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## CHARACTER SKETCH.

HON. J. B. SNOWBALL,

SENATOR AND LUMBERMAN OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

"Let us be doing something."

To tell the story of some men's lives is to sketch the times and place in which they have lived. The life of Sir John A. Macdonald is necessarily a history of Canada for more than 25 years. The biographer who would write of Sir Oliver Mowat would, at the same time, be writing, perhaps, the most complete history of the Province of Ontario. Men of individuality leave their impress on all their surroundings.

If one is to write of the lumber trades of the Maritime Provinces he unconsciously thinks of J. B. Snowball and Alexander Gibson. To pen a sketch of these men he must write, in a large measure, a history of the lumber trades of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Already in these columns a sketch has appeared of Mr. Gibson. In noting some of the incidents in the career of the Hon. J. B. Snowball, of Chatham, N. B., the sketch is sure to tell much of the extent and character of the lumber business of the provinces down by the sea.

Just as Alexander Gibson's name is intimately associated with the town of Marysville, so is the name of J. B. Snowball identified with the town of Chatham and that section of New Brunswick, familiarly termed Mirimachi, and covering a number of towns and places within the district of the Mirimachi River.

Jabez B. Snowball is a native of Nova Scotia, having been born at Lunenburg, in that province, Sept. 24th, 1837. His family is of German origin, but for several generations were residents in Yorkshire, Eng. Mr. Snowball's career has shown a happy commingling of the perseverance and endurance indigenous to the Teutonic races, and that pluck and grit that is characteristic of John Bull. The father of our sketch was the Rev. John S. Snowball.

Mr. Snowball has been actively engaged in the lumber trades in the Maritime Provinces for a long term of years, and is to-day the largest manufacturing shipper in the district in which he resides. It is estimated that the Maritime Provinces possess forest resources to the extent of about 20,000 square miles. Where pine is the leading product of the forests of Ontario, spruce holds the premier position in the Maritime Provinces. Outside of this wood there is a considerable supply of birch, which, now that this wood is coming into increased uses, will prove a valuable asset to that portion of the Dominion. The two main shipping points are St. John and Mirimachi, or Chatham more strictly speaking, the home of Mr. Snowball. The exports of lumber from St. John to Europe and America are given as 200,000,000 feet b. m. annually. An estimate of the shipments, and names of shippers, from the Mirimachi district, mainly spruce deals, etc., for the past two years, are given as follows:—

Shippers.	1893 Feet.	1894 Feet.
J. B. Snowball.....	22,081,347	24,505,000
D. and J. Ritchie & Co.....	10,650,238	11,088,000
F. E. Neale.....	13,519,604	8,730,000
E. Hutchison.....	7,109,925	9,318,000
Geo. Burchill & Sons.....	4,601,000	7,380,000
W. M. McKay.....	18,084,380	27,447,000
William Richards.....	6,607,000	5,993,000

The picturesque, aside from the rude, native beauty that is common to every lumber district, is not one of the factors that goes to give fame to the Mirimachi. This, at least, would appear to be the experience of the editor of our English contemporary Timber, who a year ago visited the Maritime Provinces and particularly the lumber districts. He had made a pleasant call on Mr. J. B.

Snowball, and at his invitation had made an inspection of his mills, together with those of Mr. E. Hutchison and others in the district. Having concluded his business, this is his account of the remaining hours spent in Chatham: "I have no desire to visit Chatham (Miramichi) again. Although the town has a pretty considerable population it is a very primitive place. There is no hotel except one or two boarding houses. The means of getting to and from the place are very inconvenient. I wished to return to St. John, but in order to do so I had to take a train at a kind of station a good mile and a half from the town at 3 o'clock in the morning. I engaged a conveyance to call for me at half-past two and the landlady of the boarding house advised me to go to



HON. J. B. SNOWBALL.

bed and let the cabman come up to my bedroom and awaken me (they do not seem to fasten the doors of their houses here) but I would not risk it, and I sat up. That cabman never came, and after anxiously waiting till the last moment, I seized my bag and ran, in the pitch darkness, over a mile up a rutty, muddy lane. I was not sure I was going in the right direction, and, after several falls in the mud, I arrived at the station, almost breathless and dirty, just as the train was starting. By repeated entreaties I got the driver to wait and entrain me and my baggage. I shall not readily forget Miramichi."

