Patria

by Louis Joseph Vance

The Great Romance of Preparedness

NOVELIZATION OF THE MOTION PICTURE PLAY OF THE SAME NAME. PRODUCED FOR THE INTERNATIONAL FILM SERVICE, INC., UNDER THE DIRECTION OF WHARTON, INC. COPYRIGHT STAR COMPANY

THE CAST.

MRS. VERNON CASTLE as Patria Channing.
MILTON SILLS as Donald Parr.
WARNER OLAND as Baron Huroki.
DOROTHY GREEN as Fanny Adair.

EPISODE ONE

The Last of the Fighting Channings.

Down on the beaches, whose gold broke the umber and slate monotony of rock-girt island shores, soft winds played. But here in the wooded uplands the air was moveless; against the brooding woodland hush the slightest alien noise attained sharp relief. One such began as a remote vibration troubling the stillness, waxed apace in volume, became quickly recognizable as hoof-beats.

A horse appeared, facing like a mad thing down a narrow bridle-path little better than a neglected trail. On its back, cross-saddle, sat a young woman. Of a sudden she chose to interrupt that headlong flight.

Kicking a stirrup free, the girl turned in her saddle and looked back. Presently, round the nearest bend, another horse pounded, hard ridden by a young man with a temper.

At sight of his well-favored young face darkened by a sulky frown, the girl threw back her head and laughed outright.

"Why, there you are, Rodney!" she cried. "Where have you been all this time?"

Her banter only served to darken his scowl. "No fair!" he protested, drawing rein. "You can't call that a race! You shot away without a word of warning!"

"Why," she said, with guilelessly widened eyes, "you yourself started the race!"

"I never—!"

"Oh, but you did. You knew perfectly well I've put you on an allowance of two proposals per day—one after lunch, one after dinner. So when you begin the very first thing after breakfast"—her jeweled wrist-watch flashed momentarily in the sunlight—"well, before noon, anyway—you as good as invite me to run away from you as fast as ever I can."

He refused to be trifled with. He was very young—almost as young as she—and took love seriously.

"Patria!"

She mimicked provokingly his tone: "Rodney?"

"You're only playing with me. It—it isn't worthy of you, Pat. Surely you must know whether you love me or not!"

"I declare I don't," she replied, a trace more seriously.

"You don't know your own mind?"

"In the eyes of the law I'm a minor and can't know my own mind. That's why I must have a guardian to manage my affairs."

"Nonsense. You'll be twenty-one tomorrow."

"But the law is the law, even when it's an ass. How can I know my own mind about you when the law says I can't? Really, Mr. Wrenn," she teased, "you must be reasonable. Wait till tomorrow."

"You mean," he interposed eagerly, "you'll give me my answer then?"

"Who knows? If you can't be patient till I'm of age—a woman grown—I'll have to refer you to Peter Ripley. You might wire him—something like this: 'Your ward, Patria Channing, doesn't know her own mind. Please advise immediately, at my expense.'"

His ill-humor broke down completely. "Patria, you witch!" he cried, trying to capture her hand.

But she was prepared for that, and too quick for him. A touch of her

She Never Could Quite Recall What Passed Between Them.

heel and a lifted rein whirled Kitchener round in his tracks. In a twinkling he was dancing half a dozen feet away.

Taken a second time by surprise, the boy swore petulantly as he sawed at the reins. His cob resented this and turned awkwardly. The girl had a long lead on the pursuit before it was well renewed.

Even without that advantage the chase was hopeless. She had the better horse and the instinct of her sex to boot.

Little wonder, then, that in the pride of fearless and carefree youth she rode recklessly—who loved reckless riding—the swing of a thoroughbred beneath her, the long roll of earth-spurning hoofs, the sweep of the wind in her face! . . .

Without warning, all this was changed—changed beyond repair.

Thickest trees and underbrush masked impenetrably the next turn ahead.

The horse took the curve like a sorrel thunderbolt. A human shape, small and brownish, dodged directly into his path. There was a shock, a shrill cry, a sickening thud. The horse plunged furiously. Unaccountably Patria lost control of him—felt the saddle slip from under her, dropped her crop, lost the reins, grasped wildly at the air as she felt herself falling.

SECRET SERVICE.

"Fore!"

The warning came from a distance and was only to be expected in view of the fact that links bordered the woodland. Donald Parr heard but paid no heed.

But he started and stopped stock still when a whitish sphere sped like a bullet within six inches of his nose.

For several seconds he remained stationary, looking keenly about him. Then, well toward the edge of the woodland, a fluttering bit of white caught his eye and forthwith disappeared; and with a noncommittal grunt Parr moved toward it.

Ten yards, and he paused again—this time behind a sizable tree.

