

TWO MEN OF THE HOUR.

Mayor Strong and Recorder Goff, the men whom New York has called to the task of reforming her administrative and judicial life—Their characters, and the fitness of each for his work.

By Thomas C. Quinn.

THE city of New York was suffering from many political evils. The pessimism of Huxley and the kindly fears of Bryce regarding the success of free institutions began to find a substantial basis in the minds of the thoughtful but politically inert New Yorker. It was a time when the future of the city hung in the balance. Would the people revolt and overthrow an unworthy regime, or would things be allowed to jog along a little worse than before? The calm that preceded last November's election was ominous. Politicians talked, of course. The mass of the citizens were silent.

The hour for action had arrived.

Then came the choice of a man who possessed the requisite qualities to be the head of a new and better civic government. The choice fell on William L. Strong, merchant and banker. He possessed the first essential. He was known by his fellow merchants to be thoroughly democratic; a man of affairs eminent for his business sagacity, and of good repute for his probity and public spirit; a man of force of conviction and sturdiness of character.

Twenty four hours prior to his nomination as candidate for the mayoralty, William L. Strong was practically unknown to the great body of New York voters, though his career was familiar to the world of business and finance. Twenty four hours later, the candidate's plain but honorable life history was familiar to the majority of his fellow citizens. They decided that he would do, and they elected him.

Every one of the sixty eight years of the life of William L. Strong—with the

exception, of course, of his infancy—has been passed in devotion to hard work; not always profitable, nor always successful, but always with a view to giving full measure to every fellow man with whom he had dealings. Born in Ohio, the son of a struggling farmer who had migrated thence from Connecticut, he had none of the early advantages that wealth and luxurious environment can bestow. He possessed, however, good health, a spirit that gave him the capacity to work with tireless vigor, and an elasticity which would not allow him to endure inactivity or suppression.

His Americanism bids fair to make him *persona grata* to his fellow citizens. He is distinctly of the people. He suffers no loss of dignity from the fact that he worked for years in different dry goods stores, in more or less humble capacities. At thirteen he lost his father, and the burden of supporting his family was placed upon his boyish shoulders.

A plain, honest, every day American citizen—such is Mr. Strong, whose supporters confidently expect to show that he is made of good mayoralty timber.

Just before the conditions that called William L. Strong into public life were ripe, while the effervescence that was to crystallize into the present municipal government was working, there emerged from the sea of humanity which composes this great city, another man whom the exigencies of the hour had called forth.

His name was John W. Goff.

Another plain, every day American citizen; straightforward, simple, outspoken. The popular effect of Mr.

Goff's quick ascent to fame was remarkable. The people were almost

Like some watcher of the skies,
When a new planet sweeps into his ken.

As a lawyer, Mr. Goff had lived among them for many years. He had held one public office—that of assistant district attorney—yet he was practically undiscovered until, as leading counsel for the Lexow Committee, he burst asunder all the fetters of obscurity, and stood before the people a remarkable man.

Recorder John W. Goff has won his spurs. When Brinsley Sheridan, after a four days' speech laden with the terrible arraignment of Warren Hastings—perhaps the most brilliant and sustained effort recorded in English history—when Sheridan was carried fainting from the hall, his effort was extolled as a marvel of human endurance, coupled with human genius. Mr. Goff's performance as counsel to the Lexow Committee was carried on without a halt, without a single anticlimax, throughout an entire summer. The effort was certainly extraordinary, and its results promise to be momentous. This fragile looking Irish American may be said to have politically revolutionized New York. Stronger men have broken down in accomplishing far less. Men of greater genius, perhaps, have attempted exploits measurably less hazardous, and have failed.

Glance a second time at this slender man with snow white hair, and a face deep lined with constant thought. Beneath the apparently narrow shoulders, with their scholarly stoop, there is room for a pair of sound lungs. That they pump a good supply of oxygen into the eager circulation, is evident from the clear color of the face. It is not difficult to see that the man is of sanguine temperament, and that tells in a word the whole story of his persistency and his success.

Mr. Goff came to America an ambitious Irish lad without a dollar to his name. He sailed to New York from the eastward some years after William L. Strong was approaching it from the westward. The orbits of the twin stars who were to make an era in the political history

of the metropolis were nearing each other, neither aware of the honorable destiny that awaited him.

