

## A Happy and Prosperous New Year!

We Thank the  
General Public for  
Their Patronage during  
the past year and  
Wish one and all



## A Happy and Prosperous New Year.

N.B.—Our Store will be closed on Monday, January 3rd, for Stocktaking.

# STEER BROTHERS.

## 1921 Greetings!

To all we extend cordial Greetings for a splendid New Year with appreciation of your favors during the past year. To all we pledge anew our service and attention to fill your esteemed orders for the New Year.

## AYRE & SONS, Limited.

Grocery and Hardware Departments.

### Burglar Had a Heart.

go, December 22.—"A Christmas with a heart," headed the Ruth Malley, aged 10, not to her Christmas presents when she returned from school for burglar was eating her lunch,

which had been left by her mother before going down-town shopping. He took her to the parlor and played little jingles and Christmas songs on the piano for her.

When she told him she would have to return to school, he said:

"Tell your mother I'll return some day and steal everything in the house," but he left without taking anything.

### Floral Tributes to the Departed.

Nothing so nice as Flowers in time of sorrow. We can supply Wreaths and Crosses on short notice, and guarantee satisfaction. We will endeavour to meet the humblest purse.

"Say it with Flowers."

VALLEY NURSERIES.  
Phone 124. Box 594, St. John's.  
Tosser Brothers.

### Madagascar's Sacred Tree of Death.

Mr. Kari Leche, a celebrated explorer and scientist, has brought back from the wilds of Madagascar one of the most amazing and incredible stories that have ever come from that African island.

He has described a plant which seems to be an extraordinary development of a certain curious form of vegetable life to which the famous Venus flytrap, or pitcher plant, and other insect catching and eating vegetation belong.

This plant, or tree, which he calls Crinoida Darjeena, attains, according to Dr. Leche, a height of ten feet, and is powerful enough to enmesh and destroy a human being.

The Mikodas, the tribe in whose territory it is found, regard it as a fetish and sacrifice maidens of their tribe to it, says Dr. Leche.

"I had gone," he writes, "to Madagascar, to visit Queen Ranavalona II, and was persuaded to visit the Mikodas by a native who had heard that besides generous daily pay I was accustomed to reward liberally anyone who showed me something strange or out of the way.

"In his company I journeyed to the south-eastern part of the island, inland among the hills covered with thick virgin forest, where there is a district practically unknown, whose white visitors can be numbered on the fingers of one hand. This is the region inhabited by the Mikodas.

"It was while among these natives that I was witness to what was probably the most horrible sight I have ever seen. Their religion consists in the worship of their sacred tree, one of the most wonderful freaks of Nature. To this tree they offer human sacrifice.

#### An Appalling Ceremony.

"The sacred tree is most remarkable in appearance. Its trunk, which rarely rises ten feet above the ground, is of a strange, barrel-like shape, covered with a quaint mosaic sort of bark, looking like nothing so much as a gigantic pineapple. At the top of this trunk it is between eight and nine feet in circumference, and upon it is fixed a remarkable growth very much resembling a huge plate.

"From the top of the trunk there hung eight leaves. They were of extraordinary size, ten to twelve feet long, a foot wide where they were hinged to the tree, widening to about two feet, and finally tapering down to a point as sharp as a needle. They were plentifully strewn with huge, venomous looking thorns.

"These leaves could not have been less than fifteen inches thick in the centre, and hung down inertly along the trunk their point trailing in the earth. Above these there stretched, rigidly and horizontally a number of branches several feet in length. Finally, from underneath the plate-like arrangement there grew, pointing upward, half-a-dozen frail looking stamens—palpi would be a better name, I believe—that shivered constantly, as if agitated by some strong wind.

"It seems the plate-like affair on top of the trunk contained some thick sweet juice. This liquid, which is a product of the tree and was probably originally intended to attract birds, is highly intoxicating, and even a very small quantity very soon produces coma.

#### Only One Chance.

"When sacrifices take place a woman is forced to climb into the tree and drink. If the 'devil' inside is in good humor, then the girl will be allowed to get down again in safety. If he was feeling ugly, however, then the poor girl was out-of-luck. Exactly how the tree was going to prevent her jumping down I could not make out, but I was to learn eventually.

