Patria

The Great Romance of Preparedness

by Louis Joseph Vance

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.

SYNOPSIS.

On her twenty-first birthday, when she is to take over control of her fortune, Patria Channing finds her guardian assassinated by Japanese in her New York home. A letter written by the murdered man tells of a secret vault beneath the library containing $100,000,000, hoarded by Patria's patriotic progenitors to combat the perils of national "unpreparedness"—of which trust Patria is sole executrix—and warns against Baron Huroki, alleged head of the Japanese secret service in America. Japanese invade the house and set it afire while Patria is inspecting the treasure vault with Capt. Donald Parr of the United States secret service. The two escape by an underground passage to a garden behind the house.

EPISODE THREE

"Winged Millions."

When, some thirty minutes later, Patria Channing and Captain Parr reentered the walled garden they were no more alone; three men accompanied them, plain citizens all, of manner and appearance so little romantic that the girl found it somewhat difficult to accept them for what they really were, on the word of Captain Parr—highly efficient operatives of the United States secret service.

None but would have been readily lost in a crowd; and he whom Parr presented as a Mr. Ryley, his most valued op-worker in the service, possessed a personality so colorless and unassuming that he might have moved unquestioned in almost any stratum of society. Yet it was this one who took over temporary charge of the treasure with the utmost sang froid—for all the world as though he were asked to safeguard a hundred cents instead of a hundred millions of dollars.

Though by this time the firemen had extinguished the flames, the first and second stories of the house were a smoking, steaming mass of wreckage that precluded utterly any attempt to examine the approach to the treasure vault via the library. Police still watched in front of the house and would, Ryley guaranteed, till the last of the treasure had been removed through the garden. . . .

"It's safe enough," he said, returning from exploration of the underground way in company with Parr, "almost too safe, if you ask me. That door down there is shut for keeps; we'll want an acetylene torch to cut through it before we can call this a moving day. I'll be going after that now, if you don't mind. Burgess and Harvey here will stop on the job and see that nobody makes trouble before I get back."

Approving this arrangement, Patria turned to Captain Parr.

"And now," she said with a weary little smile, "you may take me to breakfast for I'm famished. And I'll call Newport on long distance and soothe Aunt Amelia down and get her to send my maid in with something else for me to wear." . . .

After breakfast they taxied back to the walled garden.

Ryley himself had only just returned with a mechanic and the acetylene torch apparatus.

His fellow workers in the secret service remained in undisturbed pos-

Lit a Sputtering Fuse.

session of the garden with nothing more to report than that they had observed no suspicious circumstances of any sort.

It was Burgess who offered this reassurance—a tubby little man with a low-pitched, pleasant voice, and mild, friendly eyes. He had just finished speaking when he started violently, cried out in sharp pain, clapped a hand to his left breast, stood for a moment swaying while a look of acute, amazed protest widened on his countenance—and dropped dead at their feet, shot through the heart.

As one man, Ryley, Harvey and the mechanic ducked to cover behind the wall, while Parr delayed only to grasp Patria almost roughly by the waist and drag her with him.

"That corner house," he said sharply to Ryley, indicating an unoccupied dwelling which adjoined the Channing residence on the Fifth avenue side—"somebody stationed in an upper room—behind those shutters—with a gun of some sort, Maxim-silenced. That shot couldn't have come from any other quarter. Here: take care of Miss Channing, please; don't let her expose herself. I'm going to have a try for your guy assassin."

Bent almost double, he ran in the shelter of the wall to the rear of the half-burned house, and, catching the low sill of a window, easily swung himself up and into the library.

The room had barely escaped becoming a total wreck—was in truth little better; yet there remained of the flooring a web of charred and greasy timbers strong enough to sustain a man's weight. Parr picked a gingerly way out to the entrance hall, found the stairs negotiable, and within a very little time was climbing out on the roof through a broken skylight. Nor was he in any way surprised to find the scuttle on the roof of the corner house open—recently broken open, if he read the signs aright.

Stealthily, then, automatic in hand, Captain Parr let himself down into the ostensibly vacant residence, stole back through the upper hallway, and suddenly threw open the door to one of the rear rooms.

Simultaneously a little man who had been kneeling at one of the shuttered windows swung round, and whipped two shots at Parr from a heavy revolver furnished with a Maxim silencer. Parr's answering shot rang brutally loud. The little man dropped his revolver and subsided into a curiously disheveled heap, quite dead. The captain delayed only long enough to make sure that there was no other occupant of the room, and to verify the fact, which he had all along suspected, that the murderer was a Japanese.

