

# NO MAN'S LAND A ROMANCE

By LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE  
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SYNOPSIS.

Garrett Coast, a young man of New York City, meets Douglas Blackstock, who invites him to a small party. He accepts, although he dislikes Blackstock, the reason being that both are in love with Katherine Thaxter. Coast fails to convince his friends. At the party Coast meets two named Dundas and Van Tuyl. There is a quarrel and Blackstock's knife Van Tuyl draws. Coast struggles to wrest the weapon from him, thus the police discover them. Coast is arrested for murder. He is convicted, but as he begins his sentence, Dundas names Blackstock as the murderer and Blackstock is freed. Coast purchases a yacht and sails across a sea of ice to a lonely island, known as No Man's Land. Coast starts out to explore the place and comes upon some deserted buildings. He discovers a man dead upon a table. He approaches the man, but a noise makes him retreat. He returns, and a woman, Katherine Thaxter, who explains that her husband, under the name of Black, has bought the island. He is blind, a wireless operator and has a station there. Coast informs her that he is a wireless operator and she tells him that he is a great service man and has been working the crowd of the island, suspecting they are criminals. Coast promises to follow the mystery of No Man's Land and is admitted to see Katherine. Appleyard believes that Black and his wife are in the hands of the wireless station to conduct a stungling business. Coast penetrates to the house of Blackstock's dinner and enters the room and passes him a note which tells Coast that neither his life nor his own are safe. Coast finds that Blackstock supports him. Appleyard and the Echo disappear. Coast assures Katherine of his protection, and she informs him that they are to abandon the island immediately. The blind man and his coach arrive at the house of Coast who is ordered to escape and is met by Katherine. They flee before they can reach the boat. Coast is rescued by a yacht. Katherine appears and Coast is rescued. He is overpowered, and Coast and Katherine fly from the spot, and go to a remote part of the island and signal a boat which they see in the distance. Appleyard and the Echo appear.

his eye upon her, responded with a nod and a shrug.

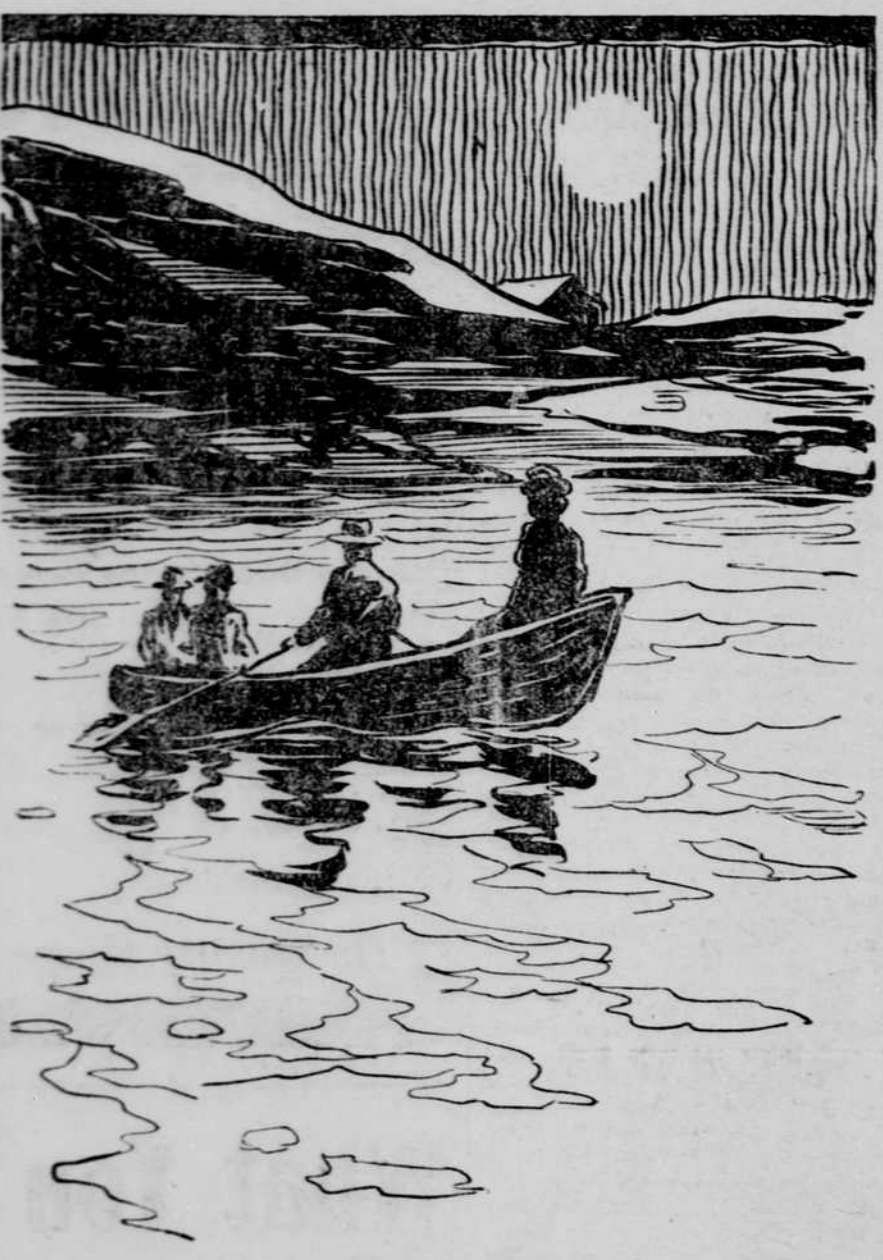
"I think we'll have to . . ." he said, tentative.