"One evening my guide presented himself to me and told me that what he had been waiting for would take place that night.

"That night, having made the chief a present to insure that I would be welcome to witness the ceremony, I followed the tribe into the forest. They made their way to the sacred tree, and round it built twelve fires, so that the whole surroundings were lit up brightly. Then they disposed themselves about them and made themselves at home, some eating, but most of them drinking huge gourdfuls of native ferment.

"Very soon they were all of them more or less intoxicated, both the men and the women, with the exception of a young girl nearby, who neither spoke nor moved, but glanced about her as if she were terrified out of her wits.

"Suddenly without warning the yelling ceased and they scattered away like frightened deer. The crucial point had arrived. For a moment there was complete silence but for the crackling of the fires. Intuition told me that the girl I had noted before was the one that was to be the sacrifice. I looked at her and saw mortal terror imprinted on her features. Yet for the life of me I could not imagine why, and put down her fear to imagination.

#### Begging For Mercy.

"By now the first group of dancers had somewhat recovered, and, suddenly springing up, rushed upon the poor girl with unearthly shrieks and yells. They surrounded her, and with

shouts and gestures ordered her to climb the tree.

"Terrified, she shrank back, apparently begging for mercy. At that the whole crowd joined in, furiously howling at her to obey. Once more the dancers gave out their orders; then, as she still refused and struggled, they armed themselves with spears, and stabbing at her forced her to retreat in the direction of the devil-god.

"At last, seeing it was useless to fight further, she turned and faced the tree. For a moment she stood still, gathering herself up for a supreme effort, then quickly she sprang toward the tree. She scrambled up, and reaching the top knelt and drank of the 'holy' liquid.

"Quickly she jumped up again, and I expected to see her jump down, thinking all was over, in that dim light not noticing instantly what caused her so to shriek with terror.

"Suddenly I realized what was happening and I seemed to be paralyzed with horror: The tree, seemingly so dead and motionless a moment before, had come to life. The palpi, so frail looking, had suddenly ceased to quiver, and had coiled themselves about the girl's head and shoulders, holding her so firmly that all her efforts to free herself remained absolutely useless.

#### Unsolved Mystery of Science.

"The green branches so rigid before began to writhe, and coiled themselves round and around like snakes. Then as that mass struggled there across a horrible sight I shall never forget—the great leaves began to rise, slowly, very slowly. Those evil-looking thorns were now on the inside, pointing toward the victim and closing on her with the force of a hydraulic press.

"As they came together tightly there trickled down the trunk a pinkish mixture. . . .

"Then the feasting began again amid much rejoicing. The devil was appeased."

The researches of the famous Dr. Bose, the Hindu scientist, go towards confirming Dr. Leche's story. By means of magnification and certain arrangements of intense lights Dr. Bose was enabled to produce actual pictures of a plant's growth and life. While the plants seem to have no fibre such as we have, there is a tremendous sensitiveness between their cells. The cells are, indeed, a granulated nerve.

The comparison might be made that instead of a wire such as our nerves may be likened to, the plant nerves are a series of small bodies with power of communicating in a sensitive way what and where is the plant impressions each to the other.

What and where the directing force is—brain—is one of the mysteries science still has to reveal.

### Still Hope for Missing Balloonists.

American Airmen May Be Safe in the Wilds of Northern Quebec.

New York, Dec. 24.—(By Canadian Press)—A mother and two children are carrying on their preparations for Christmas at 1701 Woodbine Street, Ridgewood, N.Y., while the secret that will spell their happiness or misery lies somewhere in the wilds of Northern Quebec.

In the snowbound northern district of that province must have descended the United States naval balloon A-5598, which set out in a violent gale from Rockaway on December 13 last, with three United States naval officers who were intent upon setting up a new record. The little family that waits for the solution of the secret, is that of Lieut. Stephen A. Farrell, one of the officers of the balloon. News received from Ottawa last night that Lieutenant Evans, who is now in the Canadian capital directing the search for the missing balloonists, believes the men are being cared for by traders or Indians in the Quebec lake country has buoyed up their spirits and it was in an optimistic spirit that the mother and

### Grove's

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The first and original Cold and Grip tablet, the merit of which is recognized by all civilized nations.

