

**MEMORIAL OF THE  
SPIRITUAL LIFE AND  
MINISTRY OF THE LATE  
REV. ROBERT WALKER**

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Memorial of the spiritual life and ministry of the late rev. Robert Walker by Robert Walker

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# MEMORIAL

OF THE

## SPIRITUAL LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF THE LATE

### REV. ROBERT WALKER,

VICAR OF WYMERWOLD, LEICESTERSHIRE:  
FORMERLY FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

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The memory of the just is blessed.

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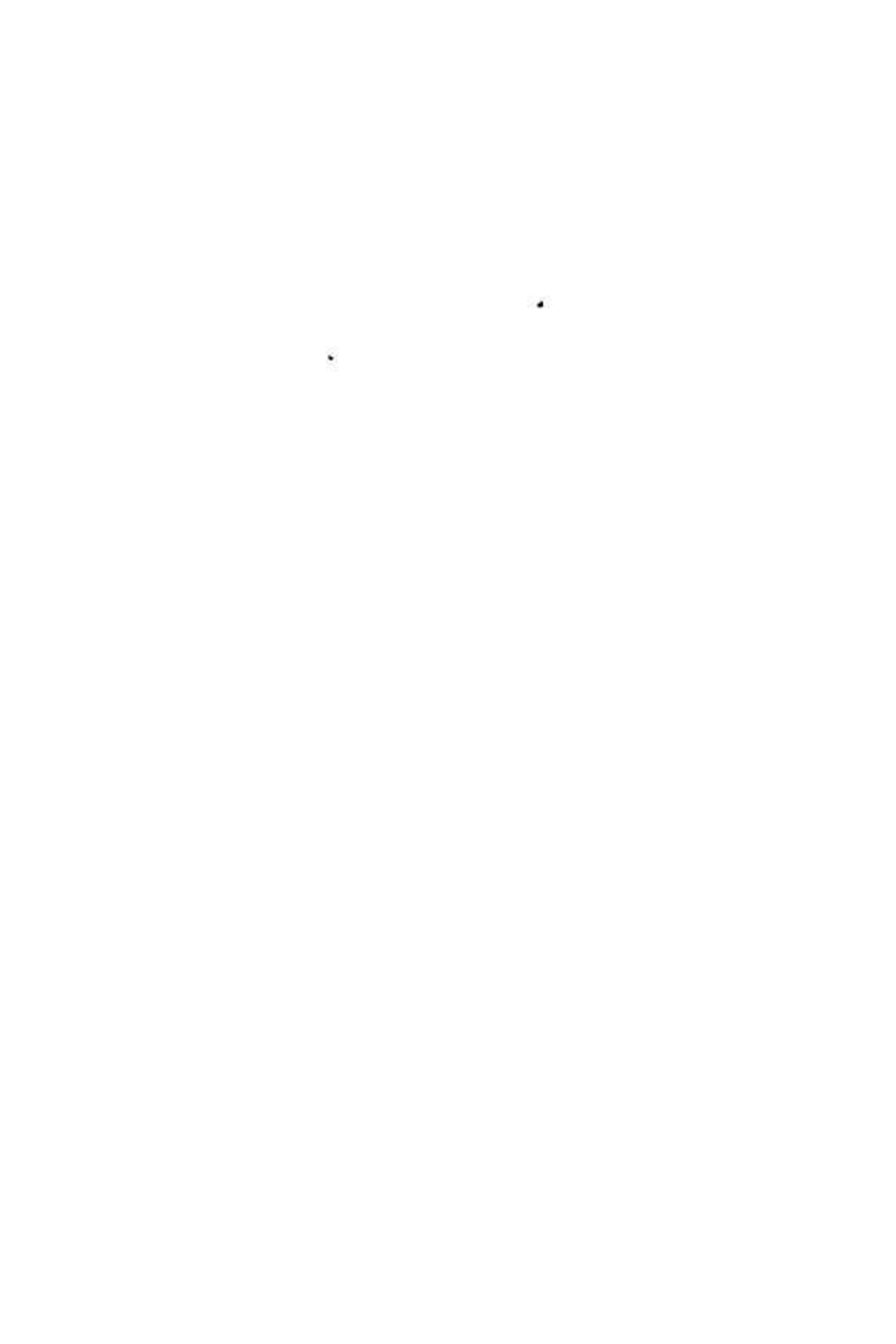
LONDON:  
HOULSTON & SONS, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS.

LOUGHBOROUGH:  
H. WILLS, MARKET PLACE.

1883.

210. p. 125.

STANDING as he did by the grace of God a witness to the power of living faith as wrought in the souls of those who are taught of God, the testimony of Mr. WALKER is highly to be esteemed. Very few writings, however, have been left by him from which to gather it up: nevertheless it shines in a blessed manner in the following pages, as a true testimony when given in simplicity always shines in the eyes of those who by the same grace are enabled to discern it. May the Lord of the harvest command His blessing upon it as 'seed sown,' or 'bread cast upon the waters,' that in this day of the pride of human reason it may go 'from faith to faith,' and that by it the faith of God's elect may be strengthened and increased.



