

Bellamy's Boston Bazaar Beaten !

A GLIMPSE AT A FAMOUS AGGREGATION OF STORES.

ONE of the greatest sights of Toronto, without a rival, perhaps, so far as varied interest is concerned, is the great establishment of Messrs. R. Walker & Sons, King St., east. We call it "establishment," for though the "Golden Lion" has long been famous as one of the best equipped and fashionable dry goods and furnishing stores in America, since its recent enlargement almost every kind of store imaginable is here found—not merely represented, but in actual full existence with a complete line of stock suited to every purse—the whole making a mammoth aggregation of stores, employing many hundreds of people, and covering a floor room of over 75,000 square feet.

The "Golden Lion" is now as full an illustration of the most modern methods of meeting the demands of shoppers as can be found anywhere. Everything is here sold that pertains to the outfitting from head to foot of a lady or gentleman, and everything that belongs to the movable furnishing of the most modern or fashionable residence of the day; and, in addition, it might be said also, nearly everything necessary for the outfitting of the mind of an intellectual man or woman.

Every appliance, too, that can add to the comfort of a customer, or expedite his business, is here found. By an ingenious contrivance on the premises electricity is used both as power and for lighting. Electric light brings every ware under the purchaser's scrutiny as well as sunlight could do. Electric elevators carry a visitor from the basement to the highest story in a few seconds; "cash carriers," running by electric power along a confusing multiplicity of endless cables or wires, flash with a rapidity the eye can scarcely follow, from every counter in the entire building to the central "cash," perched up in a strange pulpit towering aloft, as in the churches of mediæval times, but with the unecclesiastic surroundings of a glittering network of vibrating steel. Dressing rooms, and even a dark room, where the becomingness of shades of color under electric light may be tested, are also amongst the conveniences of this mammoth store.

A walk around the great compartments of this aggregation of stores at almost any hour of the day reminds one of a vast oriental bazaar, or of the stir witnessed at a great industrial fair. Every aisle and passage is moving life; all is brightness and activity, for both interest and curiosity draw hither a multitude of patrons and visitors from town and country.

It is impossible in a brief space to convey an adequate impression of the many departments of this gigantic store. Detailed descriptions must be reserved for future numbers of this MAGAZINE. The various departments are each under charge of a specialist with a number of assistants. In the basement is the china and glassware store 30x150 ft., sparkling like a palace of Alladin—glittering with chinaware and glass, embossed, plain, painted, in every design and for every purpose, from common domestic uses to the most ornamental known to decorative art. An adjoining compartment of equal size is filled with toys and sporting goods in endless variety, perambulators, cutlery, wooden and granite wares, linoleum, etc. Upstairs is the men's furnishing department, 50x210 feet—where clothing, ready made or ordered, can be had in every variety of style. Beside it and equal in size, is the ladies' dress-goods compartment. The house-furnishing department is another flat, occupied with carpets, rugs, furniture, curtains and draperies, etc. The ladies' outfitting flat, 210x110 feet, is divided into two equal compartments. One, surmounted by a handsome dome forty feet in diameter, is the mantle room—the largest and finest in America. The other, the millinery department, with its latest patterns, its bonnets and hats, house wrappers, working milliners' quarters, is a famous resort for ladies. Nor must be forgotten, the jewellery store; the boot and shoe store—one of the largest in Canada; and the book and stationery department lower down where, through a combination of great furnishing houses in the chief cities of this continent, in which the emporium of Walker & Sons is included, and by which a million copies of a standard book are printed at one time, books in great variety and worth generally a dollar or more each, are sold for 12½ or 15 cents. The book store also sells art and toy books, commercial books, magazines, and stationery of every variety up to the most expensive.

An admirable feature of the establishment is the possession of special artists in many of the departments. In the house-furnishing department are experts who will, on an order being given, furnish a house from attic to basement, drape it, curtain it, and have it ready for occupancy in a manner satisfactory to the most exacting of tastes.

An enquiry office on the ground floor aids the public, and in addition, the civility universally prevailing throughout the great store, makes a visitor feel welcome.