



JOHN LA PORTE GIBBS.

The present Lieutenant-Governor of Minnesota is John La Porte Gibbs. Mr. Gibbs was born of Colonial ancestry. His progenitors were pioneers of the states of Massachusetts and Connecticut, his father's ancestors having settled in the former, and the mother's in the latter, over two hundred years ago. In the long and fierce struggle for American independence, both the great-grandfather and the grandfather of our subject were active participants, serving in a Massachusetts regiment. Grandfather Elijah Gibbs was a successful and wealthy farmer, and left his children well provided for. His son Eli, the father of the subject of this sketch, also followed the occupation of farming, and was in addition engaged in the lumbering business on the Susquehanna river. He acquired considerable property, but failed just previous to his death by having become responsible for promissory notes of a large amount. His death was by accidental drowning in the Susquehanna river, July 3, 1855. His wife's maiden name was Caroline Atwood. Their son John was born in Bradford County, Pennsylvania, May 3, 1838. The lad lived on his father's farm and attended the district schools of his native county.

He entered Le Raysville Academy when eighteen years of age; afterwards the Susquehanna Collegiate Institute at Towanda, at that time one of the best institutions of learning in his native state. He graduated from this institution in his twenty-second year, and immediately went to Ann Arbor, entering the law department of the University of Michigan. He graduated from this department a year later, and came West to carve out his fortune. He first crossed the Mississippi river at Rock Island, Illinois, and having no money in pocket or friends to aid him, set out from this point on foot through the Hawkeye state, working at such odd jobs of employment as he could secure. He finally wandered into Albert Lea, Minnesota, at that time but a small village, and secured a position as school teacher. His talents having become recognized he was elected the fall of the following year (1862) county attorney. A year later he was elected on the Republican ticket to the lower house of the legislature, representing the counties of Freeborn, Steele and Waseca. Since that time Mr. Gibbs has been a representative of his district in the legislature five different times. He has been one of the most prominent members of that body, and has been the author of a large amount of important legislation. He was elected speaker of the house in the session of 1877, and again in 1885. In 1887 Governor McGill appointed him a member of the railroad commission, and he was re-appointed the ensuing term by Governor Merriam. In 1896 he was nominated by the Republicans to the office of lieutenant-governor, and was elected. Though having taken up the study of law for the purpose of making that his profession, Mr. Gibbs has never engaged in its practice. Shortly after his location at Albert Lea he "took up" a farm, and aside from his duties to the state, the occupation of an agriculturist has been his vocation since settling in the North Star state. He is the owner of a large farm near Geneva, in Freeborn County, which is twelve miles from the nearest railroad station. His farm has been conducted on the most improved scientific methods, and it is at present one of the most prosperous farms in Southern Minnesota. Dairying, however, is his chief specialty, and he is recognized as one of the

Morris Daniel Shutter, 1897

best authorities on that subject in the state. He has lectured at various times before farmers' institutes, contributing of his practical and scientific knowledge on this subject to the benefit of his brother agriculturists. Starting without a cent, Mr. Gibbs has now become one of the successful and prosperous citizens of the North Star state. He is prominent in the counsels of the Republican party, with which he has always affiliated, and is highly respected in the community in which he lives, as well as in the state at large, for his genial qualities and for the push and enterprise which he has exhibited in his business life. In 1868 he was married to Mrs. Martha P. Robson, widow of Captain James Robson, of the Tenth Minnesota, who was killed in the fall of 1862. They have no children.

E. C. BABB.

Captain E. C. Babb was born in the village of Saccarappa, near the city of Portland, Maine, on February 1, 1834. His ancestors are descendants of old New England families, his mother, Mary Winslow, tracing her descent from Governor Winslow, of Massachusetts. Captain Babb received a good common school education in his native town, and, after teaching school for a while, learned the trade of a marble cutter. From the age of twenty-one to twenty-eight he was engaged in lumbering in northern Vermont and New Hampshire. It was while he was in this business that the war broke out, and he enlisted in the Ninth Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteer infantry. He participated in the battles of Bull Run (two), South Mountain, Antietam and Fredericksburg. In the latter he displayed such gallantry that he was promoted over six first-sergeants to the rank of second lieutenant. After Fredericksburg Captain Babb's regiment was sent west, and participated in the siege of Vicksburg. Later his regiment was detailed for service in Kentucky, and in 1863 and 1864 Lieutenant Babb served as staff officer during the campaign in East Tennessee. Here he received his commission as first-lieutenant. The following spring found him at Annapolis with his regiment



where preparations were making for the final campaign under General Grant. He was in the battles of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, Cold Harbor, and all the battles about Petersburg until the final surrender. He was commissioned captain in January, 1865. On June 10, of the same year, he was mustered out of service at Concord, New Hampshire. Captain Babb came to Minneapolis in 1868. After a few years in the lumber business he became president of the Cedar Lake Ice Company, an office which he still holds. He has been a distinguished member of the Grand Army of the Republic, and has held the position of Commander of the Minnesota department. He is an esteemed member of the Loyal Legion, and is also a Mason and a Knights Templar. He became a Knights Templar in 1868, and is a member of the Zion Commandary, No. 4, of Minneapolis. In 1885 and 1886 Captain Babb represented the Eighth ward in the city council. In 1888 he was elected mayor. During his term of service as mayor occurred the great street railway strike, which called for the exercise of the soldierly qualities which the war had developed in the city's executive. Captain Babb was married on August 15, 1862, to Levee L. Chandler at Berlin Falls, New Hampshire.