"Of course," she answered listlessly. "Look here, Blackstock! At Coast's sharp and frigid address, the man quieted abruptly, and apparently coming to a realization of the spectacle he was making of himself, got slowly and shamefacedly to his feet. "If we agree to take you off the island, you know what it means? I'll turn you over to the police, first place we stop."

"I don't care," Blackstock asserted eagerly. "I don't care a damn. I'll go anywhere, do anything—go to the chair, if I have to—work out my life in the pen—anything but stay here and go mad. I've been a cur, I know, but for the love of God don't leave me to die like one—"

"Hello!" Behind the trio the keel of a rowboat grated on the sand, and Appleyard jumped briskly ashore, trotting up, painter in hand. "What's this?" he demanded briskly. "Hello, Coast! Madam, your servant. . . . Now, what's the row?"

He put himself in the center of the



Drove the Dory Swiftly Toward the Echo.

group, bright watchful eyes diagnosis one expression after another on the countenances round him; with something in his pose and manner singularly suggestive of an exceptionally intelligent and inquisitive magpie.

Coast dropped a hand affectionately on his shoulder. "Thank heaven, you're here at last," he said. "And here's your prisoner—take him in the name of the law and for the sake of peace. He's been badly bitten first by a dog and then by fright, and he wants to give himself up and be sent to a hospital."

"O Coast, that's it, eh? I heard a bit of the confab while rowing in, and it listened uncommonly interesting; but I couldn't figure out what was at the bottom of it all. Well, well, Mr. Blackstock! The little man rubbed his hands. "I'm glad to come up with you. This is more fun than a goat, for sure. Come!" He jerked his perky little head toward the tender. "Jump in, and I'll hurry you to market."

A sullen look replaced the terror that had masked Blackstock's face. He sighed and with a brief, uncertain nod, apparently directed at Coast, collected himself and trudged heavily toward the boat, entering which he squatted silently in the stern.

## Tempting Marks for Bolts

Lofty Spires of Churches Are Dangerous Because They Are Often Struck by Lightning.

The reaction from the intense heat of the past few days, which in various sections has taken the form of electrical storms of almost phenomenal destructiveness, has played exceptional havoc with the churches of New England. As many as a half dozen have been struck by lightning in this state alone, and in almost every instance the structure has been of the familiar style of architecture that was instituted by our forefathers and has been more or less cherished ever since.

Somewhat squarely built, with a lofty spire, the New England meeting house has been a familiar feature to the New England worshiper wherever he might find himself, and though all else was strange, and though all else was strange, that made him feel that he was in his own country.

The lofty spire, however, has proved an element of danger according to our recent experience. In almost every instance, as the reports run, the bolt "struck the steeple" and traveled downward.

