

FOREWORD

THIS book contains the story of some of the great architects of yesterday, who laid the foundation of and helped to build the stately edifice of Western medicine. A few years ago I picked up Mansfield's "Memoirs of Daniel Drake," and was completely fascinated by the character and the life work of Drake. Posterity has done nothing for this great man. He seems to be entirely forgotten. To hold up the mirror of the past to the present generation was the motive which primarily suggested the writing of this book. Incidentally I felt that even a modest attempt to preserve some of the unwritten professional records of the past, and in this way arouse additional interest in the medical history of this country, would be a sufficiently worthy motive to justify the appearance of a new book and apologize for any shortcomings of the latter. The life work of Drake and the immediate and remote effects of his labors on the evolution of medical practice and education in this part of the country are not unworthy of being placed beside those of the immortal Rush. The latter was not a greater man in the East than Drake was in the West. We are no longer in the stage of transition from primitive conditions of existence to more settled modes of life. The time has come when the people of the Middle West can retrospectively contemplate the records of their past, and experience the thrill of inspiration which must be communicated to their inner consciousness by the knowledge of a history, a tradition, a *raison d'être*, distinctly Western in character and inseparable from Western people and Western soil. Therein lies Drake's claim to the gratitude of posterity because he was one of the great standard bearers of civilization in this Western country.

The present volume includes the records of those who continued the work left by Drake. Among these followers of Drake were some whose labors form a part of medical history, while others might be charitably interred in the grave of oblivion. Yet their records, collectively, add an interesting page to the history of American medicine, not without significant lessons to the present and future. These lessons might prove a source of solace to some, while there is hardly any one who can not discern some meaning in and derive some instruction from the story of the eternal mutation of things, as exemplified in the happenings of a hundred years in and near the old town which Daniel Drake loved so much and so loyally.