

**MEMOIR OF THE REV. WALTER
BALFOUR, AUTHOR OF
LETTERS TO PROF. STUART, AND
VARIOUS OTHER PUBLICATIONS**

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Memoir of the Rev. Walter Balfour, Author of Letters to Prof. Stuart, and Various Other Publications by Thomas Whittemore

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THOMAS WHITTEMORE

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P R E F A C E .

I have been induced to prepare the Memoir of Rev. Walter Balfour, by the solicitations of several of my ministering brethren. I had known him, ever after his arrival in this country. He took up his residence amid the scenes of my youth; and it was permitted me to see every step of his progress.

The predominant moral qualities of Mr. Balfour were honesty, love of Scripture truth, a fearless spirit of inquiry, and independence to assert and defend what he believed. His knowledge of the Scriptures was extensive; and the works he produced, although not all regarded by the writer as faultless, were very valuable, and have

exerted, and will continue to exert, a wide influence on the community. Such men as Walter Balfour continue to live on the earth after they are dead. It was said of Abel, "being dead, yet he speaketh," Heb. xi. 4. So we may say of the subject of this memoir. The influence of his life will be long felt. The truth that radiated from him will be reflected from mind to mind; and many perhaps will be enlightened by it, who may not be conscious of ever having heard his name. To assist in giving the proper influence to his life and character, the following work has been prepared. May the divine blessing attend it.

T. W.

MEMOIR
OF
REV. WALTER BALFOUR.

The name Balfour has been a name of The name Balfour. some eminence in Scotland. The family of Balfour, long heritable sheriffs of Fife, derive their name from Balfour Castle in that county, built upon their earliest possessions in the vale or strath of the river Or, a tributary of the river Leven. Their first recorded ancestor was Siward, probably a Northumbrian, living in the reign of Duncan I. His grandson, Octred, witnessed a charter of David I. about 1151-2. Sir James Balfour was deputy Governor of the castle of Edinburg, in the time of Mary, Queen of Scots; and when that castle was besieged by the associated lords, he delivered up the jewels and the private correspondence of the queen, to

the messenger sent to receive them. A person of the name of Balfour was lieutenant of the Tower of London, during the reign of Charles I. The famous Earl of Strafford, who was a prisoner there, under sentence of death for high treason, offered Lieut. B. £22,000, the king's warrant of indemnity, and other gifts, for his escape, which was refused. We have not the means of tracing the pedigree of the subject of this memoir.

Birth and Youth
of Walter Balfour

He was born at St. Ninians, not far from the year 1776. This is one of the small towns of Scotland, and is situated in Stirlingshire, a few miles south of Stirling, about forty miles north west of Edinburg, and nearly as far N. E. of Glasgow. Here he passed the term of his youth. He was fully initiated into the religious creed of the Church of *Scotland* during his childhood and youth; and early received strong religious impressions under the preaching of Rev. William Sheriff, then Minister of St. Ninians. From his earliest years young Balfour had a strong love for reading. From this source of information, and from a habitual perusal of the Scriptures, he was led to doubt the correctness of some of his religious impressions and opinions. He always was an

honest inquirer after truth. He felt the impulse of this generous attribute of his nature, very early in life. His doubts related to the general aspect of the Church of Scotland, as established by law—her government—rather than the doctrines of her creed. He was in no small degree weaned from his mother church, by reading some of the ablest works on church government. Besides, a weekly meeting was held in the village—by a select number of about twelve or fifteen—for prayer and conversation on the Scriptures. Each member took his turn in prayer, and made such remarks on the portion of Scripture read as seemed correct and pertinent. One of Mr. Sheriff's deacons was of this number, and Mr. S. himself frequently attended.

While these things were gradually infusing a little light into the mind of young Balfour, Mr. Robert Haldane—a rich gentleman in the neighborhood—determined to devote a large share of his fortune in diffusing a knowledge of the Gospel in Scotland and other places. To accomplish this benevolent design, he selected twenty-five persons with a view to educate them for the ministry. The deacon, referred to above, and Mr. Balfour made two of this number. Some of our readers may have

is admitted a member of Mr. Haldane's School.