In rural communities, especially where the church rises above most of the surrounding buildings and is crowned by a tapering tower as high

Appleyard's eyes sought Coast's. The younger man lifted his shoulders, disclaiming honor or responsibility. "When the devil was sick," he quoted in disgust, lowering his tone. "Keep an eye on him."

"Well, rawther," Appleyard drawled. "But he won't try any monkeyshines aboard the Echo—or I never saw a man afraid of his sins before. . . . Madam," he added, turning with a curious little courtly bow to the woman. "If you'll step in—his glance traveled past her down the beach—"we'll beat that pack to the mainland. I see," he said. "they're launching a long-boat. What kind of a yarn explains that, please?"

Coast recounted with exceptional brevity the wrecking of the schooner, at the same time stepping into the boat and placing himself at the oars, on the middle seat. Katherine sat forward, behind him, and Appleyard, pushing off, scrambled aft and dropped down beside Blackstock, who sulkily moved to one side to make room for him.

"Look lively, Mr. Coast," he little man advised pleasantly. "We really haven't got a minute to spare—those chaps are laying to their oars as if they really wanted to scrape acquaintance with us. Or perhaps," he suggested with a look askance at Blackstock, "my cheerful prisoner can account for this apparent mad anxiety of theirs to bid their dis—I mean extinguished leader a fond farewell."

Blackstock, fumbling nervously at his bandaged throat, made no answer. Coast, bending all his strength to the oars, drove the dory swiftly toward the Echo.

TO make the wind that from Eden time bloweth where it listeth carry man on frail new found wings savors of the sublime.

But it also savors of the supremely natural, for have not the years looked forward to it as a foregone conclusion? Not because it was imperative, like those problems that the race must solve for its very existence, but merely for the reason that man in his god-like vanity must perforce reach the very limit, if limit there be, of his possibilities. So men have learned to make wings that adapt themselves in a measure to the air, and when the untamable winds air complain they make their little flights and say, "We have conquered the sky. Behold the sublime—the work of men." And the name of each serial adventurer is known and lauded and passed from tongue to tongue.

To take that same free eternal air and read it as we read the earth, to make metals, to make of it helpless material in men's hands, answering with indifference its raging and blustering, and to do not only that, but to make it answer the most unanswerable riddle ever propounded by mother earth—this is the work of one woman. And it is a thousand to one you have never even heard her name.

No, not strange, but only the world's way. For one achievement is as romantic and gratuitous as a tourney of knights in glittering armor. But the other is as humble as the baking of a loaf in the ashes. So that I hesitate to turn from the grandeur of flying through the air to the making of fertilizer from that air, lest I be accused of willfully plunging from the sublime to the ridiculous.

It is not only impossible, being an accomplished fact, but it is of an aspect yet more sublime than aviation.

Never heard of making fertilizer out of the air? There is a factory now doing it in this country and another is being built, there are seven or eight in Norway, and Sweden, Austria, Germany and France have them also.

Fertilizer is absolutely essential to your life, because there is not so very much virgin soil left on the earth, and much of that there is unutilizable. And in spite of the rotating of crops earth is becoming weary with the immense strain of feeding her teeming millions. In the childhood of the race she fed us freely, as a mother should her babes. But as the race grew up things have changed, and earth long since became like a bank into which we must first put something if we would get anything out. The next age will behold a still more stringent state of affairs, for earth will be seen to be holding over man's head a mortgage, with the threat of immediate foreclosure if the giant interest accruing be not met. Even now things have reached a state where practically every acre of land under cultivation is first fertilized. The end of the natural fertilizer is in sight, which means that Mother Earth has at last seen through our trick of paying our board bill with

"Blackstock," said Appleyard, ironically, "what you got in that neat little bag between your feet? The conventional pyjamas and toothbrush, what?"

The tormented man at his side grumbled something inarticulate.

"Did I understand you to imply it's none of my business? How extraordinarily rude, Mr. Blackstock! Besides being untrue—quite a naughty fly. In addition to which it's uncalled for; I know."

"You know?" Blackstock turned to him with a scowl.

