



*John H. Light*

SOUTH NORWALK

John H. Light of South Norwalk, was born in Carmel, N. Y., March 27, 1855, being the son of Belden and Anne Light.

When a young boy he came with his parents to reside in the town of New Canaan.

Having finished the usual course of instruction in the public schools, and being naturally of studious tastes, he became ambitious of carrying his studies further. In many fashion he earned by hard work enough money to carry him through Chamberlain Institute at Randolph, N. Y., where he graduated with honors in 1880. He then began to teach school at the same time studying law.

He was duly admitted to the Fairfield County Bar, September, 1883, and began his practice in South Norwalk, where he soon attracted attention. In 1884 he was appointed City Attorney of South Norwalk, and has held the office continuously through all party changes, to the present time.

In February, 1896, Mr. Light was made Prosecuting Attorney for the Criminal Court of Common Pleas of Fairfield County, and has held the position with marked satisfaction to Bench and Bar. It is a well understood fact that he can put through more business and finish up his

cases in a shorter time than is possible to most lawyers. This comes from a remarkable gift of concentration, and the ability to seize the salient points of a matter with instant perception. He is known as a very successful jury lawyer, and in all arguments is logical and convincing.

In 1898 Mr. Light made the speech putting the Hon. George E. Lounsbury in nomination as a candidate for Governor, and this speech immediately placed him among the foremost orators of Connecticut. As a public speaker he is always in demand. For years he has been one of the most gifted and popular stump speakers, and his addresses on Memorial Days and during other patriotic celebrations, together with his literary lectures before lyceums and woman's clubs have won the admiration of highly appreciative audiences.

In appearance he is striking. He is about six feet in height, and has a fine physique. His face is somewhat rugged, its expression frank and fearless. His voice is a powerful organ, yet melodious and resonant. His gestures are numerous and are those easy, unconscious motions peculiar to the natural orator who is absorbed in giving utterance to his thought, and whose thought moves rapidly. He rarely writes a word of his frequent speeches upon a variety of topics. He combines in his personality in an eminent degree the essentials of marked ability. There is an elemental force in him rarely met with and then only in the born leader of men. He can cleave his way through great difficulties by mere force, but his sunny disposition and magnetic qualities are so winning that he is enabled to reserve this great power for supreme moments. He resembles Benjamin Franklin in preferring to persuade rather than to push an issue, yet once embarked in a quarrel, he is a magnificent fighter. It is not strange that in a comparatively short time he came to stand among the foremost lawyers at the Bar of his County.

Notwithstanding the intense life of a busy lawyer, and a man of affairs, consulted upon questions of public and private policy by his friends, clients, neighbors and fellow citizens, he makes opportunity to live much in the thought of the philosophers, poets and statesmen whose writings are our priceless possessions, for he is a "bookman," owning one of the finest private libraries in the State, besides his professional library which is extensive and valuable. Therefore he is deeply interested in the educational welfare of his community, and he has served for years as Acting School Visitor, as one of the School Committee of his District, and as Vice-President of the Public Library. His culture, judgment and knowledge of human nature make him most valuable in these capacities.

For years he refused all solicitations to enter the lists for political preferment, though so admirably fitted to succeed. He chose rather to devote his undivided attention to serving his clients, and to use his leisure for his literary studies. But in the fall of 1898, seeing that he might serve his party and his town he consented to stand as a candidate for the office of Representative. He was nominated by the republicans, and the democrats also announced that there could be no better representative of the interests of the town than John H. Light, and thus was seen the unusual spectacle of opposing parties, united upon, and electing the same man, because of their confidence in him.

He entered the House with the prestige of a born leader, yet he is never inclined to push himself in any way. He is a cautious adviser and is known to be indifferent to money-getting. His ambition is to be a good citizen, rather than to gain gold and honors.