Immediately ahead a dense thicket blotted the fair prospect of the links, and behind this, his back to Parr, skulked an undersized person clothed in those amazingly ugly garments which the motor-cyclist of today affects. He was busily unknotting a handkerchief from the end of a stick. Now and again he peered stealthily over the top of the thicket.

Beyond, on the links, four figures were visible. Of these, three remained in the background, two being caddies, the third a tall and slender gentleman in rakish white flannels. The fourth, a man of middle age, neither tall nor short, but tolerably stout, and commonly well if not unsuitably dressed for the game, appearing sedulously to search for his lost golf ball, boldly left the links, and without further subterfuge rounded the thickets and stopped before the motor-cyclist, who greeted him with a salute of deep respect.

Parr's teeth tightened on his briar. By this alone did he betray surprise—if surprise it were. This closer view showed him that golfist and cyclist alike were Japanese, the motor-cyclist of the commonest caste, the other . . . Well, it happened that Parr knew the other both by sight and ill-repute.

He called himself Baron Huroki. He was the only son of a Samurai, a man of much influence in Tokio, and of vast wealth, whose great gifts as a diplomatist had frequently been demonstrated in the course of a long career as Japanese ambassador to various European capitals. The offspring of a marriage with an Englishwoman of title, the present Baron Huroki had inherited all his father's wealth, together with much of his cunning, his courage, and his morals—or lack thereof.

Acknowledging the obeisance with the most brusque of gestures the baron silently held out his hand. As silently the motor-cyclist produced a folded slip of paper, and placed it in the expectant palm. Baron Huroki unfolded and scanned what was written upon the paper, pocketed it, whipped out a notebook, rapidly penciled one of its leaves, tore this out and gave it to the other. Then, after a few curt words in Japanese, so guardedly pitched that Parr could make nothing more of them, he strode briskly back to the links.

Delaying only to fold and secrete the baron's message in the leather of his cap, the motor-cyclist trotted off through the trees.

After a brief moment of indecision, Parr left cover and darted after the Japanese.

The path debouched into a shallow glade, crossing another. At this point the gods launched at the devoted Japanese their bolt in the shape of a splendid sorrel saddle-horse with a slim young woman on its back.

They came together squarely. In a trice the motor-cyclist was bowled over and stretched out unconscious. The sorrel went to his knees. His fair rider shot on, over his head. Parr came up just in time, and without other choice than to receive her in his arms.

The young woman stood before him, trembling and out of breath, but obviously unharmed.

So far, good; Parr wasted no more solicitude on her. His Japanese remained to be attended to.

That one lay senseless, as he had fallen. On his knees beside the man, a hasty examination persuaded Parr that he had suffered no really serious hurt. His cap had dropped off in the collision. Parr deftly extracted the folded paper from its leather, rose, and turned back to find the young woman, whose life he might reasonably be credited with having saved, regarding him with a look in which considerable amusement was mixed with as much chagrin.

"If you will permit me," said he, offering his hands with fingers interlaced.

She hesitated. Amusement glimmered again in her eyes. The corners of her mouth twitched adorably. But with no more than a conventional, "Thank you so much!" she coolly lodged the toe of a small boot in his hands, and sprang into the saddle.

Before he could move back, a second horse galloped into the glade and pulled up smartly. A voice of amazement saluted him.

"Donald Parr! Well, I'll be jiggered!"

Captain Parr swung about.

"Rodney!" he exclaimed, pleased; and striding over, warmly shook the newcomer's hand.

Behind his back the girl's voice rang out in sharp warning. Followed the sound of plunging hoofs. He wheeled, instinctively whipping an automatic from his pocket.

He saw her spurring full-tilt at the Japanese. That one, it seemed, had quietly regained his senses and got to his feet, simultaneously producing a pistol of his own. But he had no chance to use it; the horse was upon him too quickly. In another breath the man had tripped and half fallen, half thrown himself bodily back through a mask of undergrowth. He disappeared instantly.

Without hesitation, Parr pursued through the hindering tangle. On its far side he paused and listened. The Japanese had vanished.

His eagerness to inform himself concerning Baron Huroki's message would brook no more delay. Quickly he unfolded and smoothed out the paper.

"Probe the private affairs of Peter Ripley, trustee for Channings estate, for reasons for persistent discrimination against Mexican contracts."

By no means as puzzled as his

The Gasoline Tank Exploded.

frown might have been taken to indicate, Parr thoughtfully refolded the paper, put it away in his card case and plowed back through the undergrowth to the glade.

The girl was still there, with Rodney Wrenn.

"Don!" he cried as Parr rejoined them, "you're a wonder! If it hadn't been for you—"

"Pure accident!" Parr interrupted, lifting a deprecatory hand.

"That doesn't make it any the less true; you saved me a nasty fall," the girl insisted cordially.