"Sure. I can put two and a millstone together and make a hole in a ladder just as easy as take a silk purse out of a sow's ear. It wouldn't be you, Mr. Blackstock." Appleyard continued without giving his victim time to analyze this astonishing statement—"It just wouldn't be you if you didn't try to hand your friends the double-cross. That bag's stuffed with loot—the best part of the truck they were running this trip—jewelry, for a dollar. And that's why, you see, they're so infatuated with the idea of shaking your hand and wringing your neck before you get away; they've just discovered your perfidy. But don't you fret. Here we are and long before they can drive that seine-boat this far we'll be sailing merrily away."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

# MAKING THE AIR FEED US



something taken from herself, and is putting a lock on the pantry door.

What next? We must pay her or starve, and pay her in advance in the shape of so much fertilizer for so much food. So the mad question becomes. "How shall we pay without coin? Earth is our only supply of that, even as she is our only supply of food. And now she is withdrawing the coin."

Could a more impossible deadlock be imagined?

And doesn't the deadlock become a thing to amaze the stars when we consider that one of the most needed elements of a "complete fertilizer" exists right in the air that all plants grow up in and breathe and stretch out their arms in, but that through all the aeons that have passed since "God said, let the earth bring forth," they have been separated by a gulf from that food that they live in and for lack of which earth says she will one day extinguish them and through them us.

That is not to say that plants do not absorb nitrogen from the atmosphere. But plants obtain but a part of the needed nitrates that way. The rest must, by an edict of nature, come by way of their roots from the soil where earth is withdrawing the supply, instead of by way of leaf and branch from the air, where the supply is exhausted.

Doesn't that look as if it were true that earth were conspiring against her children? That is just what it has been looking like to those seer-eyed scientists who are able to peer into the future and see the end of those supplies that seem so boundless to the lay mind. But even to them the question has only recently become acute, and they have been asking each other how this great sphinx riddle could be answered.

But where was ever the woman who could forever remain a closed book to other women? The riddle has been answered, and answered by a woman. If earth demands fertilization and is withdrawing her own natural supplies of the coin she demands, what then? "Simple," said Mme. Lefebre of Paris. "There's only one thing besides the earth available, and that is the air. Use it." And then she devised the method of extracting the nitrogen from the air and using it to make nitric acid, and in turn the multitudinous chemicals that man now needs, including the humble and all important fertilizer.

"When did she do it?" asks the public. "It must be very recent, or the news would have traveled outside of scientific circles. When it does, the woman will be lauded as 'she deserves'."

The woman will not be lauded. She made her discovery more than half a century ago, taking out an English patent on the process in the year 1859, and the decades that intervened between the time of her work and mankind's discovery of its necessity have been sufficient to bury her name as completely as they hid her deed till urgent necessity made us aware of it. Look through the articles on famous women scientists in the old French reviews; look through French dictionaries of science and histories of important inventions. You'll find the names of those who met a then recognized need, but you will probably find no mention of her, though the value of her discovery may exceed theirs many times. And listen to this, published not long ago in one of the chemical trade journals: "Nitrogen . . . is so rare an article, the commercial sources of it being so few, that he who will discover a cheap commercial process for obtaining it from the atmosphere and combining it in a form that will be serviceable in crop production not only will be a great benefactor and inventor, but will change the economy of living on this earth."

"He who will discover?" "She" had already discovered, and had done it before the need became pressing, just as a mother feeds her family so long be-

fore hunger becomes acute that they are not aware that her simple act sustains and saves their very lives. Had Mme. Lefebre made her discovery 50 years after she did this is what the chemist would have said: "Nitrogen . . . is so rare an article . . . that she who discovered a process for obtaining it from the atmosphere . . . not only is a great benefactor and inventor, but has changed the economy of living on this earth." Then he might have added: "And the modern need being everlasting for the greater cheapening of processes, and the cost of water power, high or low, the one who will make the latter still cheaper or invent a substitute independent of the natural supply of water power, will make her blessing to mankind practically free."

What is this process that produces such marvelous results? It is as elemental in its simplicity as the great primal drama I spoke of in beginning to tell this story. It is in that that fire and water are called in to aid the woman. Fire? The leading feature of the process is an electric arc between the poles of which the temperature is 4,200 degrees centigrade, or 7,592 degrees Fahrenheit. It reminds us of that "fervent heat" in which "the earth also shall melt," and when air is passed over that arc one naturally expects a result apocalyptic in its nature. What does happen is that the oxygen in the air is burnt up, utterly consumed. That which remains is, a colorless gas, as invisible as the air itself, which is known as nitric oxide. This, driven out into the air, recombines with it, the result being, of course, twice as much nitrogen as there was before to the same amount of oxygen; in other words, nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). The next step is just as childishly simple. There is added one more ingredient, no rare and mystic compound to transform the air by magic into chemicals before our eyes—just water. The result of this is nitric acid, poisonous and powerful, made of air, plus a part of the air plus water! And this chemical stands second in commercial importance, only one, sulphuric acid, having a vaster area of usefulness.

