

foundation in science and in literature. He began life as a merchant, then turned his attention to law and began its practice in Talboton, Talbot county, Ga., in 1826. He was elected from that county to the state legislature and senate, and in 1834 was sent to congress and served until 1839. He was again elected to that body in 1845. He was elected as a democrat, governor, in 1847, over Gen. Duncan L. Clinch. Gov. Towns was a Chesterfield in address. Nothing could exceed the suavity of his disposition and the ease of his manner. He was truly a refined gentleman, courteous and unpretending with the plain, and diplomatic with the precise, just as the society he was in for the time being demanded such an exhibition of character. He had a friendly word, a kind recognition for each individual. The charm was complete; he satisfied all. At the bar his rank was decidedly high as an advocate. He possessed all the requisites of an orator to control the jury. Of him, Stephen F. Miller says: "His return to the bar was hailed by his professional brethren with universal cordiality. All within his attendance looked forward to much enjoyment in his society, to much improvement by his example. There had been a Forsyth, with his fluent simplicity and inimitable sneer; a Berrien, with his musical phrase and classic gesture; a Wilde, polished in diction and lofty in thought; a Colquitt, with the arrows of nature barbed for the rhinoceros or softly edged for the hare; there had been such advocates in Georgia, honored, glorious; yet it was the prestige of Gov. Towns to differ from them all, perhaps to excel them all, in the spontaneous gushings of the heart, in the electric sympathy that, kindling with the orator, burst out and blazed in every bosom; court, jury, bar, audience, all melted, all subdued by the occasion." Gov. Towns was married to a daughter of the Hon. John W. Jones, of Virginia, speaker of the United States house of representatives. He died in 1854.

COBB, HOWELL, governor of Georgia from 1851 to 1853, was born at Cherry Hill, Jefferson county, Ga., Sept. 7, 1815. His father was Col. John H. Cobb, of Greenville, N. C., who removed to Georgia when young, and his mother, Sarah Roates, of Fredericksburg, Va. Howell Cobb was graduated at Franklin college, Athens, in 1834, studied law, was admitted to the bar in 1836, and chosen an elector on the Van Buren ticket the same year. He was elected solicitor-general in 1837, representative to congress in 1842, 1844, 1846 and 1848, and speaker of the house in 1849; governor of Georgia, as nominee of the Union party, in 1851, and representative in congress in 1854. In 1857 he was appointed United States secretary of the treasury, by President Buchanan, a position which he resigned in 1860. He was president of the confederate provisional congress, and brigadier and major general in the army of the Confederate states. Mr. Cobb's familiarity with the rules, skill as a debater, and his bold championship of slavery, made him the leader of the southern party in the house in 1847, and he was elected speaker in 1849 after a long contest. He demanded the extension of slavery into California and New Mexico by federal authority, and advocated the compromise measures of 1850. Upon the latter issue he boldly antagonized the extreme men of his own state, and accepting the nomination for governor from the Union party (1851) took the stump and was triumphantly elected. After his term of governor he resumed the practice of law, though continuing to take an active part in politics. He stumped the north in 1856 for Buchanan, and in 1857 became his secretary of the treasury. He found the treasury full and the bonds representing the national debt at a premium of 16 to 18 per cent. He used the surplus funds in the treasury in purchasing this indebtedness at this high premium, but the approach of the civil war so affected the national credit that he was compelled to attempt to borrow at an exorbitant discount the

money necessary to defray the ordinary expenses of the government. On Dec. 10, 1860, he resigned, giving as a reason that the state of Georgia (then about to secede) needed his services. His name was mentioned before the Charleston convention for president, but a division in the Georgia delegation caused him to withdraw it in a good-tempered but patriotic letter. He warmly advocated secession and was author of those much-quoted words, "The hour of Georgia's dishonor in the union should be the hour of her independence out of the union." He was elected permanent president of the convention of seceding states, which met in Montgomery, Ala., Feb. 4, 1861. He was not a favorite of President Davis of the Confederacy, and so withdrew to private life. On the demand of Georgia members of congress that body appointed him brigadier-general in the Confederate army and soon promoted him to a major-generalship. After the close of the war Gen. Cobb opposed reconstruction vigorously, maintaining its effect would retard the restoration of the south to the union, keep back its prosperity, and destroy the negro race. He died in New York city Oct. 9, 1868.

JOHNSON, HERSCHEL VESPASIAN, governor of Georgia and senator, was born in Burke county, Ga., Sept. 18, 1812. He was graduated from the state university at Athens in 1834 and a year later settled in Augusta and began the practice of law. He entered public life during the presidential campaign of 1840, taking the stump, after declining a congressional nomination. He was defeated for congress in 1843, canvassed the state as presidential elector in 1844 on the Polk ticket, withdrew his name when urged for governor in 1845, and in 1847 was appointed to the United States senate to fill the unexpired term of Walter T. Colquitt, February, 1848, to March 3, 1849. He was delegate to the Baltimore national convention in 1848, and was elected judge of the superior court in 1849, delegate to the Pierce democratic national convention, and elector for the state at large in 1851. Resigning his judgeship upon his nomination for governor in 1853, he was elected to the latter office, and re-elected in 1855. He was nominated for vice-president on the Douglas ticket in 1860; elected Confederate state senator in November, 1862; president of the state constitutional convention that repealed secession, repudiated the war debt of \$18,000,000, and abolished slavery in October, 1865; and in January, 1866, after the restoration of the state to the union, United States senator, though he was disfranchised by acts of congress and did not serve. He was appointed, in 1873, judge of the superior court, an office which he held until his death, Aug. 16, 1880. As an orator, a constitutional lawyer and jurist Judge Johnson took high rank. He was a master of classical diction, his state papers being the most finished in the state archives. Originally a strong "southern rights" man, he nevertheless acquiesced in the compromise measure of 1850, and later opposed secession. He married Mrs. Annie Polk Walker, a niece of President Polk, and a highly intellectual and beautiful woman.

BROWN, JOSEPH EMERSON, was born in Pickens district, S. C., April 15, 1821. His paternal ancestors were Scotch-Irish. The grandfather, Joseph Brown, was a whig rebel, and took an active part in the war for Independence. The father, Mackey Brown, was a native of South Carolina, and served under Jackson, in the campaign of New Orleans, in the war of 1812. He married Sally Rice, of Virginia ancestry, in Tennessee, and then moved to South Carolina. During the boyhood of Joseph, the Browns removed to, and settled in, Union county, which is in northeastern Georgia. He labored in the field and attended stock to aid in the family support until nineteen years of age. He had mastered