"Left here to discourage any attempt of ours to break into that vault," he surmised. "That means the enemy have surprised our secret—is probably even now trying to get away with the loot. . . ."

Throwing open the shutter, he called to Ryley in the garden that the danger had been done away with, then turned and set himself to hasty exploration of the corner house.

He found no living soul therein, but every evidence that many had been in lawless possession of the premises not long since. The place had been gutted of its furniture, the trail of whose hasty removal led Parr to and through the front door.

As he ran out into the avenue a casual-minded policeman, strolling past,

"Have you noticed anybody leave this house?" Parr asked.

"I've noticed about two dozen leaving it—and that's about all they did leave. A big guy bossin' the job tells me the Japanese consul has purchased the property and is moving every stick out before refurnishing. Three vanloads they carted away—and in a hell of a hurry they were, at that."

"Which way did they go?"

The policeman obligingly jerked a thumb westward. "They made off that way," said he. "But where they were bound, I dunno."

Parr fancied he could hazard a shrewd guess. He ran hastily across the avenue and down the side street.

And, so running, he disappeared for a time from human ken.

THE HOLE IN THE WALL.

Ignoring the protests of Mr. Ryley, Patria crept along under cover of the wall to the window through which she had watched Parr disappear, and climbed through.

Just why she elected to follow him she could hardly have said.

She was inside the house before she appreciated that she had yielded to what was most probably a foolish impulse.

The first thing to greet her as she hurried through the upper hallway was the grinning mask of a dead Japanese huddled up on the floor of the back room; and turning from this in dread and disgust she ran blindly down the stairs. But she discovered no sign of Captain Parr—or indeed of anybody else—and though she stopped at the front door long enough for a hasty glance out into the avenue, the man she sought was by that time several blocks away.

But this she couldn't know; and believing that he must still be somewhere in the house, she pursued her investigations; in the course of which, descending to the cellar, she discovered irrefutable evidence of what Parr had surmised to his own satisfaction, if he hadn't stopped to verify it, that the treasure vault of the Channing house had been looted through a breach in the connecting wall.

Or was it empty altogether? Had her quick ears caught the sound of a footstep beyond that breach? If so, it must be Captain Parr's beyond a doubt. In the utmost confidence that this would prove to be the case, Patria sprang lightly through the breach.

Instantly a loop of stout lines settled over her head and shoulders, pinning both her arms to her sides. Another followed it and another, half hitches thrown with deft expertness. Before she could utter the cry that choked her throat she was bound and helpless in the power of a sullen ruffian who was deaf to tears and prayers, and proceeded calmly to rope the girl to the back of a heavy chair, and then, knelt to strike a match and light a sputtering fuse. This done, he moved quickly out into the adjoining cellar.

She needed almost a minute before she comprehended her danger.

Then the vault echoed with her screams, answered by voices from beyond the steel door to the underground passage where Ryley and his associates were at work with the acetylene torch.

But however rapidly it worked it could not possibly be swift enough to compass Patria's salvation.

Of a sudden the girl stilled her cries. In her struggles she had freed one hand from its bonds. And in the pocket of her coat, convenient to that hand, lay the dainty little revolver she had on impulse snatched up on leaving her boudoir in Newport the night before.

There was just a chance. She was a fair shot, and the fuse was slow-burning. If she could only contrive to break it with a bullet. . . .

Working the weapon with great difficulty out of her pocket, she aimed as best she might and fired.

Twice she missed. But the third bullet struck the fuse fairly and snapped it in twain.

Then the revolver slipped from her nerveless grasp and she sank back unconscious in her bonds.

Thus Ryley and the others found her when, some ten minutes later, they at length broke through the steel door.

The open air of the garden revived her. By the time a cab had been called she had recovered sufficiently to appreciate that Captain Parr had disappeared.

Her last instructions to Ryley were simple and direct:

"The money doesn't matter. But never rest till you've found Captain Parr!"

THE SANDAI.

Luck of a sort played into the hands of Captain Parr that morning. He found no difficulty about trailing three heavy-laden moving vans across the lower West side to the waterfront,

Patria Pointed Out the Freighter.

where he arrived in time even to see the last of the vans, now empty, whip briskly out of a pier shed and up the street.