But nitric acid, you say, is not fertilizer. It practically is in the chemist's mind, for with it he is as near to having fertilizer as he is to having money when he pushes an indorsed check through the paying teller's window. Limestone is cheap, exhaustless, easy to get and easy to work. He treats it with his air made nitric acid, and the result is nitrate of lime (or nitrate of calcium), for fertilizing purposes the practical equivalent of the famous Chilean nitrate of soda.

That is about all of the process, but, simple as it is, it is spectacular enough to fulfill all expectations. For the electric spark between the poles of that arc is nine feet long. Nine feet of that inconceivable fervor of heat! a nine foot core of light so intense as to be colorless, a thing almost beyond the concept of both eye and imagination. Surrounding this is a zone of wonderful greenish blue, fascinating and repelling at the same time, like an evil beauty. Here the temperature is 1,400 degrees centigrade, or 2,552 degrees Fahrenheit. Wrapped about this (the beauty's veil, to make more alluring by partial concealment) is a zone of pale greenish brown, and here the temperature is but a paltry 900 or 1,000 centigrade. It is mystical, terrible, and to behold as its result that humble, whitish, crumbly stuff that is only fertilizer dust, and to return to dust, is as if we were to behold witches casting, with spells and mutterings, all sorts of magic into their cauldron to take therefrom—a loaf of bread.

That is just what it is, though—bread for us and the generations to come. For, in spite of the fact that water power costs four times as much in this country as it does in Norway and twice as much as in Austria or Switzerland, its development has already so cheapened the use of electricity that the production of atmospheric nitrogen is at last coming into its own as a thing of such limitless commercial value that its discoverer indeed deserves the name of "a great benefactor," for she has, in truth, accomplished that which will "change the economy of living on this earth."

Child Explained.

Sinker told the following story: He was one day giving a lesson to his school children at Goole. He had been talking to them about colors and had explained that white denoted goodness and black sin.

Wishing to drive his lesson further home, Sinker said: "Now, children, have you ever noticed the colors of my hood?"

"Yes, sir; black and white."

"Quite right, and what do those colors signify?"

After a short pause one small child answered:

"Please, sir, you wear black because you are a sinner, and white because you are trying to be good!"

After the Quarrel.

The Helress (in tears)—My husband was so ardent in his lovemaking. I thought he adored me.

Her Friend—My dear, a man can put considerable fervor into his wooing when it's a case of marriage or work.

Somewhat Dubious.

"I wonder would the judge consider a piece of insanity?"

"Doubtless he would. Why do you hesitate?"

"Well, my client only stole 25 plunks."

Of Course She Could.

"So you think you could dress a chicken?"

"Oh, yes," declared the ambitious bride. "I saw uncle take a clock apart once. You just number the pieces as you take 'em out."

Bakery or Beggary?

"What line is poor old Sillupp in now?"

"Last I heard he was in the bread line."—Judge.

## BOOKS TO SUIT CONDITIONS

Instance of Way in Which Librarians Are Called on to Exercise Judgment.

There was a consultation of librarians. Just what kind of literature would fit the mental attitude of women engaged in darned socks and mending shirts was a question hitherto unconsidered.

They decided on a woman's rights pamphlet called "The Eternal Warfare." Apparently it suited, for the child did not bring it back.

Candid Admission.

"What are your ideas about reform?"

"About the same as everybody's," replied Senator Sorghum. "I have a general impression that myself and my personal and political friends are the only people who do not need it."

Better Still.

Edna—Did Mabel get that six-shooter she spoke of providing herself with as a protection against burglars?

