirty-first Olympiad, and the little city of Olympia, usually so quiet, that stood near the sacred groves and famed course, in a lonely corner of Hellas, was alive with the vast crowd of visitors, who were thronging its streets, during the "truce of God" that heralds had proclaimed throughout the Grecian world, the sacred month of the Olympic Games.

Ladas and Phraanes waited in the dim dawn-light for the trumpet-note which would summon the former to the stadium.

"Thou art drawn in the third heat," said Phraanes, laying his arm across the boy's shoulders, all tremble under the terrible strain of suspense. "Run thou that with the ordinary upright start such as all will use. There are none against thee save new men from distant provinces; but in the last heat Phaedo

\*At the first throb of sound on the air, Ladas, with a panther-like spring, is off and into his stride an instant before his startled opponents. A third of the way down the course he is leading by over his own length.

As the warm blood rushes through the veins of the Galatian boy, it carries away all the fear, all the oppression, that has weighed upon him. Little by little he slackens his speed to spare himself for what is to be the final struggle with Phaedo; and now the mad rush of the two on the right brings them up beside Ladas.

But soon the straining efforts of the two on the right begin to tell, and slowly they draw away from the boy until there is a clear space between. Ladas holds the same pace, watching only that the little gap shall not widen. Still Phaedo makes no sign, though near enough for Ladas to hear his rapid breathing close at his shoulder; nor, though the boy lags all that he dares, will Phaedo draw up side by side; and Ladas knows that to-day the race is between Athens and Galatia, for already his practised eyes see the tiny fatal falter in the stride of



"'T'S A HARD LAW," CRIED THE BOY FACING THE ARCHON UNFLINCHINGLY

of Athens will push thee hard, for this is but thy first year, and sixteen wreaths has he won at games—Olympic, Pythian, Nemean and Isthmian. Thou must needs remember every wile that I have taught thee to touch the marble at the finish in front of him. See to it that—"

The great voice of the herald sounded along the hillside for the third heat, and the first name was "Ladas of the province of Galatia."

He faced up the stadium as the starter gave the first word, and assumed the position for the Grecian start, in accordance with Phraanes' directions. Bending lithely forward, he darted off at the last signal a little ahead of the other runners, despite the unfamiliar method of starting. Before he had taken half a score of strides, by that indefinable instinct that comes to a runner, he knew, without glancing back, that he was easily drawing away from the others.

Imperceptibly he slackened his pace when once assured that his opponents were running at the limit of their speed, and foot by foot they crept up. The awkward fling, too, of their limbs he imitated somewhat, disguised the smooth, rhythmic beat of his feet by clumsy movements, ran as if greatly exhausted, and finally staggered in, a winner by a few inches.

Now came a brief interval of rest, while the trainers with supple hands and limpid oil rubbed out the last vestige of fatigue from limbs on whose speed that day depended the honor of a city. As the mighty-voiced herald called forth the names and cities of the heat-winners they ranged themselves at the start in the order of their names.

First was a Thessalian, a heavy-featured sturdily built mountaineer; next to him stood a Cretan, sly-faced and treacherous-eyed; slow runners both, who chanced to be the swiftest in their heats. Then came Ladas, with Phaedo of Athens next. Side by side with Phaedo was the Wolf of Sparta,

As the runners ranged themselves in line there sounded the trumpet-note that warned the runners to take their positions. Instantly the line bent forward, and all save the runner of Galatia leaned over with arm outstretched, left foot on the mark, ready to stride forth at the last trumpet-call. Ladas alone crouched at the feet of the others, both hands white to the knuckles with the pressing on the starting-line, and every muscle in his little body tense to shoot him forward at the first sound of the trumpet.

the leaders. That desperate struggling from the very start is beginning to tell, and the life and dash at the finish which wins a race has gone.

And now the last third of the race is at hand. Scarcely have they swung by it when, with a mad rush, Phaedo shoots past Ladas, running as Ladas never saw man run before, eyes fixed on the goal, flaming under his heavy brows like altar-coals, but right at his heel comes the rapid footfall of the Galatian boy. Clearer and clearer it sounds, run as he will. Every faculty and fiber in Ladas's mind and body is concentrated on keeping unbroken the long, swift stride that Phraanes has taught him, which eats up the ground like fire. With elbows held well in, and swinging arms that lengthen every stride, he wastes no breath shouting invocations.