## MEMORIAL

OF THE LATE

### REV. ROBERT WALKER.

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IN a brief memorial like the present of a departed saint, a loved and esteemed minister of Christ Jesus, as was the late REV. ROBERT WALKER, Vicar of Wymeswold in Leicestershire, there is no place for much that might be truly said of natural gifts and scientific attainments. These indeed he possessed, and in no ordinary degree, as his success at Cambridge proves (he was Second Wrangler and Second Smith's Prizeman, in the year 1847); but it was the sanctifying of these gifts by the grace of God humbling him in heart and mind, that gave him the truly loveable character he bore, and endeared him to Christian friends both far and near. He was born in 1824 at Gestingthorpe in Essex, and was Curate of Bradford St. Clare in Suffolk, from 1851 to 1856, in which year he resigned his Fellowship on accepting the vicarage of Wymeswold, where he continued to the end of his days.

Taken away from the scene of his labours when



years of chastening had mellowed his spirit and filled him with humility and love, may we not say his loss is to many irreparable? When faithful men are few, the loss of one is greater than can well be measured; yet let us remember it was the same Lord who gave him life and a ministry to fulfil, that in mercy and love to His own, and in correction, has now seen fit to remove him.

We should like to have been permitted to follow our departed brother throughout the path of the Lord's gracious dealings with him more perfectly than the records he has left enable us now to do. Amidst the cares of a family and of a populous parish he had little time for writing, yet well he knew that true Christian experience is always to the praise of Christ, and that in it the work of the Holy Spirit is magnified; and therefore it was that both in his private letters, and in his printed Addresses to his parishioners every new year, he dwelt freely on the things which he had heard, and looked upon, and handled of the Word of Life.

From these sources we must gather such fragments as may seem best suited to exhibit his inward life and ministerial exercises, sensible that no words can so adequately set forth his experience, or afford so true a testimony to the grace given him, as his own.

Speaking of his life at college Mr. Walker has remarked how his love of learning kept him entirely from many of the evils and temptations that surround young men; but he was at that time ignorant of the experimental power of *religion*, and he was no stranger to the tempta-

tions to scepticism which, owing to the innate unbelief of the natural heart, are so frequently engendered by that very learning.

We extract the following passages on the subject of his deliverance from these temptations, from a letter Mr. Walker wrote in reference to the sceptical errors of the day. It was printed in *The Record*, October 1862, under the title 'Faith the Gift of God,' and afterwards in the *Oxford Chronicle* under the title 'Science will not convert the heart,' and finally revised and reprinted by Mr. Walker himself. In it he says:—"I am myself a monument of the delivering power and mercy of God in this very matter. . . . My own history was just this:—I had read and studied deeply in mathematics, had mastered every fresh subject I had entered upon with ease and delight; had become accustomed (as every exact mathematician must do) to investigate and discover fundamental differences between things which seem to the uninitiated one and the same; had seen my way into physical astronomy and the higher parts of Newton's immortal "Principia," and had been frequently lost in admiration of his genius till St. Mary's clock warned me that midnight was past three hours ago. I had, in fact (as we say), made myself master of dynamics, and become gradually more and more a believer in the unlimited capabilities of my own mind! This self-conceited idea was only flattered and fostered by eminent success in the Senate House, and by subsequently obtaining a Fellowship at Trinity, and enjoying very considerable popularity as a mathematical lecturer.

‘It would have spared me many an hour of misery in after days had I really felt what I so often said, viz., that the deeper a man went in science, the humbler he ought to be, and the more cautious in pronouncing an independent opinion on a subject he had not investigated, or could not thoroughly sift. But, though all this was true, I had yet to learn that this humility in spiritual things is never found in a natural man.

‘I took orders, and began to preach, and then, like the Bishop among the Zulus, I found out the grand deficit in my theology. I had not the Spirit’s teaching myself, and how could I without it speak “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power”?

‘In vain did I read Chalmers, Paley, Butler, Gausson, etc., and determine that, as I had mastered all the other subjects I had grappled with, so I would the Bible, and that I would make myself a believer. I found a poor ignorant old woman in my parish more than a match for me in divine things. I was distressed to find that she was often happy in the evident mercy of the Lord to her, and that she found prayer answered, and that all this was proved sincere by her blameless and harmless walk amongst her neighbours, whilst I, with all my science and investigation, was barren, and unprofitable, and miserable—an unbeliever in heart, and yet not daring to avow it, partly from the fear of man, but more from a certain inward conviction that all my sceptical difficulties would be crushed and leaped over by the experience of the most illiterate Christian.