Of Mr. Snowball personally our English friend, as is the case with everyone else, can only say kind things. His interview was of the pleasantest character. "Like everything with which Mr. Snowball is connected," says he, "his mill is a reflex of his undoubted ability and great intelligence. Although the mill has only three gangs with compliment trimmers he can cut here some 30,000,000 feet or 15,000 stds." Besides this mill, which is illustrated on the following page, Mr. Snowball handles the product of three other mills in the district, in which he has a direct interest. Following the custom of lumbermen in this country Mr. Snowball carries on a general store business, the profits from which make even a better showing than that of his lumber business. The Snowball stock is shipped largely to Great Britain, Messrs. Farnworth & Jardine being his representatives there. Mr. Snowball himself is a yearly visitor to Great Britain,

The activities of this well-known Lower Province lumberman are by no means confined to his commercial undertakings, though these are extensive. For, besides his lumber business, he is largely interested in the railways of his province and has been president of the Chatham Gas Co., as well as director of other monetary institutions. He has been mayor of Chatham more than once, and it goes without saying that the town was the gainer by his wide business experience and knowledge of public affairs. He represented Northumberland, N. B., in the House of Commons from 1878 to 1872, when he retired. On May 1st, 1891, he was called to the Senate, and in the Upper Chamber of the House he has been one of the Senators who has done his share to impart a measure of present-day business life to a branch of government that has sometimes been said is fast becoming fossilized in its character. In politics he is a Liberal-Conservative.

## CUTTING QUARTER-SAWED OAK.

In a recent interview a leading Grand Rapids furniture man gave some valuable ideas as to cutting quarter-sawed oak, from his standpoint. He said that the demand just now was better for quartered oak than for any other wood, and that prices for satisfactory qualities and widths would afford a reasonable profit. He remarked: "If I owned a lot of that stock that would exactly meet the ideas of the furniture men in every respect, I would not know what price to put on it, but would hold it pretty high; but if I had a lot of badly manufactured, dirty, narrow, different length quartered white oak, I would not know what to do with it, for no furniture man would buy it." To sell well it must be well manufactured, clean and bright and well handled. The greater the width the better the price. No one wants it less than six inches or an average below eight. Other things being all right, a ten-inch average makes a lot that sells readily at a top price. It requires a lot not less than twenty-six inches to make a profitable lot. It requires the best of machinery, all the appliances and the most skillful handling, and then there is a large loss of timber.

## INDICATOR FOR SHAFT REVOLUTIONS.

AMONG the mechanisms of utility lately described, is a small instrument which shows the number of revolutions of a shaft by means of two hands traversing a dial similar to that of a watch, the longer hand indicating the units and tenths of revolution and the smaller the hundreds. In order to make error in reading impossible, whether the shaft be running in one direction or the other, a simple method is resorted to, which consists in placing the dial plate carrying the numbers under a perforated plate, the numbers on the dial showing through the perforations. There are two sets of numbers on the dial plate, one set reading from right to left and the other from left to right, so that, should the shaft move from right to left, the figures on the dial move automatically so as to come under the perforations, while if the shaft move in the other direction the other set of figures show through the perforations. After reading the number of revolutions, the hands could be quickly brought to zero by opening the case and turning a knob. The spindle of the revolution counter is projected by the watch ring so that the instrument can be carried in the pocket, as in the case of a watch, without injury to the clothing, this portability and the extreme simplicity of the operation of the instrument constituting its special advantages.

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