

DR. A. B. SPRUILL.

DR. SPRUILL, one of the leading physicians of Jackson county, now practicing in Kansas City, but formerly located in the southwestern part of the county, was born in Pickens county, Alabama, June 11th, 1824. The family from which he is descended formerly resided in South Carolina, and about 1822 settled in Alabama. His father, Thomas Spruill, was one of the first residents of that part of Alabama in which the subject of this sketch was born and raised.

The foundation of his education was laid in the common schools and academies of Pickens county, and was supplemented by an extensive and judicious course of reading which made him familiar with a fund of knowledge not accessible in the schools of that region. For a short period he taught school, but quit this occupation to begin, in 1843, when nineteen years of age, the study of medicine with his uncle, Dr. Jephthah Spruill, a prominent physician and a leading citizen of Pickens county who for several terms represented that part of the state in the legislature of Alabama, and bore a conspicuous part in public affairs. Dr. Spruill attended medical lectures at Augusta, Georgia, and graduated from the medical college there in March, 1846. After receiving his diploma he returned to his native county and began practice in the same neighborhood where he was living at the time he began his medical studies. He subsequently followed his profession in that same locality, which was one of the wealthiest and best improved portions of the state, for a period of twenty years, and succeeded in building up a large and lucrative practice. On the 4th of February, 1851, occurred his marriage to Martha E. Bonner, the daughter of James Bonner, one of the leading citizens of Pickens county. He still continued the practice of medicine, but after his marriage engaged also in agriculture.

Previous to the actual breaking out of hostilities between the North and South he was deeply conservative in his sentiments. He deprecated any attempt toward the disruption of the Union, and steadily opposed the steps looking to the ultimate secession of his state from the national Government. After the rebellion was actually inaugurated, however, his sympathies were with his native state and the South, and he did all in his power to aid the Confederate cause, though personally he took no active part in the struggle. He remained in Pickens county through the war attending to his professional duties and engaged in the management of his plantation. The close of the war left Alabama in a chaotic and confused condition. The labor system was subverted, property depreciated, and society rested on no sound and substantial basis. In this state of affairs Dr. Spruill determined to remove to another state. From 1866 to 1868 he practiced his profession at Trenton in Western Tennessee.

In the spring of 1868 he removed from Tennessee to Missouri, and settled in the neighborhood of New Santa Fe, in Jackson county. He bought a tract of 400 acres of land, formerly known as the Chiles farm, and moving on this property continued to practice his profession, and at the same time carry on farming. He had charge of a large practice in that part of the county, but in the spring of 1877 removed to Kansas City where he is now following his profession with the success which his skill and attainments as a physician merit.

The Doctor began his political career as a member of the old Whig party, and in the memorable presidential campaign of 1844 gave an earnest and ardent support to Henry Clay, the Whig nominee for the presidency. He continued to vote for the candidates of the Whig party, for Taylor, Scott, Fillmore and the other statesmen whom the great Whig organization honored with its support. He supported Bell and Everett in 1860, believing that those candidates represented most fully the Union sentiment of the South to which he was warmly attached. Since the disruption of the Whig party he has acted with the Democrats. In 1874 his friends in Jackson county presented his name as a candidate for representative in the 28th General Assembly—a position to which he was elected by a large majority. As a member of the Legislature he was known as a man of sound and moderate views, conscientious in the performance of his duties, and a representative who reflected credit on his constituents. Dr. Spruill has nine children living.