Delaying only long enough to note the license number of the vehicle, he darted briskly into the pier shed and at discretion lost himself among its shadows; in which business luck—of a sort—again was with him. For he bitterly escaped being spotted by two particularly grim and repulsive looking young Japanese, who had apparently been posted near the entrance for the express purpose of preventing espionage.

It was a busy place, a-roar with the activities of a multitude of longshoremen. On either side steamers were taking in cargo, with every indication of furious effort to get finished with the job and away. But which was which? Aboard one the Channing "preparedness" fund had been stowed and presently would be outward bound:

Presently a lull fell in the sound and fury of cargo loading on one side of the pier. Preparations were made to take in the gangplanks. Dock laborers concerned themselves with the cables that moored the vessel. Its deep-throated whistle blasted a warning once, twice, and again. Down the pier ran alertly the two Japanese who had stood guard near its entrance. As they jumped aboard the last gangplank was withdrawn. The vessel began to sheer away from the pier.

Parr hastened to the nearest opening and waited there till, overhead, an open cargo port in the ship's painted flank moved past. At peril of his life he leaped, caught the lower lip of the opening, and scrambled aboard, to find himself in 'tween-decks gloom—and definitely committed to the most desperate adventure of his history.

It seemed impossible that he could have escaped observation. Yet, apparently, he had; and that despite the fact that not far distant, a number of efficient, deadly little Japanese decks' hands were busy stowing cargo at the behest of a boatswain.

Eavesdropping attentively upon the conversation of the deckhands, he learned all he needed to know—discovered that he had stowed away aboard the "Sandai" of Yokohama, bound for Vera Cruz; that she had sailed with considerable suddenness, three days before her scheduled sailing date; that she carried passengers of some importance (but these were not named) and a cargo consisting of arms and ammunition for the Carranzista forces; finally, that a treasure of vast value had been brought aboard at the last moment and stored in a strongly guarded stateroom on the officers quarters.

As the freighter drew out to mid-stream and began to drop down the river the deckhands trotted off on other business and left the stowaway to digest, his information and formulate his plans.

The last proved no easy matter. What one man could be expected to accomplish against a shipload was a riddle that baffled Parr's wits for the best part of a long hour. Satisfied that the Channing treasure had been brought aboard the "Sandai," and quite ready to believe that Baron Huroki and his pet Mexican, Senor Juan de Lima, had not been actively concerned in its theft but had sailed in charge of it, he still failed to puzzle out any feasible way to inform the authorities and cause the detention of the freighter and the arrest of the thieves without sacrificing the neck of Donald Parr.

Huddled in the shelter of the bales, the young man commanded a view through the cargo port; and his thoughtful gaze had long been fixed upon that breadth of harbor water slipping past so slowly and steadily before he distilled an inspiration from its hue.

And even as he began to take cognizance of the fog, Parr heard the jingle of signals in the engineroom below his hiding place. And immediately the pulsings of the engines ceased. For a little the "Sandai" drifted with steadily slackening way. Then the anchor was dropped, with chain roaring through hawse-holes, and the freighter settled down to wait the lifting of the fog.

In this combination of circumstances Parr thought to see his chance. The ship could not be far from land; and he was a strong swimmer. If he could slip unseen over the side and win to the shore, or even to a friendlier vessel's decks. . . .

With every precaution, he stole out to the main deck and—was instantly espied by a barefooted little monkey of a sailor, whose shriek of warning rang out the instant his vision comprehended the face of a stranger.

Failing in an attempt to gain the side—his way barred by half a dozen Japanese who seemed veritably to spring up from between deck seams—Parr took flight to the bridge deck by way of a most convenient companion-ladder; but gaining it only to find his plight nothing bettered; willing little assassins made toward him from fore and aft the moment he appeared.

His next resort was one of desperation. Charging through a stateroom door half open to the deck, he slammed, bolted it, and swung round to find himself in the wireless room, confronted by a Japanese operator who seemed to lack something of the readiness of his fellows, since he failed to recover from his surprise before Parr had him covered with his automatic.

Blows on the panels of the door were sounding as Parr backed the little brown man into his chair and with a significant gesture of the pistol commanded:

"Take my dictation! And, mind you, no shenanigan! I can read your sending by ear!"

The operator nodded; his slender, deft fingers gripped keys and switches. His eyes he kept steadfast to the face of the American while the latter dictated, and the crash and crackle of the spark filled the narrow space with false thunder.