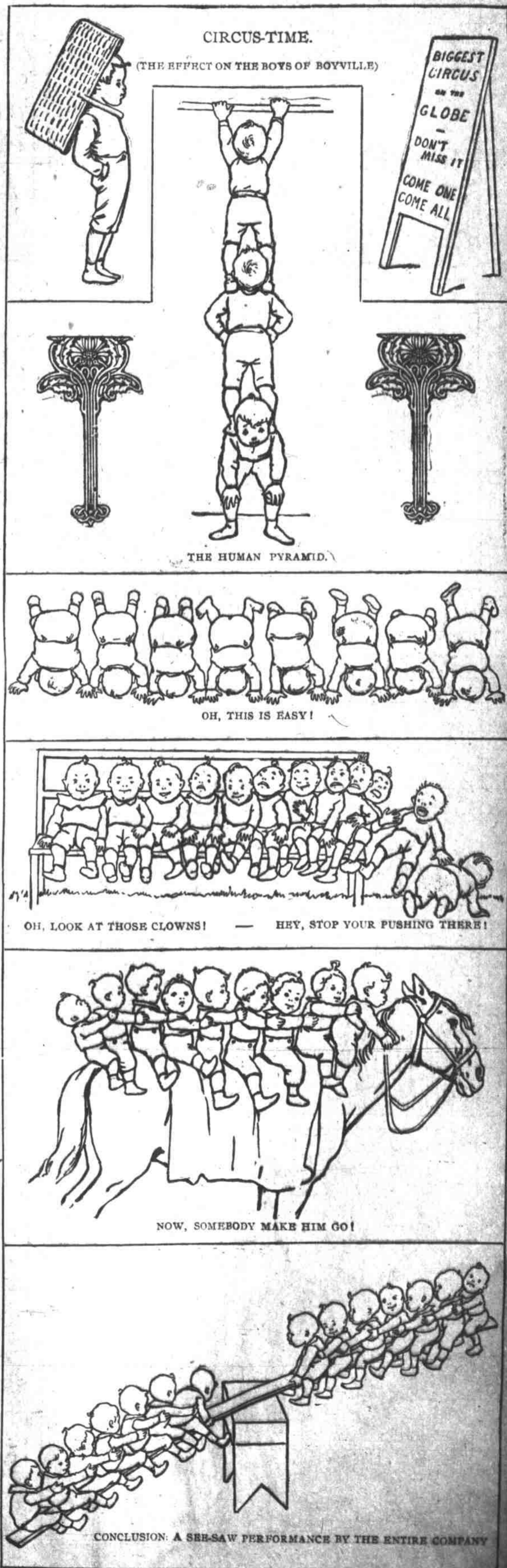
A single slip or falter will be fatal now, with the goal distant but a few short lengths, and as his limbs weaken under the terrible strain, the strength of his will sustains his flagging muscles, and still the flying feet spurn the loose sand with never a break in their motion.

Deep down within himself Ladas feels yet remaining an iota of reserve power. The temptation is almost irresistible to make his effort now, now to end the suspense and decide the race; but to his mind come the words of crafty old Phraanes: "With a stout heart and cool head the race can be won in the very last stride," and the supreme moment is delayed.

And now a mad shout from the crowded seats of the Athenians roars forth across the stadium as they see Phaedo in the lead at the very finish. "Athene! Athene!" they shout. "Pallas Athene gives us the race!" The cheers of the little group of Galatians are swallowed up in the great cry, but Ladas needs no applause to nerve him on. Now, at the very last, the wan, beautiful face of his mother is before him, and he remembers the two, lonely at home, waiting for the outcome of this day, for their glory or for their shame. Already the goal is scarce three strides away, and Phaedo laughs with triumph, when suddenly the face of Ladas shoots up even with his. For an instant that seems hours of struggling, the two waver side by side, and then with a last desperate effort the boy of Galatia draws ahead and touches the goal-slab, even while the foot of the Athenian hangs above it.

With the mighty shout of an assembled world begins the Olympiad of Ladas.