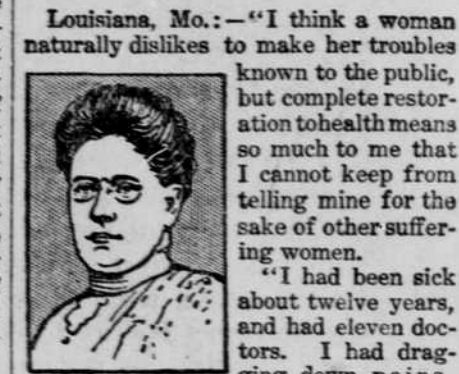
Eva—No; she got a six-footer.—Judge's Library.

Infinites are the requirements and profound the judgment of librarians. The other day a little girl who does the family marketing rushed into a west side library with the announcement that the sewing society was going to meet at her mother's house that afternoon and wouldn't the librarian please send around a book suitable for the educationist of the society to read aloud while the others worked?

The young woman appealed to sent the sequel to a particularly charming story that had beguiled the teddium here. A certain woman who lives not far from Eighteenth avenue started to make three beds one morning at nine o'clock. At seven o'clock that night she had not yet made the third. The beds looked so inviting and I was so tired," she explained, "that whenever I came to one I lay down and slept on it."

# WOMAN SICK TWELVE YEARS

Wants Other Women to Know How She Was Finally Restored to Health.



Louisiana, Mo.—"I think a woman naturally dislikes to make her troubles known to the public, but complete restoration to health means so much to me that I cannot keep from telling mine for the sake of other suffering women.

"I had been sick about twelve years, and had eleven doctors. I had dragging down pains, pains at monthly periods, bilious spells, and was getting worse all the time. I would hardly get over one spell when I would be sick again. No tongue can tell what I suffered from cramps, and at times I could hardly walk. The doctors said I might die at one of those times, but I took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and got better right away. Your valuable medicine is worth more than mountains of gold to suffering women."—Mrs. BERTHA MUFF, 503 N. 4th Street, Louisiana, Mo.

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, made from native roots and herbs, contains no narcotic or harmful drugs, and to-day holds the record of being the most successful remedy for female ills we know of, and thousands of voluntary testimonials on file in the Pinkham laboratory at Lynn, Mass., seem to prove this fact.

If you want special advice write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman and held in strict confidence.

The man who gets gay with a busy bee is apt to get a stinging rebuke.

Red Cross Ball Blue gives double value for your money, goes twice as far as any other. Ask your grocer.

Some people lead such placid lives that nothing ever seems to happen to them, not even the unexpected.

That irritable, nervous condition due to a bad liver calls for its natural antidote—Garfield Tea.

Some people are congenial not because they like the same things, but because they hate the same people.

To be sweet and clean, every woman should use Paxtine in sponge bathing. It eradicates perspiration and all other body odors. At druggists, 25c a box or sent postpaid on receipt of price by The Paxton Toilet Co., Boston, Mass.

A Surmise.

"That," said the musician, "is a Stradivarius. It is worth thousands."

"Hm!" replied Mr. Comrox, rather wearily. "I suppose music is something like the drug business. Things cost more when you call 'em by their Latin names."

Kind of Things to Buy.

"I'm thinking of going on a tour of the Rhine this summer, and I should like your advice about the best things to buy there. You've been there, haven't you?"

"Yes, but it's a long time ago. I shall have to refresh my memory. Waiter, bring the wine card."

Unappreciative.

"Ha!" mused Noah, as he looked upon the flood from one of the windows of the Ark, "the folks who jeered at me for building this vessel, laughed at me when I told them it was the original water wagon, but they would have fared better had they appreciated in time the dry wit of my little joke."

Her Natural Protector.

"O Clara, we had a dreadful scare this morning, a burglar scare!" said Mrs. Fink. "There was a frightful noise about two o'clock, and I got up. I turned on the light and looked down to see a man's legs sticking out from under the bed."

"Mercy, how dreadful! The burglar's?"

"No, my dear, my husband's. He had heard the noise, too."—Youth's Companion.

## When the Appetite Lags

A bowl of Post Toasties with cream hits the right spot.

"Toasties" are thin bits of corn; fully cooked, then toasted to a crisp, golden-brown.

This food makes a fine change for spring appetites.

Sold by Grocers, and ready to serve from package instantly with cream and sugar.

"The Memory Lingers"

Made by Postum Cereal Company, Ltd. Pure Food Factories. Battle Creek, Mich.