When a shattered port behind Parr's head was broken in, and a revolver through the opening stamped a dull ring on his temple, he stopped dictating, dropped his pistol, and elevated both hands.

At the same time the little wireless operator lunged forward from his chair, clipped Parr's waist with two sinewy arms, and bore him to the floor.

The Needle in the Haystack.

It was mid-afternoon when Patria's maid answered a knock at the door and brought back to the semi-distracted girl an envelope of the Marconi company.

Tearing it open, Patria read hastily an unfinished message:

Miss Patria Channing,
"Ritz-Carlton, New York:
"Fog bound in lower bay aboard Japanese freight steamer Sandai. Treasure aboard. Tell Ryley."

There was no signature; none was needed. Tossing the message to the maid, Patria turned in frantic haste to the clothing she had cast on the bed preparatory to hanging the garments up.

"Help me into this immediately," the girl insisted, making a selection. "Then, if you can get Mr. Ryley on the telephone, read him that message—and say I've started to answer it in person. No—don't ask questions. Just finish dressing me—and don't bother!"

But before long Patria interrupted her dressing of her own volition, to seize the telephone and secure connection with a yacht club whose floats were moored in the Hudson not far from Claremont.

A taxicab whose chauffeur risked his license for a lady's whim bore her uptown with such expedition that, in less than twenty minutes from the time when she had telephoned, she hurried down the gangway to a float beside which waited a motorboat built on racing lines.

Two mechanics were tuning up the motor. Impatiently waiting till they pronounced it fit, Patria refused their further services, jumped into the boat and ordered it cast off.

Not until it was well away—so far distant that the fog had blotted the club landing out astern—did she feel conscious of any lessening of nervous tension. Now, at least—little as she could possibly hope for—she must grope blindly over a blind sea for a goal of uncertain whereabouts—she was doing what she could; she was trying to find the man who had proved himself never for an instant unready to risk his life in her interests, and whose life, she never doubted, was now more grimly imperiled than it ever yet had been.

And even though she were to find him, by some wild whirl of the wheel of chance to come upon that vessel of all those hundreds which haunted that fog-bound harbor—what then could she do?

She never stopped to question her ability to aid the man or hinder his enemies and hers—if she were happily to be permitted to do anything helpful, it would only be when she had found this man who (she was now ready to admit) meant more to her than all the treasure in the world. If it was her business first to find him, then to fret about rescuing him. . . .

Once through the Narrows, however, once astray in the lower bay, she perforce slowed down, for very lack of any means of guessing where to turn. And for a space of time that seemingly many weary hours she wandered hither and yon over the face of that sullen sea, aimlessly, save as she essayed ever and again to trace some fog warning to its source, in the forlorn hope that it might prove to be the floating prison of her protector.

Is there a Providence in wilful charge of lovers? Who shall deny the fact? What else led Patria's errant boat to that quarter of the harbor where lay the Sandai?

She found herself at length staring with incredulous eyes up at that name lettered in faded gold across the stern of an idle vessel.

Quite automatically she shut off the purring of her motor. Under decreasing momentum the small boat moved quickly round the bulk of the larger, while she stared and wondered to see no curious head peering down at her over that high rail.

It seemed her approach must have been unnoticed. She heard never a sound, saw never a sign of any human thing about the freighter. And presently she swung her almost wayless craft in under the side of the anchored ship, and, rising, fished with a boathook for a loop of cable that hung untidily from an open port. Catching this, she made painter fast, and with little difficulty scrambled up the side and in through the port—to receive a grinning welcome from half a dozen Japanese sailors, who had been patiently waiting.

Her disgust was as extreme as her efforts to escape were unavailing. She was promptly seized, if not ungently, and escorted up from the lower deck to be presented to the captain at the foot of the bridge companion ladder.

From this personage she received a courteous bow, a sharp scrutiny, scant consideration. For, though he had an intelligent face and looked and carried himself like a man of education, he refused flatly to understand English or to regard her as anything more than some strange stray of the sea. A few brusque commands in his Japanese, and Patria was led off to be locked up in a small, neat stateroom overlooking the upper deck.

If they had counted on any lack of courage and resource as an infirmity of her sex, these Japanese had reckoned without Patria. She was no sooner alone than alert to find a way of escape. The door was stout and stoutly locked, but the shuttered port seemed a frail barrier to one of the least determination.