"Well, . . ." Parr admitted with a significant look to Rodney.

"Oh!" The latter hastened to remedy his oversight. "Permit me, Patria, to introduce my friend, Captain Parr. Don, this is Miss Channing."

The girl leaned forward, giving cool fingers transiently to his grasp.

"Captain Parr, did you say?"

"Of the regular army!" Rodney added.

"I'm so glad," Patria said warmly; "doubly glad to meet a soldier, Captain Parr. All the men of my family have been soldiers, patriots, all the way back to Revolutionary days. They used to call us 'the Fighting Channings.'"

"But that's all ended now. I'm the last of the Channings—and a girl can't fight."

Parr hesitated a little. "I mustn't sail under false colors," he faltered. "The truth is—I resigned my commission last month."

"The deuce you did!" Rodney commented. "Then I'll go bail I know why."

Patria turned curiously to him.

"Don always had a genius for detective work, and army service offers a man mighty little opportunity to exercise anything like that." Rodney deliberately ignored Parr's movement of protest. "If Donald Parr is out of the army, it's a pipe he did it solely to enter the secret service and become his country's faithful sleuth! Eh, Don—what?"

"If so, wouldn't it be highly indiscreet of me to admit it?"

"Whether or no," Patria came to his rescue—"can anything prevent your coming to tea this afternoon? The Channing cottage—you know—near the Cliff walk? . . . I do want to know you better, Captain Parr—but we're already in danger of being late for lunch."

CODE MESSAGES.

Parr pondered the adventure soberly over a lonely lunch in an inconspicuous corner of the Casino.

Within his radius of vision were seated both persons, aside from himself, involved in the as yet obscure intrigue, and with them some others.

Not far away, deep in confabulation with the white-flanneled gentleman who had been his companion of the links that morning, was Baron Huroki. A discreet inquiry elicited from Captain Parr's waiter the information that the baron's friend was one Senor Juan de Lima, a wealthy Mexican.

"Probe the private affairs of Peter Ripley............for reasons for persistent discrimination against Mexican contracts!"

This Senor de Lima, then was a fourth party to the intrigue.

If any more proof of that were needed, it was furnished by Huroki, who, upon the arrival of Miss Channing and her party, covertly designated her to De Lima, muttering something which Parr would have given much to overhear, and which seemed to exert a rather incendiary effect upon inflammable Mexican emotions.

Patria was hardly seated when a page called Baron Huroki to the telephone.

Intuition whispered to the understanding of Captain Parr. He was entertained by a mental vision of an unhappy and excited little Japanese in the dress of a motorcyclist stammering the story of a purloined message into a telephone receiver.

When Baron Huroki returned wearing a countenance whose racial serenity was perceptibly ruffled, Captain Parr smiled grimly into his demitasse.

Shortly after this he got up, strolled unobtrusively out of the Casino and found the nearest telegraph office, where he concocted a lengthy code message to one Edward W. Ryley in New York. . . .

The answer was delivered as Captain Parr dressed for dinner, and caused a considerable interruption of that ceremony.

"Ripley doesn't know Huroki, but says private advices persuade him Japan conspires to embroil United States with Mexico. As patriot and trustee for Channings, Ripley has repeatedly refused of late to accept arms and ammunition contracts for delivery in Mexico. Declares his life mysteriously threatened. Is worried about Patria Channing, who, on tomorrow, takes over sole ownership of Channing, Inc."

LONG DISTANCE.

Without the least warning, on impulse of exasperation, Rodney Wrenn all but lifted Patria off her feet, swinging her bodily from the thronged ballroom floor to the semiseclusion of a deep window recess masked with palms.

"No—wait!" he insisted with peremptory gesture when, mastering her surprise, Patria drew herself up to the full dignity of her inches and made as if to pass him. "You don't get off so easily—not until you've explained what's come over you tonight to make you treat me like this!"

"But I think it's for you to explain by what right you make a fool of me before my guests!"

"I can't help it. I'm sorry, but—you're driving me crazy. You don't wear my orchids—you ignore the note I sent with them—you've even got another man's roses at your waist—Parr's, I daresay!"

He paused; and Patria was momentarily discountenanced. Her glance winced, and the boy pounced furiously upon that betrayal.

"They are Parr's—curse him! The fellow's bewitched you—that's the whole trouble. You've lost your head—you're clean head over heels in lo—!"

"Rodney!"

Patria fought with herself to deny her anger. But suddenly with a gesture half of despair, half of rage, Rodney spared her further effort—turned and left her, plunging blindly back across the crowded floor.

Promptly Patria forgave him. Glad she had been spared the regret sure to follow hard upon any exhibition of her temper, glad of a little time alone, she stepped quietly back through the long window opening on the veranda of her home; and immediately paused in disappointment, not finding there the privacy she had hoped for.