Mr. Goff was forty five years old when he acquired his present prominence in New York City. He was born in the south of Ireland, and had seen something of life in England and South America when, in 1865, he landed in New York, and, like young William Strong, obtained work in a dry goods store. Trade was not congenial to the man, the bent of whose mind was toward logic and metaphysics. He was caught more than once studying his Blackstone when he should, perhaps, have been doing up parcels. He was forgiven, however. Among his employers was A. T. Stewart, to whose honor be it said that he encouraged the young Irishman in his studies. Thanks to Peter Cooper's philanthropy, young Goff was enabled to force an education out of New York under cover of the night. He did not feed his body very highly in those days, but his eager mind was well supplied with pabulum. Against heavy odds, the most galling of which was caused by poverty, he succeeded in his longed for object. He was admitted to the bar.

John W. Goff is by no means an idealist or fanatic. Although an earnest reformer, he does not believe that he and his friends have brought about the millennium. His knowledge of human nature is too deep and too broad for that. It was a condition and not a theory that he confronted. He recognized the force of the fact that morality and earnestness will not necessarily produce reform. He realized that

We must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

Like a wise mariner, he embarked at flood tide, and it led on to fortune for himself, and, it is to be hoped, to a new and better era for the community of which he is an integral part.

Mr. Goff knows thoroughly the weaknesses of human nature, and he does not lay the flattering unction to his soul that New York will remain good as a community without any further effort. He is no pessimist, but he is not

egotist enough to imagine that the good work of himself and his collaborators is sufficient for the lasting redemption of municipal mankind.

Mr. Goff has a charming personality.

not care. He is the antithesis of a dude, and yet he would not look *outré* arm in arm with a modern Beau Brummel.

Democratic? Step into one of the numerous "quick lunches" in the lower



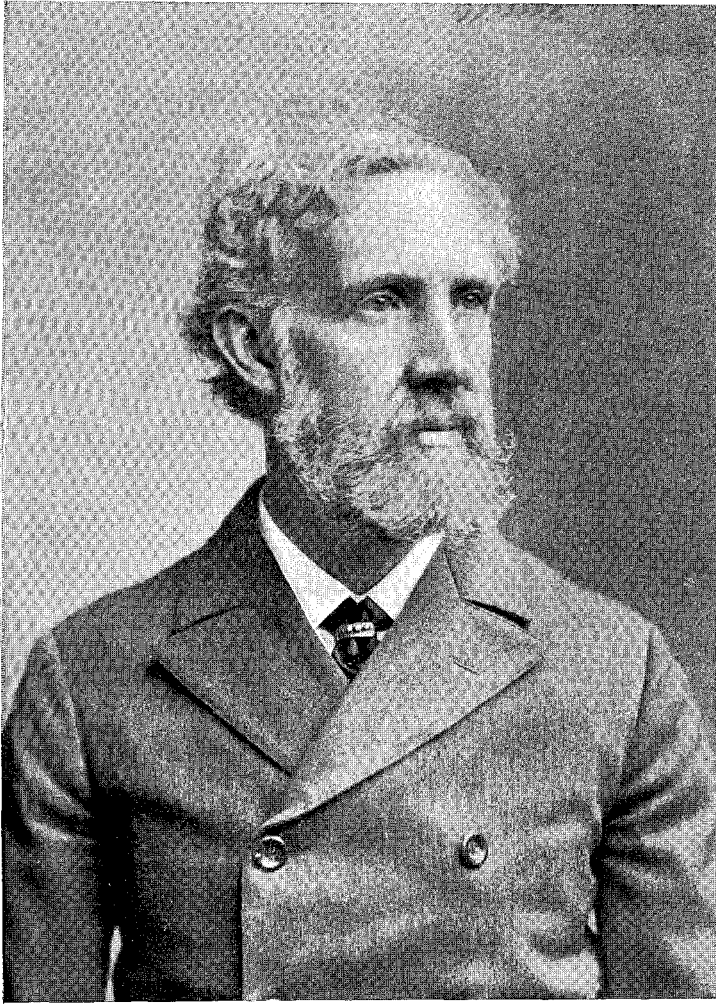
William L. Strong, Mayor of New York.
From a photograph by Sarony, New York.

He possesses dignity, without severity. His mind is often given up to the light play of fancy and the sparkle of Irish wit. His voice is one of rare charm, and has a sufficient suggestion of brogue, which, like the delicate perfume of a wild flower, makes one long for more. His attire indicates the carelessness of genius. Without being slovenly, it is marked by a sort of nondescript indifference. He evidently does not know how he is dressed, and he certainly does

part of the city. Observe that gentleman with somewhat ragged white hair and beard, holding in one hand a cup of coffee, in the other a sandwich. The florid face is thoughtful, but placid. If he is the observed of all observers, he appears absolutely unaware of the fact. He is snatching a bite, in order to sustain life. He must hurry back to his work.

