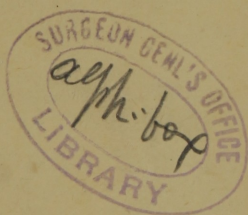


Rockwell (P. G.)

a biographical sketch
of Dr. Roswell Bronson x x x





A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF
DR. ROSWELL BRONSON,
OF OXFORD.

BY P. G. ROCKWELL, M. D.

DOCTOR ROSWELL BRONSON, of Oxford, Conn., whose untimely death his numerous friends and professional brethren were recently called to mourn, was a native of Middlebury, Conn., the son of Garry Bronson, a farmer in moderate circumstances, who died when Roswell was at the age of fifteen.

His early life was mostly spent upon the family farm, with the opportunities for attending district schools during the winter months. He grew up with industrious habits, ardent and persevering in whatever he became engaged. His advantages for education from necessity being circumscribed, he was early brought to build up resources of his own, in order to enable him to mark out a course for future life. His was the class of mind which seems to defy and almost to invite obstacles in the way, rather than to be disheartened or depressed by them.

He early evinced a fondness for reading, and employed whatever of leisure time he could command in this way. By economy and industry he accumulated, as the result of labor on the farm, a scanty supply of means to enable him to obtain an education. After arriving at the age of eighteen, he devoted most of his time to study. He attended Philips Academy, at Andover, Mass., but most of his preliminary education, which was not inferior, he wrought out by himself, without the aid of instructors.

At the age of twenty-one, he commenced the study of medicine in Middlebury, under the tuition of Doct. Robert Crane. He attended

medical lectures at Berkshire Medical College, in the years 1847, 8, and graduated at the above named College in the year 1849. He spent at the hospitals in New York City most of his time during the following year.

He commenced the practice of his profession in the town of Pawtucket, R. I., where he remained but a short time, after which he removed to Oxford, and soon came into possession of a large practice.

He was married to Miss Martha Butler, a lady from Cromwell, Conn., by whom he had one child, which has since died.

Doct. Bronson was enthusiastic in his devotion to the profession of his choice, methodical in his researches, and eminently logical in his practical application of all the knowledge he obtained. Seldom has the writer of this sketch met with a young physician of the few years experience of the deceased, who possessed so many clear, well-defined principles governing his treatment of the sick. He was constantly in search for truths, not hypothesis, in all of his investigations; nothing seemed to satisfy his active mind, in relation to medical study and practice in particular, short of marked facts. It was his *peculiar characteristic* of mind to reason and rely mainly and wholly on facts. His first inquiry in diagnosis and in prescribing medicines, was for the relative facts in the case and their application to it—without these were made clear and unambiguous, he was ever loath to act. His mind was so well disciplined to this mode of reasoning and investigation, that he was as ready to act in cases of emergency as most men of much larger experience and more extensive observation. It made him reliable and safe in his practice, neither withholding remedies when necessary, nor administering when unnecessary. He had no inclination to borrow from the marvelous, or to imitate the hazardous. Truth was the philosopher's stone for which he was always in search; hence hypothesis, speculation, empiricism, never interfered with his judgment—a principle once established, it was laid up on the shelf of memory, to be taken down whenever needed.

Doct. Bronson never neglected any means of information that came within his reach. (From the authors he sought with the humble-mindedness of a child, yet with the eye of a full grown critic.) From all well informed medical men, whether young or old, he seized with avidity each opportunity to learn. He was unremitting in his toil, self-sacrificing in duties; located where immense hardship was required to perform his every-day duties, he made it a principle to allow nothing to interfere with the discharge of them. He conversed with ease to himself and interest to those who participated or listened. He

was courteous and kind to his equals and inferiors, respectful to his superiors. He was social and exceedingly domestic, fond of conversation, yet never wasting time in that which was useless or unprofitable. He was delicate in his sensibilities, ever grateful for kindness, and sensitive to abuse. He was ever ready to contribute his mite to assist those who were in need; affectionate in his family, and among a large circle of near and remote relatives he was the general favorite. He was decidedly beloved in the community in which he lived; never has it fallen to the lot of the writer to witness more heartfelt grief by a large congregation than was manifested by that one in attendance at his funeral.

Another characteristic which marked him both as a man and physician, was unostentation in every respect. This contributed much to the just esteem in which he was held.

To his aged mother, who resided six miles from his place of residence, he was all that a mother could ask of a son. Frequently and at short intervals were his visits made to solace and comfort her by manifesting his filial interest, and no amount of fatigue, short of actual sickness, would permit him to neglect this kind office.

He was an active friend to all valuable interests of society, whether religious or secular. To sum up, in short, he was a man of sound judgment, and good practical common sense.

Had Doct. Bronson lived to the ordinary age of man, we believe he would have been a shining light in his profession, but like many others of the past and present, he was too much devoted to his noble calling to remain long upon earth. To a naturally weak constitution, and some hereditary troubles, the addition of his severe labors from childhood proved more than he could physically withstand.

During the winter of 1855, while attending to his practice, he contracted pneumonia, which in one week's time caused his death. In his death, as in life, he was cheerful, thoughtful, and resigned. He died the 14th day of December, 1855.

