

## GROWTH OF THE HOUSE

He covered Manitoba, the North-West Territories and British Columbia. That territory has proved almost as fertile of business as of wheat, and the great West is a field that the firm has carefully cultivated in the past fifteen years. To-day we have customers, and valued customers, in Sydney, Cape Breton, in the Yukon and in almost every city, town and village intervening.

For the accommodation of the Eastern trade a selling depot was established in Montreal in 1901, and in 1902 a similar agency was established at Quebec. From these hubs travellers radiate through the whole of the Province of Quebec, and our many customers there can inspect samples and purchase stock as readily as though they lived in York County. When it is remembered that since 1898 Nerlich & Co. have issued a Spring and Fall Catalogue annually, the firm's efforts to thoroughly cover Canada from coast to coast will be appreciated. There is no place in the whole Dominion where a letter can travel but an order of goods can follow it, and if there is one thing more than another in which the firm takes pride it is in the thoroughly Canadian scope of its business. All Canada is our selling territory.

Not unfitted to carry on business over so great an area is a firm that carries 15,000 or so lines of stock at all times, representing the product of nearly 2,000 factories, and just as our selling representatives have branched out so have the buyers for the firm. In the early days German goods had practically a monopoly, but to-day our buyers visit England, France, Austria, United States and Japan, and each country contributes largely to our stock, while in many lines the Canadian factories can supply what we want better than any foreign manufacturers.

The necessity of carrying an immense stock that must be cleaned out each season to make way for other novelties is one of the chief problems in our business. For comparatively few articles in the great stock list is there a steady demand year after year. To keep the stock alive and fresh demands the presence in Europe, each season, of the three partners, in addition to the constant buying of the resident purchasing agents there. In the sense that the public taste for change and variety is infinite, the stock of a business like that of Nerlich & Co. is highly perishable. It is absolutely essential, if the firm is to maintain leadership, that the stock shall be kept free from "deadwood." The larger the business becomes the greater the vigilance necessary in purchasing stock. Every item must be carefully selected. That is how Nerlich & Co. were built up. That is how they purpose to remain.

It is as difficult for a firm as for an individual to speak about his work, if it has been good work and successful work, and not appear egotistical; and in conclusion we desire to say in the frankest manner possible that what our firm is to-day it is chiefly because of the goodwill of the Public and the co-operation of the Trade. We have not been in business for half a century without acquiring some wisdom on one or two lines, and we know that without the goodwill of its customers no business can stand for long. We acknowledge in the warmest manner the debt we owe our friends, a debt that can hardly be translated into terms of dollars and cents, as it is something above the gold standard, and is "more to be desired than rubies." The three great assets of any business are its own good name, the goodwill of its patrons and the loyalty of its staff.