Contents

Acknowledgments ix
Introduction xiii
1. Cradled in the Profession 1
2. Marking the Progress of Civilization 29
3. Behind the Cart of Thespis 54
4. An Actor Prepares 85
5. Echoing the Public Voice 107
6. Triumphs in Comedy and Melodrama 134
7. Nibbling at Stardom 163
8. A Mighty Nimrod of Theatrical Touring 184
9. Mr. Jefferson and Rip Van Winkle 213
10. Bringing the “Sleepy Piece” Home 241
11. A Fellow of Infinite Jest, of Most Excellent Fancy 269
Contents

12. Are We So SoonForgot? 305
   Epilogue: A Shy Thing Is Comedy 350
   Notes 357
   Index 423