

JOHN R. BOOTH.

Mr. John Rudolphus Booth, of Ottawa, manufacturer of lumber, timber, and pulp, was born at Waterloo, Shefford County, Que., April 5th, 1827, the son of John Booth, a farmer. After receiving his education in Waterloo, Mr. Booth engaged in farming work until attaining his majority, when he accepted employment upon the Central Vermont Railway, working for several years as a carpenter in the bridge construction department of that Railway. In 1852, when Ottawa was known as Bytown, and never dreamt of attaining the distinction of being the Capital of Canada, Mr. Booth, then twenty-five years of age, removed to the Ottawa district. Shortly afterwards we find the future lumber king of one of the world's greatest lumbering centres, engaged in the building of Leamy's Saw Mill at Leamy's Lake. The historic mill erected, the late Mr. Leamy, its owner, engaged young Booth to conduct it for him, which he did for one year, at the conclusion of which term he started into business on his own account, and has continued actively engaged in the manufacturing of timber from that day to this. He was soon to meet with reverses to test his character, and show of what determination he is possessed. A mill he had rented in Hull was burned down after he had operated it for a few months. He leased another for a year and installed two shingle machines in it. At the end of the first year's lease, the proprietor attempted to double the rent, and Mr. Booth declining to re-lease on such terms, gave up the property and removed to Ottawa, establishing the business in which he has remained ever since, and which has attained the distinction of being the most extensive of the kind in the world. His present Ottawa mill turns out no less than 500,000 feet of lumber a day, and affords employment to between 1,500 and 1,600 hands for at least seven months in the year. In the summer months the saws in Mr. Booth's mill run night and day; while in the winter, the mill being in operation only during the day, as many as 600 or 700 find employment there. During this same season an army of between 2,000 and 3,000 men and 600 teams of horses is employed in the woods getting out the supply of logs for the coming season. The thousands upon thousands of logs that are each year cut up into timber, deals, etc., are obtained from Mr. Booth's extensive limits along the tributaries of the Ottawa on both the Quebec and Ontario sides, which cover an area no less than 4,250 square miles, quite a province in itself.

Mr. Booth's business career has been anything but one of plain sailing. By fire alone he has been called upon to submit to losses aggregating close on to a million dollars. In the great Ottawa fires of 1900 and 1903, he sustained tremendous losses in the world, with a capacity of a million feet in lumber, and in 1893 his mill, then the largest

in eleven hours, was completely wiped out. Still Mr. Booth has never accepted municipal aid in the shape of business and exemptions, and in fact has flatly refused such. Yet in fifty odd years he has never missed paying all of his men as regularly as each pay day has rolled around, and the wage bill at his mills alone amounts to something like \$50,000 a month.

A man of tireless energy and business-like ambition and forethought, it was only natural that Mr. Booth should have found scope for his activity outside of the vast business which he has created. And so we find his name intimately associated with the railway development of Canada. Mr. Booth was the originator and was up to the summer of 1905, when the system was taken over by the G. T. R., the owner of the Canada Atlantic Railway, and the Ottawa, Arnprior, and Parry Sound Railway, which under the popular designation of the Booth System of Railways, comprised about 400 miles of main line and 100 miles of sidings, and in view of Mr. Booth's established reputation as a thorough man, it is perhaps unnecessary to say that this great railway system represented to the minds of Canadians all that was substantial in railroad construction, and all that was regular, systematic, and satisfactory in its administration.

For the disposal of a portion of the tremendous output of his vast lumber mill, Mr. Booth has a great lumber yard at Burlington, Vt., and in connection therewith a big planing mill where about 15,000,000 feet of lumber is dressed and handled each year. As if all of these vast interests were not enough for the apparently illimitable energy of this untiring captain of industry, he during the year 1904 established nigh to his great lumber mill by the Chaudiere a splendid paper pulp factory, with a capacity of between 75 and 80 tons of ground pulp per day, and giving employment to about 150 hands. He is also erecting a paper mill, and will be making paper by 1906. In addition to all this, he has been actively identified with all of the enterprises of the Upper Ottawa Improvement Company.

While systematic attention to business has been the keynote of his life he has not overlooked the fact that there are other things besides business worthy of the practical man of affairs, and so we find his name associated with one of Ottawa's most noble charities, the St. Luke's Hospital, as one of its founders, and present President of the Board of Directors. A believer in and a generous patron of clean, manly sport, Mr. Booth is a member of the Ottawa Amateur Athletic Club and the Ottawa Rowing Club. He is a member of the Rideau Club.

Mr. Booth's family consisted originally of nine children, five girls and four boys, of whom four survive: Mrs. A. W. Fleck, Mrs. J. A. Seybold, J. F. Booth, and C. Jackson Booth.