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 HARLEY KNOLES — Copyright, 1916, by Louis Joseph Vance

THE CAST.

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

SYNOPSIS.

Baron Huroki, chief of the Japanese secret service in America, conspiring to embroil the United States with Mexico, kidnaps Patria Rivera Jumel, daughter of a Mexican patriot exiled by Porfirio Diaz. "The Flaming Challenge" and sees to it that Donald Parr, American soldier of fortune, is blamed for the crime. Donald had the national garrie interned in Texas, although Patria, who has escaped from Huroki and her fiancé, Capt. Donald Parr. Huroki is engaged in a plot to embroil the U. S. with Mexico and Japan. Patria's flaming challenge reaches Baron Shimura—a lieutenant general in the Japanese army—and a secret alliance between Shimura and Huroki is formed.

NINTH EPISODE

Cat's Paw and Scapegoat.

THE CONVENTIONAL THING.

That night had been sultry, a night of heat rendered the more oppressive by humidity, a true Manhattan night of August. But the day that followed broke upon the unsavory city in dawn-light so pitilessly clear that at least one belated wayfarer, half dulled from excessive stimulant, was impelled to state that the friendly cloak of darkness was no more for him, was attired with a little ill of shivering, as it clothed.

His trembling fingers strove to draw together the front of his coat, a fruitless effort. Looking down angrily, he discovered a wide-spread expanse of white gaping between the edge of his dress coat—somewhat rumpled, one fancied—and the waistband of his trousers.

Mumbling petulantly an inane oath, the belated one glanced furtively round to see whether, by mischance, anybody else were abroad to be a witness of the wilfulness of things, then reeled to find himself the lonely tenant of a doorway. Hardly had society suffered itself to accept Captain Parr as the fortunate suitor when, following the rise of Patria's business trips to New York, all that was left of Donald was a deep disfavor and Baron Huroki, that sly, suave Japanese, was the favored associate. Senor Juan de Lima, the Mexican financial commissioner now constantly at Patria's elbows, with Senor Adair completing a triumvirate of her intimates.

Rodney Rumford had been the banishment of Rodney and his mother, who knew Patria's childhood and stood in loco parentis to the girl, managing her secretarial affairs, even to town and gowns, supervising her education, chaperoning her dances.

And now, but a few weeks later—

Rodney from Patria or even of remembrance, save in the sentimental manner of her betrothal to Senor de Lima! Rodney, the irresistible to Rodney, Such heartlessness! Such unwomanly, such cruel unconsciousness!

Rage clouded his wits and senses. Such? Why, it positively enlisted

Heedless of risk to his hands, he shattered the glass in the frame with a blow of his fist, ripped out the photograph and tore it across and again.

Then, as the fragments fell to the floor, he stood with a thin, draped figure mod on a forearm on the table, and, sobbed gustily.

Almost immediately he fell asleep, his head pillowed on his arms, and how long he slept he never knew. He was conscious only of a half-frightful woman's voice, of a hand shaking him by the shoulder, of a face peering down at him, of a dim recognition of the face of Patria, smiling, exquisite, compassionate.

A phase of mock activity possessed the mind of Rodney Wrenn as he picked up the photograph and stood staring lovingly at it.

Besides a day that was scarcely six weeks old, when Patria, the self-willed, the girl whose counterfeit presentment was smiling into his eyes, had vanished as he wholly his portion to become his bride by an understanding so long complete that it was.

They had been light-hearted lovers on that day, and as early a day for the sad game before,

This, in a twinkling. Donald Parr had stepped between them.

In the opinion of Rodney his subsequent sufferings had aged him swiftly to full manhood. But he was bravely self-deluded; he remained a boy, of man's stature but of youthful mentality. As he was presently to prove.

His look grew still more morose as he reviewed the events which had followed the evening of Captain Parr.

There had been a brief time when Donald had seemed to be back in the favor of the girl. So constantly were they in each other's company that Rodney had seriously doubted their engagement. And that was unthinkable to Rodney, for all his resentment had been able to understand. The boy-to-boy worship which he had always accorded Donald Parr still negotiated its way upon his thoughts. It was quite conceivable that the girl should have become only temporarily infatuated with such a man.

But all the time she was changing, her very nature was changing incomprehensibly. Hardly had society suffered itself to accept Captain Parr as the fortunate suitor when, following the rise of Patria's business trips to New York, all that was left of Donald was a deep disfavor and Baron Huroki, that sly, suave Japanese, was the favored associate. Senor Juan de Lima, the Mexican financial commissioner now constantly at Patria's elbows, with Senor Adair completing a triumvirate of her intimates.

Rodney had been the banishment of Rodney and his mother, who knew Patria's childhood and stood in loco parentis to the girl, managing her secretarial affairs, even to town and gowns, supervising her education, chaperoning her dances.

And now, but a few weeks later—

Rodney from Patria or even of remembrance save in the sentimental manner of her betrothal to Senor de Lima! Rodney, the irresistible to Rodney.