Before attacking it, however, she took the precaution of slipping off her sports skirt, for the greater freedom of her slender, knickerbockered legs, if by any chance she should be suffered to escape the stateroom.

Then waiting till she heard no sound of any voice or footfall on the deck beyond the shutter, she shattered this with two sharp blows of a stool—and was through the opening in a twinkling.

An instant more and she had leaped upon the rail and was poised to dive. An officer made for her as she hesitated, but vanished in measure the distance to the water. But his arms, that would have drawn her back in their embrace, hugged only air—Patria was already under water.

She came up within two yards of her motorboat, struck out, and was climbing its gunwales when several quick splashes alongside gave warning that the pursuit had taken to water as cheerfully as she.

In this extremity the boathook served her well. She clouted more than one close-shaven, brownish poll with it, and planted its point against the chest of more than one who sought to follow her over the side of her motorboat, before she could get the engine going. And when that happened, she got a taste of what Japan's resentment might mean.

For, as she sheered off and her small craft gathered speed, a shower of bullets spattered round it, fired from the freighter's decks.

But their aim was indifferent; Patria too quickly became lost in the fog.

Sunset and Clearing Skies.

In a pitchy dark compartment of the Sandai's hold, wrists and ankles in irons, Donald Parr lay in an extreme unease little tempered by the fact that he was but semi-conscious.

A blow on the head during the scuffle in the wireless room had proved mer-

Found the Body of a Dead Japanese.

cifully anodynous. For he had been severely manhandled before ironed and imprisoned.

Now he had knowledge neither of his whereabouts—save that he was not far from bilge—or of how long he had lain there insensible.

Vaguely he apprehended that the ship was once more under steam. But he suffered too much to reason from this that the fog must have lifted. . . .

It was, in fact, only just lifting at that sunset hour. And as the evening breeze gained strength and swept clear the face of the sea, it showed those on the Sandai's bridge the slender, graceful, white shape of a Naval Reserve cutter standing between her and the open sea.

Aboard the cutter Patria Channing indicated the freighter with a trembling hand.

A moment later a two-pounder spoke from the cutter's deck, and its shot dropped neatly beneath the Sandai's bows.

Now the freighter had drifted almost dangerously near inshore during that afternoon of fog; while the cutter was still well out. She would need several minutes in which to lay her boats alongside the Japanese—more minutes by several than the Japanese would require in which to land her own boats on the nearby, lowlying shore. And the crew of the freighter, no more than her passengers, desired to become prisoners of the United States government.

There followed, consequently, something of a scramble aboard the Sandai. But her boats were launched quickly and in sailorly fashion, and were actually headed shoreward and pulling fast by the time the cutter's were well started toward their destination.

But before the Japanese abandoned the freighter, Donald Parr was briefly entertained by a fugitive caller.

A manhole above his head was suddenly opened. An active little officer slipped down the iron ladder to the plates whereon the American rested. Without noticing Parr in any way, the officer moved off into the gloom, and for a moment was busy in some mysterious fashion. He reappeared, pursued by a noise of gushing water, swarmed briskly up the ladder, reclosed the manhole.

Parr moved uneasily in his irons. Cold water was swiftly enveloping his body in a pool. Then abruptly he understood, and with desperate effort got upon his feet. His tongue clave to the roof of his mouth and his heart was like a mad thing in his breast.

For the sea-cocks had been opened to scuttle the ship—and he was penned in there to die by drowning in the dark. . . .

When the Naval Reserve men opened the manhole they found Parr clinging with his manacled hands to the upper rungs of the ladder, his head barely out of water.

But he wasn't long about regaining his poise, when they bore him up to Patria on the deck. Under the influence of that surprise he was even able to muster a flickering smile when the lieutenant in command of the boarding party haughingly explained that his life had never been in real danger, since the Japanese had tried to scuttle the Sandai at a point so shoal that she could not have sunk or even have filled beyond the point the waters had reached when Parr was rescued.

As for the treasure. . . . that was saved without any loss whatsoever.

(END OF THIRD EPISODE.)

Government Issues Warning Against Fly Poisons

Following is an extract from "The Transmission of Disease by Flies," Supplement, No. 29 to the Public Health Reports, April, 1916.

