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The Power of Song

By F. A. MITCHEL

There was a girl of one of those states which now compose the Balkans whose ambition was to emulate men in athletics. Expert in throwing the discus, she won contests against those who were champions in this game. She was the best chariot driver in the kingdom and had won many races. But her most remarkable feats were in running. In this no one was found to beat her.

So proud was she of her swiftness on her legs that she made a vow she would marry no man who could not beat her on the cinder path. Having many suitors, this only added to the rivalry among them. But since an ability to run fast does not argue that a man is otherwise attractive, those whose muscular development warranted their entering the list were not likely to win the girl even if they won the race. Several fleet runners came so near beating her that if she had chosen she might have thrown the race without appearing to do so.

One day a young man came to the village where this girl, Eudoxia, lived and announced that he would enter the list against her, only he made the provision that should he win the race she must marry him. He sent a challenge, and Eudoxia dispatched her brother to look the man over and report to her whether he would likely outrun her. The brother returned and reported that, while the challenger was shapely, he was not muscular, and his

physique did not warrant the inference that he could beat an ordinary runner.

The slight risk of being beaten by one whom she would be pledged to marry and yet might dislike tempted Eudoxia to consent to the terms. So an agreement was drawn up between her and the stranger, who called himself Boris, to race, and if he beat her she was to marry him. This agreement was signed by Eudoxia without having seen her suitor.

The race was to take place on a track in the form of an ellipse, the length being half a mile and there being seven laps. A large concourse of people were gathered to see the race. The stranger stepped forth in a pair of short running pants such as are worn at the present day. One thing about him was noticeable—his manly beauty. It was evident that he was not built for fleetness. But what astonished every one was that he held in his hand a harp. Eudoxia was attired in the same fashion, with the addition of a shift falling only to the thighs.

When the two confronted each other it was noticed that the stranger's manly beauty, which all agreed rivaled the statues of Apollo, made a marked impression on Eudoxia. When she saw the harp in his hand she was surprised, and when he did not lay it aside before taking his position for the race she wondered.

The signal was given. Eudoxia started off so fast that she did not know that Boris was walking slowly. She heard behind her sounds from the strings of the harp, soothing rather than inspiring. When she had made three-quarters of the first lap there, directly opposite her at the other end of the minor axis of the elliptic course, was Boris, walking and striking his harp. Then he began to sing.

Eudoxia, who had nothing to fear from such a tortoise, stopped to listen.

Boris was singing her praises, the love he felt for her, pleading that she would not turn a deaf ear to him. She listened till he had gone out of hearing, and then she proceeded to the other end of the minor axis and waited till he had come around to the point where she had been listening to his song.

It seemed that in the meanwhile it had grown sweeter. He was walking very slowly, putting all his feeling into it. Again Eudoxia went on till she reached the point at which he had been singing, while he proceeded till he took her place. Here both stood still, the man singing of the beauty and the virtues of the peerless Eudoxia, she seeming to be spellbound. Then he went on singing, "Wait for me, fair one," repeating the words again and again till he came around to where she stood, and the two walked side by side.

In this way they proceeded, the girl rapt in the song, till they came within a few yards of the goal, when Boris, still singing, turned and walked backward, keeping his eyes fixed on Eudoxia, till he passed over the goal.

Then the spectators, who had appeared to be enthralled as well as the girl, drew a long breath and burst into a cheer.

And so Eudoxia was won, not by fleetness, but by the power of song. As soon as he had won the race Boris announced himself to be the son of a powerful noble of what is now Montenegro, and, without holding Eudoxia to her contract, appeared himself as a suitor for her hand, which, after a period of maidenly reserve, she gave him.

Many of the people who were not cognizant of what passed after the winning of the race believed that the stranger was Apollo, who had come down from heaven to win an earthly bride.

After the wedding Boris and his wife

disappeared and when they reached his home were received with as much interest as had attended the race. For Boris had been in Greece and, hearing of the girl who must be won in a foot race, had stopped on his way back to see her. He resolved to win her by making love to her in song.

Trouble Ever Present.

"Do you have any trouble when you are saying your lessons in school, Tommy?"

"Yes, sir."

"What seems to trouble you most?"

"The teacher."—Stray Stories.

Brazil Nut Trees.

The Brazil nut tree does not begin to bear fruit until it attains the age of fifty years or thereabouts and continues to produce crops intermittently. Trees known to be hundreds of years old have produced crops.

"And Thy Neighbor as Thyself."

Willie—Ma, may I have Tommy Wilson over to our house to play, Saturday? Mother—No; you make altogether too much noise. You'd better go over to his house and play.—Boston Transcript.

Described.

"Pa, what is the difference between good taste and good judgment?"

"Well, my boy, the man who marries a pretty girl may have excellent taste but mighty poor judgment."—Detroit Free Press.

If Food Is Too Salty.

One often puts too much salt in food while cooking it. To remove the salt place a wet cloth over the top of the vessel in which the food is cooking and the steam will draw the salt into the wet cloth.—Good Housekeeping.