Near her window two men stood talking. One faced her, a substantial figure in evening dress, the other,

[The remainder of this page — the continuation of "Patria," "The Kitchen Cabinet," the remaining articles and advertisements — is not transcribed.]

Silk Culture in Texas

COCOONS AND CATERPILLARS FEEDING

On a great ranch in the Lone Star state are some people who give their time to breeding countless large white worms—ugly ones, the kind that squish when you step on 'em, girls—and giving them tender care, for they produce the gossamer threads that are woven into lovely fabrics

By ROBERT H. MOULTON

AFTER three hundred years of failure in different parts of the United States, there has recently been firmly established near Austin, Tex., a silk plantation of 40 acres which gives every promise of unqualified success. The trees covering the 40 acres of this plantation were imported from France and are of the most approved variety for feeding the worms. The fact that the production of cocoons is going forward at the rate of 40,000 a month shows what can be done in this industry.

It has been found that climatic and other conditions in Texas make it the ideal place for the development of the silk industry. The silk crop is surer than any other crop and involves little risk or trouble, while the occupation is pleasant and the returns are

[…]

TRAPS STOP MOLES

Raider Destroys Harmful Insects and Need Not Be Exterminated.

LIFE HABITS OF EXPLORER

Leveling of Ridges by Means of Roller Tends to Discourage Further Incursions of Animals—Ready Market for Skins.

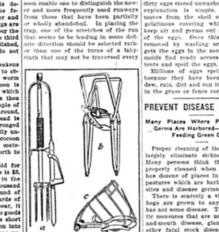
(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

The case against the garden mole is not clear-cut. The damage that it does by burrowing in the soil and uprooting plants is somewhat offset by its helpful habit of feeding upon insects and in working the soil. A specialist in the bureau of biological survey of the United States department of agriculture, who has made a careful study of this underground explorer, concludes that judgment against the mole may be rendered when it actually invades the lawn or garden—the overt act—but that no general warfare against an insect-eating mammal should be encouraged. In Farmers' Bulletin 583, "The Common Mole of Eastern United States," a report is made of investigations in the life habits and methods of destroying this animal when necessary.

Trapping is the most effective means for putting an end to mole depredations. Although this bulletin considers the common garden mole of Eastern United States, to a great extent the instructions for trapping it apply to all American moles. Three general types of traps—the harpoon, the scissors-jaw, and the choker—are on the market, and most of them give good results. Specific instructions for handling any particular make should be obtainable from the manufacturer.

Successful Mole Trap.

In general, a mole trap can be successfully operated only when set on that part of the runway that is near enough to the surface to upridge the sod or soil. A little observation will soon enable one to distinguish the newer and more frequently used runways from those that have been partially or wholly abandoned. In placing the



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WHAT TO SELL TO CHINAMAN

Celestials Will Not Buy Some Things Regarded as Necessities, Says Commercial Attache.

An American commercial attache in China reminds the manufacturer at home that the Asiatic demand for Western articles is still somewhat primitive.

For example, the Chinaman is a liberal purchaser of American barbwire. He likes the locks we make. Files from the United States sell well and one American firm holds a monopoly on scoop shovels. But the razors made here have no attraction, for the Chinaman is contented with the clumsy instrument the local blacksmith hammers out of a file. Trying to sell him doorknobs and electrical bells is to waste time and breath. Chinese agriculture gets along with the farm implements devised centuries ago and cannot even understand the mechanism of American farm machinery. Nails, bolts and nuts have a ready market, being simple, yet when it comes to knives, the product of high skill and workmanship, China is perfectly satisfied with the cheap stuff sent out from Europe.

The commercial invasion of the far East can be successful only if the character of the people of the East is given careful consideration, says the Toledo Blade. The American merchant does not try to sell section hands fountain pens. The American manufacturers will lose money who seek an outlet in China for articles that a simple people look upon as luxuries or toys.

Chances Too Great.

Benjamin Birdie, the famous jockey, was taken suddenly ill and the trainer advised him to visit a doctor in the town.

"He'll put you right in a jiffy," he said.

The same evening he found Benjamin lying curled up in the stables, kicking his legs about in agony.

"Hallo, Benny! Haven't you been to the doctor?"

"Yes."

"Well, didn't he do you any good?"

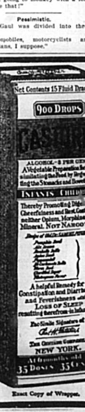
"I didn't go in. When I got to his house there was a brass plate on his door—'Dr. Kurem. Ten to one'—and I wasn't going to monkey with a long shot like that!"

Pessimistic.

"All Gaul was divided into three parts."

"Automobiles, motorcyclists and pedestrians, I suppose."

Children Cry For Fletcher's CASTORIA



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