

Northern Kentucky Views presents . . .

Robert Hardin Gale, M.D.

GALE, ROBERT HARDIN, M. D., Physician and Surgeon, was born January 25, 1828, in Owen County, Kentucky. His father was a physician and surgeon for many years in that county, and enjoyed a wide-spread reputation, having performed some original and successful operations in surgery. He is of Scotch-English origin. He attended school in his native county for a number of years, and finished his education at Transylvania University, at Lexington. He studied medicine with his father; went to Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, in 1848, and subsequently graduated with great credit, receiving his degree in medicine. He soon after commenced the practice of medicine at Covington, Kentucky; was appointed on the Medical Staff of the Commercial Hospital, of Cincinnati; after one year's service in that capacity, returned, through the solicitation of his friends, to his native county; practiced with great success for several years; was twice elected Probate Judge before he had reached his twenty-fifth year; became candidate for the Legislature in 1859, and was elected, by an opposition of seven votes, in a voting population of twenty-four hundred. He served in that body on several important committees, and took an active part in its work during the troublesome times prior to the initiation of the civil war. From the first, he took a decided stand for the South, and was a prominent member of the Democratic Convention, which met at Charleston, and afterward at Baltimore, in 1860. When the war came on, he entered the Confederate service, as surgeon of Col. D. Howard Smith's regiment, remaining on active duty until failing health compelled him to return home. In 1873, at the solicitation of Gen. Eccles, President of Louisville, Cincinnati, and Lexington Railroad, he accepted the position as agent and surgeon for that company; in 1874, he received a similar appointment under the Louisville, Paducah, and South-western Railroad, still holding both positions. In 1876, he was elected as Secretary of the American Mutual Benefit Association of Physicians, whose offices are located at Louisville; became member of the State Medical Society in 1873; was delegate from it to the American Medical Association, which met at St. Louis in that year; at that meeting, was made one of the Judicial Council on the Code of Ethics for the profession; and, serving the short term, was re-elected the following year at Detroit, and now serves in that connection. In May, 1874, he was elected surgeon on the Visiting Staff of the Louisville City Hospital; has been annually re-elected, and, in 1876, was made President of the Board of Medical Officers of that institution. He was the first physician in Owen County to give ice-water in fever, where the patient had previously been on mercurial treatment; has been particularly successful in numerous cases of lithotomy; is quick in his conceptions, and bold and vigorous in carrying them out, and, as such, stands as a pioneer in some of the most successful surgical operations. He is a writer of force; is a man of strong convictions—considers his position and maintains it; is a man of fine personal appearance, easy and winning in his manners; stands deservedly high in the community, and is one of those characters who would take a place in the front rank of any profession. Dr. Gale was married, December 31, 1846, to Miss M. C. Green, and has had eight children, three of whom are now living.