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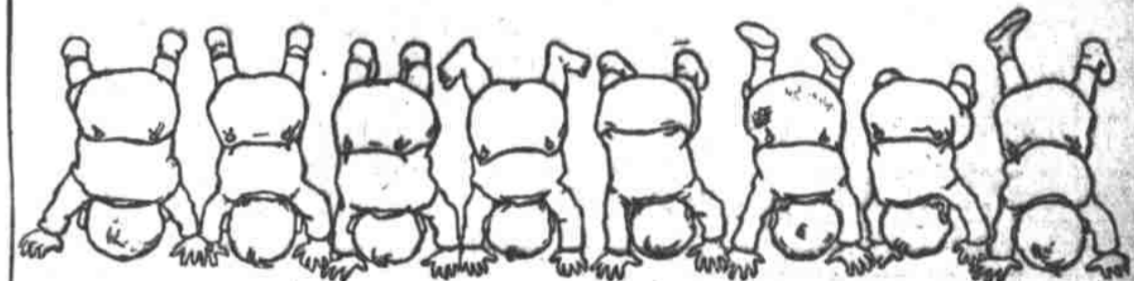


CIRCUS-TIME.

(THE EFFECT ON THE BOYS OF BOYVILLE)



THE HUMAN PYRAMID.



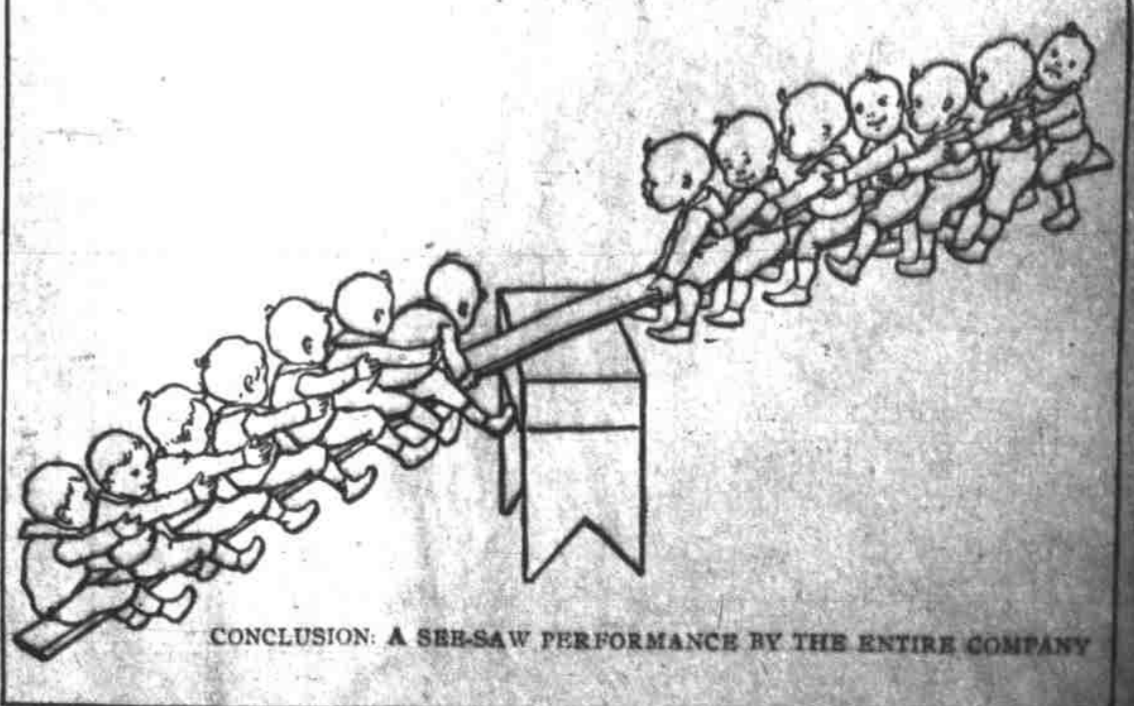
OH, THIS IS EASY!



OH, LOOK AT THOSE CLOWNS! — HEY, STOP YOUR PUSHING THERE!



NOW, SOMEBODY MAKE HIM GO!



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