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The genuine bears this signature



### "Oh! This Shopping"

"I certainly get on my nerves. I come home all fagged out, and nearly always have a splitting headache.

"Yes, they say we women always like shopping. But if everybody feels that out afterwards as I do, it is no joke.

"I wonder if it is my nerves. I never could stand much sightseeing, anyway. The strain on the eyes seems to exhaust the whole system.

"I suppose I shall not be able to sleep to-night, and that will put me in fine condition for to-morrow.

"Why don't somebody invent a good medicine for the nerves?

"But what was that Mrs. Crary was telling me about? I believe it was Nerve Food—Dr. Chase's Nerve Food. I have heard so many talking about the way this Nerve Food helped them that I must give it a trial."

And this is what Mrs. Crary of 515 Cedar street, Peterboro, Ont., writes about her experience with this well-known treatment for the nerves:

"I was suffering from a rundown condition of the system, nervous debility and sleeplessness. I lost a good 'many nights' sleep, and sometimes after going to sleep would wake up with a start.

and then it was for nothing. I went to bed and pains through my head so that I could hardly do any help. Through reading in the paper the help others had derived from Chase's Nerve Food I started taking it. The first box helped me, and I was a great deal better, able to sleep and do my work without any trouble. My headaches and nervousness are gone. My health is now good, and she has also found great benefit from the use of Dr. Chase's Nerve Food for nervous trouble of any kind."

If you could only read the letters which come to this office from day to day telling of what Dr. Chase's Nerve Food is doing for women, and men, too, in all parts of Canada, you would not be long in doubt as to the most satisfactory treatment for tired bodies and exhausted nerves.

All we can do is to pass along the good words by publishing an occasional letter. It remains for you to benefit by using this blood and nerve builder to restore energy and vitality to your exhausted system.

You can obtain Dr. Chase's Nerve Food from all dealers, or Edmondson, Bates & Co., Ltd., Toronto.

At all Druggists and Dealers. **GERALD S. DOYLE, St. John's, Distributing Agent.**

## Seasonable Goods!

### Silver Plate:

Biscuit Barrels  
Cruet Stands  
Butter Dishes  
Bon Bons  
Cake Plates  
Sugar Basins  
Casseroles  
Trays  
Cream Ladles  
Pie Servers  
Sugar Shells  
Salad Spoons  
Bread Knives  
Meat Carvers  
Meat Forks  
Stainless Dessert  
Knives  
Stainless Table  
Knives.

### Brassware:

Photo Frames  
Mirrors  
Letter Racks  
Fern Pots  
Coal Vases  
Flower Stands  
Fire Brasses  
Wood Boxes  
Toddy Kettles  
Match Stands  
Cigarette Stands  
Crumb Trays  
Fire Dogs  
Umbrella Stands  
Bouquet Holders

### Sundries:

Manicure Sets  
Pipes in Cases  
Pipe Racks  
Cigarette Cases  
Cigar Cases  
Tobacco Jars  
Cigarette Holders  
Cigar Holders  
Reading Lamps  
Safety Razors  
Slides  
Sleeves  
Laces' Hocks  
Skates  
Gel's Hocks  
Skates  
Hanging Lamps  
Ice Creamers

## BOWRING BROTHERS, Ltd.

Hardware Department.

her two little ones went about the work of preparing for to-morrow's festival just as they would were "daddy" to be with them on Christmas Day.

"Why should I give up hope?" asked Mrs. Anna L. Farrell, somewhat proudly, in reply to the questions that were put to her to-day.

"Has not my husband frequently gone away on long trips from home on duty and been out of communication for days and days. It is his duty."

With her as she spoke stood her two children, Eugene, fifteen years old, and Emily, fourteen years old. Eugene has carefully studied all the information received concerning the missing balloon. Over maps of the Province of Quebec, he has poured and sought to trace the helpless aircraft which carried his father.

"I am somewhat anxious to hear from him, yes," continued Mrs. Farrell, "but I believe, and I have studied the problem, too, that he is safe with his comrades in some isolated spot."

Quebec, where they have been and have been told that it is in the hands of the forest guards, without guides, on a trip and are taking a long time to abandon themselves out of