"Of other fly poisons mentioned, mention should be made, merely for a purpose of condemnation, of those composed of arsenic. Fatal cases of poisoning of children through the use of such compounds are far too frequent, and only by the responsible of arsenical poisoning to summer diarrhea and cholera infantum, it is believed that the cases reported do not, by any means, comprise the total. Arsenical fly-destroying devices must be ruled as extremely dangerous, and should never be used, even if other measures are not at hand."

706 fly poisoning cases have been reported by the press within the last three years. As stated above this number is but a fraction of the real number. Protect your children by using the safe, efficient, non-poisonous fly catcher

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SULPHUR FROM SMELTER GAS

Methods of Handling Fumes Proposed by University Professor Regarded as Most Important.

In regard to getting the sulphur fumes out of smelter gas, Prof. S. W. Young of the Leland Stanford university lately presented to the American Institute of Chemical Engineers a paper on proposed methods whereby the result of the process is crude sulphur. This would, indeed, be a godsend. When copper and other ores are smelted they must also be roasted to get the sulphur away from the metal. This is easy enough to do, but the fumes that escape into the air are the fumes of sulphurous acid, and if there is anything that disposes a farmer to carry a pitchfork and a double-barreled shotgun along with him when he goes to make his protest it is these very sulphurous fumes in the air. In fact, in some states the laws now forbid the liberation of the gases of burning sulphur in nearly every activity except that of volcanoes. Volcanoes are exempt.

It is possible to collect this sulphurous gas and make sulphuric acid out of it, but some plants are so located that transportation costs forbid. Sulphur, on the other hand, may be stored out of doors so long as desired and sold whenever there is a good price available for it.

Two methods are known, a wet one and a dry one, but both depend upon the tendency of sulphur to get out of combination with oxygen in the presence of certain other bodies. Vast quantities are likely to be thus produced.—Ellwood Hendrick.

Tit for Tat.

There was an uproar in the nursery and papa rushed upstairs to inquire into the cause. "Now, then, children, what's all this noise? Stop it at once!"

"Boohoo!" sobbed Eva. "Billy kicked me!"

"Billy kicked you? Billy, how dare you kick your little sister? You coward, to kick a girl! Don't you know it's only donkeys that kick? If I hear of this again I'll give you tit for tat, and kick you!"

No Doubt About That.

"What! Paid $50 for a hat? Woman, you are mad." "No, but it's plain to be seen you are."

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FOR

Breakfast
Lunch
or
Supper

SMART CLOTHES FOOL COPS

French Police Allow a Modern "Raffles" to Walk Calmly Past Them.

A gang of young criminals, with more than fifty burglaries to their charge, is now being tried. Their misdeeds extended over a period of two years, and one of their victims was the present minister of the interior, M. Malvey.

The burglars are of good families, and they made a feature of always "operating" in the most scientific manner, with implements perfected in accordance with the latest thing in burglarious art, and they were always faultlessly dressed in smart man-about-town style.

On one occasion, when surprised while at work in a flat, the member of the gang charged with the operation, escaped to the roof, crawled from there into another flat, sending a woman who was dressing there into a faint by his sudden appearance, and then calmly descended the staircase, slowly walking past half a dozen waiting policemen who did not dream of suspecting that this well-dressed man was the burglar whom they had been sent to catch.

From the house of M. Malvey the gang succeeded in making off with a large quantity of valuable silver, a part of which, curiously enough, they returned in a mysterious manner a few months afterward.—Paris Cable to the London Chronicle.

AFTER MANY YEARS OF WORK

Commission Finally Publishes Its Findings, and, as Usual, the Taxpayers Foot the Bill.

A dog once bit a boy's leg, so the latter's father promptly sued the owner of the animal. After much wrangling the case was submitted to an independent inquiry committee, which many years after gave their decision as follows:

"We find the dog partly responsible for the bite—not the owner, whom we have established has no cannibalistic tendencies. Considering the independent action of the animal, which pointed to bones in the vicinity, it is to be regretted that the canine intelligence did not consider the portion of leg between it and the said bones.

"The boy is not guilty of negligence in getting in the dog's way, and we should compensate him, only he is now a man, and it was a boy who was bitten. Likewise he has forgotten which leg suffered.

"We are inclined to censure the dog for careless discrimination, but it is dead, so we unanimously conclude no one is guilty, except the taxpayers, who, having derived considerable entertainment from the proceedings, must now pay the cost thereof."—London Tit-Bits.

Another Pathetic Figure.

Intellectually, man appears at his worst while standing before a shop-window during a white goods sale.—Toledo Blade.