

## THE FOUR CORNERS AND THE METROPOLIS

"Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new ;  
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do."

—Locksley Hall.



CORNER YONGE AND QUEEN STREETS.

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IT is said of Napoleon Bonaparte that, having an imperative call to get a batch of military documents completed in short order, he asked the chief of the department concerned to point out to him the very busiest man on his staff. On his being called, Napoleon gave him charge of the work, explaining, after his retirement, that a man having a very great deal of labor to perform in a restricted time was much more apt than another to have his faculties alert and capable, under unusual pressure, of performing expeditiously any special task. This keen-eyed disturber of the destinies of Europe voiced a principle which is in no direction better demonstrated than in the tendencies of trade in all civilized countries of the world. Accordingly, it is the aim of successful business men to provide, in the first place, that their enterprises shall be large enough to

ensure their being able to afford proper facilities, and, in the second place, that such enterprises shall be developed to the point where these facilities can perform their most satisfactory service, which, naturally, is, when they are fully used. On the other hand, the customer soon recognizes that he can get promptest service in establishments where the whole equipment is on the *qui vive* to cater to his wishes. So, does madam decide only to-day, that to-morrow night she must appear in costume, rich and new—it does not occur to her to visit then the deserving and faithful dressmaker on the side street, who sometimes renders her good service. Madam must have, and all at once, variety to choose from, certainty that her robes have the latest Paris influence, and organization put at her command which will give instant, general response to her controlling touch.

It is not within the limit of this article to trace the history of trade from the days of primeval man, when time was not an essence of any contract, to the present, which seems gliding past the period when "time is money"—for even now these terms are rapidly becoming anything but synonymous, and it seems likely that "time" will soon reach a heavy premium over gold. "The mill will never grind with the water that is past," and the hours that are lost will never come again, while gold will always awaken on receiving the true Midas touch.

A rather curious series of developments in retail trade is traceable within our own country, but while it has been