

president of the East River bank.

BANKS, Nathaniel Prentiss, statesman, b. in Waltham, Mass., 30 Jan., 1816. After receiving a common-school training, he worked in a cotton factory, of which his father was superintendent, and learned the trade of a machinist. He was ambitious to fit himself for a wider field of work, and studied diligently during his leisure hours, securing engagements to lecture before meetings and assemblies at an early age. He became editor of the local paper at Waltham, studied law, was ad-

mitted to the bar, and in 1849 was selected to represent his native town in the legislature of Massachusetts. At this time the ancient power of the whig party was waning in New England, and the free-soil party was making its influence felt. Mr. Banks advocated a coalition between the democrats and the new party, and was elected speaker of the state assembly in 1851 and re-elected in 1852. In 1853 he was a delegate to the Massachusetts constitutional convention, and was selected to be its chairman. On the tide of success that attended this political combination, he was in 1853 elected to congress as



A. F. Banks

a coalition-democrat. During this term of service he withdrew from the democratic party and identified himself with the American or "Know nothing" party, and by an overwhelming vote, as against the whig and democratic candidates in his district, he was re-elected to congress. In the preceding congress he had demonstrated his ability, and he was now nominated for speaker of the house of representatives. A contest lasting more than two months followed, and he was elected by a small majority on the 133d ballot, when the dead-lock had been broken by the adoption of the plurality rule. The American party went out of existence, and Mr. Banks was elected to the 35th congress as a republican by a larger majority than before, and served until 4 Dec., 1857, when, having been elected governor of Massachusetts, he resigned his seat in congress. He was re-elected governor in 1858 and 1859. In 1860 he accepted the presidency of the Illinois central railroad, succeeding General (then Captain) George B. McClellan in that capacity, but gave up the office when the civil war began in the following year, and was commissioned a major-general of volunteers and assigned to the command of the 5th corps in the Army of the Potomac. For this duty he was in a degree qualified by experience in the state militia. His first active service was on the upper Potomac and in the Shenandoah valley, where a part of his corps acquitted itself well at the battle of Winchester, 23 March, 1862. He was left in April and May to guard the Shenandoah with two divisions. The exigencies of the service caused the withdrawal of one of these (Shields's), and Gen. Banks was left with about 8,000 men. Upon this force "Stonewall" Jackson made one of his sudden onslaughts with his whole corps, and the command only escaped capture by rapid and well-ordered marching and stubborn fighting. Through good generalship the bulk of the army crossed the Potomac at Front Royal on 26 May, and the confederate leader failed to realize his apparently reasonable expectation of capturing the entire force. Gen. Pope was placed in command of the army of Virginia, 27 June, 1862, and concentrated his forces in the neighborhood of Culpepper Court-House early in August. Gen. Banks's corps was ordered to the front on 9 Aug., and late in the afternoon of that

day a severe fight took place, known as the battle of Cedar mountain, which lasted well into the night. Banks's corps held the position against a largely superior force, was strengthened during the night, and before the morning of Aug. 11th the confederates retreated to the Rapidan. After participating in Gen. Sigel's campaigns in September, Gen. Banks was placed in command of the defences of Washington while preparations were secretly made to despatch a strong expedition by sea to New Orleans. He was assigned to the command of this expedition, which sailed from New York in November and December, and on reaching New Orleans he succeeded Gen. B. F. Butler in command of the department. Baton Rouge was occupied with a strong force, and during the winter reconnoissances were made toward Port Hudson and other points in the vicinity. Early in April of 1863 he led the army up the Têche country, encountering no very formidable opposition, as far as the Red river. Thence he crossed the Mississippi and invested Port Hudson in connection with the fleet under Farragut. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to storm the works, involving heavy losses to the assaulting columns. In July the news of the surrender of Vicksburg was received, and on the 9th of that month the garrison of Port Hudson, 6,000 strong, capitulated, and the Mississippi river was once more open to the sea. No military movements of great importance were undertaken in the department until the succeeding spring, when Gen. Banks's army, supported by a powerful fleet, was sent up the Red river with the intention of regaining control of western Louisiana. At the same time Gen. A. J. Smith with 10,000 men descended the Mississippi, reaching the rendezvous first, and was joined by Gen. Banks, who assumed command of the whole force at Alexandria. The army advanced along the south bank of Red river as far as Sabine Cross-roads, when it suffered a defeat by the confederates under Gen. Richard Taylor, and was obliged to fall back to Pleasant Hill, having sustained heavy losses in men and material. Here on the following day the confederates renewed the attack, but were repelled with great loss, and the national army retreated without further serious molestation to Alexandria, where a new complication arose in consequence of the subsidence of the Red river after the spring freshets. The gun-boats were unable to descend the river owing to shoal water, and were only saved by the engineering skill of Lieut.-Col. Joseph Bailey (*q. v.*). The whole force then retreated to the Mississippi. Gen. Banks has been censured for the failure of this expedition, but it was undertaken contrary to his advice and in spite of his protest. During his command of the department of the Gulf he endeavored to reorganize the civil government of Louisiana, but did not accomplish it in a manner satisfactory to the inhabitants. He was relieved of his command in May, 1864, resigned his commission, and, returning to Massachusetts, was elected to congress from his old district. He was reelected to the successive congresses until 1877, failing only in 1872, when he was active in behalf of Horace Greeley, the liberal-democratic candidate for president. He served for a long time as chairman of the committee on foreign relations. Since his retirement from congress he has been U. S. marshal for Massachusetts.—His daughter, **Maud**, after a course of study and training at the New York school of acting, went upon the stage in 1886, making her first appearance at Portsmouth, N. H., in the character of Parthenia in "Ingomar."—His brother, **Gardner**, soldier, b.

in Waltham, Mass.; d. there, 9 July, 1871. At the beginning of the civil war he raised a company for the 16th Massachusetts regiment, in which he rose to the rank of colonel in 1862. He was with his regiment at Fair Oaks, Glendale, Malvern Hill, Kettle Run, Chantilly, and Fredericksburg. Lieut. Hiram B. Banks, his brother, was killed by his side in the second Bull Run battle. Gen. Hooker said, in a letter to Gov. Andrew: "There is no doubt but at Glendale the 16th Massachusetts saved the army." From constant exposure Col. Banks contracted an inflammatory rheumatism, which completely disabled him for active service. The battle of Fredericksburg was the last he shared with his comrades of the 16th. In 1864, after an illness of several months at Waltham, he went as a planter to Louisiana, where he remained until his return home four days before his death.

BANKER, Benjamin, mathematician, b. at