That is John W. Goff.

Goff and Strong—well sounding



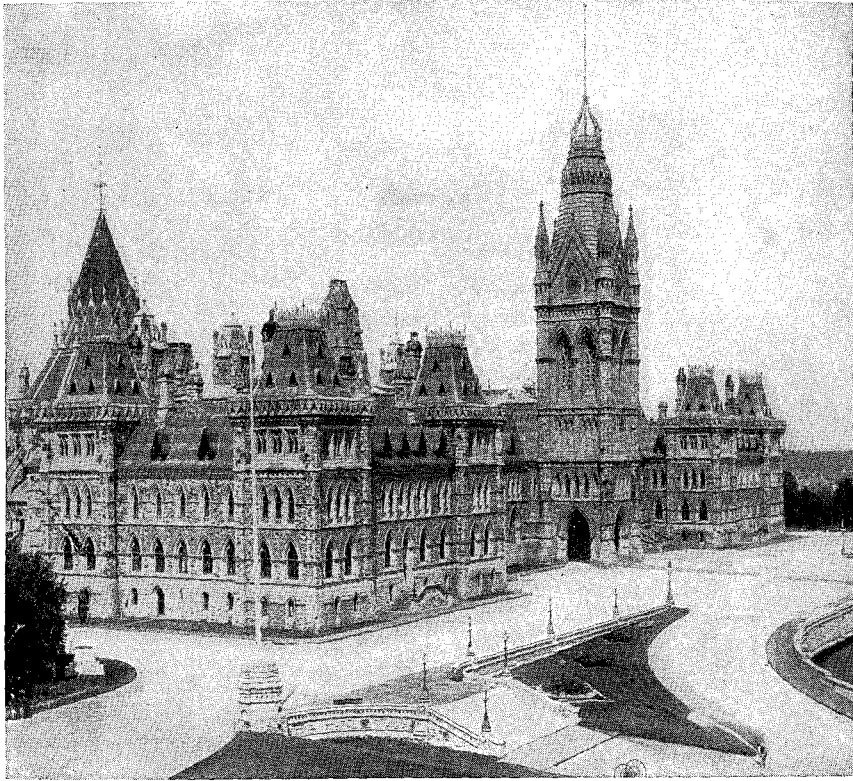
John W. Goff, Recorder of New York.

From a photograph by Prince, New York.

names, those! Goff a Democrat in politics; Strong a consistent Republican; both domestic in their tastes, and both endowed with a great capacity for hard work. Strong with a sturdy, straightforward mind, not reveling in subtle logic or the science of metaphysics, but plowing straight ahead to attain the object in view. Goff, keen, subtle, of many sided mentality; a clever actor, with a bright play of fancy, a merry jest, or an avalanche of thunderous wrath; most dangerous when least suspected; armed with the weapons of the wicked, but using them in defense of the right.

Strong, of the stuff of which successful

merchants are made; possessed of great patience, not overburdened with imagination, seeing things in their exact proportions; with a perfect knowledge of the value of money, thoroughly balanced by having known the want of it early in life. Goff, who fulfilled his destiny in working himself out of commerce; with an eager, inquiring mind that must be satisfied, with no knowledge of the value of money; a man who could never be rich, unless some one undertook the management of his estate; a man to whom a vista of Easy Street has appeared for the first time, perhaps, after having passed his forty fifth year.



The Houses of Parliament at Ottawa.

From a photograph by Topley, Ottawa.

A COLONIAL COURT.

*The Earl of Aberdeen, Queen Victoria's representative in the Dominion of Canada—
The official state and ceremony he maintains at Ottawa, and the social
festivities of Rideau Hall.*

By Malcolm Mackenzie.

TWENTY odd years ago, when the British colonies in North America joined to form a single great confederation, the titular headship of the new Dominion of Canada became one of the most important posts in Queen Victoria's empire. And one of its first occupants was a man of such personality, such tact and genius, and so ably backed by a clever wife, that its importance was emphasized and enhanced by the brilliant traditions Lord Dufferin created; and when his term expired his successor was the husband of one of the queen's daughters.

But when Lord Dufferin left the Canada he had helped to make, and the Marquis of Lorne came to take his place, the difference between the two men was speedily felt. Lord Lorne had none of the qualities that make a great colonial governor; and his wife, the Princess Louise, was equally out of her element in the new born capital on the banks of the Ottawa river. Brought up in the rarefied atmosphere of a court, she was the very opposite of the gay, hearty, sympathetic, and typically Irish Lady Dufferin. There was no regret when the marquis' term of office ended.