

Death of Rev. Walter Jones.

Congregational Minister, Milton.

The Rev. Walter Jones, minister of the Milton Congregational Church, and ex-president of the Queensland Congregational Union, died at his late residence, River road, yesterday morning. The deceased gentleman was born at Alexandria, Egypt, in 1847. When but an infant he lost his mother. Shortly afterwards, he was taken to Rome, and received some instruction in the Roman Catholic faith. At the age of 7 years, he was taken to England by his father, and being left in the care of guardians, he was brought up in the tenets of the Protestant religion. At 18 he left school and entered the ironmongery trade. Three years later he severed his connection with commercial life, and entered Western College, Plymouth, in which institution he spent five years. After his ordination, he took charge of the Congregational Church at Devizes, in Wiltshire. The great snow-storm which swept over that part of England in 1881 was in a measure responsible for the late pastor's coming to Australia. Becoming lost in the blinding snow and darkness of that awful night, the reverend gentleman suffered so severely from the effects of his exposure to the cold that a migration to a warmer climate was advised by his medical attendant. Just at this juncture he received a call to the large and important Congregational Church at St. Petersburg. This he declined in favour of an invitation to take charge of the church at Gawler, South Australia. His pastorate at this place, which extended over a period of 20 years, was marked by great progress of the church, and the utmost good feeling between the pastor and his flock throughout. His fame spread abroad, and the result was numerous calls from various parts of Australia and New Zealand. At length the late pastor accepted the twice extended call to the Milton church. This was in 1902. The intervening five and a-half years have seen a repetition of the Gawler church's experience. The Milton church has thrived in every department of its work, and the bonds between the pastor and his people had become very deep and lasting. On Thursday last the late minister officiated at a wedding. He then appeared to be in excellent health. In the evening, however, he became so ill that the family physician was sent for. The cause of the illness was found to be deep-seated and serious, the heart being implicated. The pain at times was excruciating, but was borne without a murmur. Before long the sufferer lapsed into a condition of unconsciousness, which prevailed with brief periods of semi-consciousness until his decease, which occurred at ten minutes to 11 o'clock yesterday morning. The Rev. A. J. Griffith, who was acquainted with Mrs. Jones in Birmingham, was with his suffering comrade almost till the last. The deceased gentleman only last year filled the high office of president of the Queensland Congregational Union. His occupancy of the position was marked by those characteristics which were so prominent in his work as a pastor—namely, unobtrusiveness, combined with an entire absence of controversialism and a broad-minded and large-hearted Christian charity towards all men. This was specially noticeable in his presidential address,

ity towards all men. This was specially noticeable in his presidential address, which contained an earnest plea for Christian unity. The deceased minister leaves a widow, three sons, and one daughter to mourn their loss. The eldest son, Mr. Percy Jones, is an assistant analytical chemist in the Government service. Mr. Bernard Jones, the second son, who is a bachelor, resides at Sydney, and Mr. Eustace Jones, the third son, is employed at Messrs. D. and W. Murray's warehouse. His only daughter is Mrs. Sadgrove. The Milton church congregation, at last Sunday evening's service, passed a unanimous resolution of sympathy with their beloved pastor in his illness, and expressed the hope that he would shortly recover. They also decided to grant him a three or six months' holiday, if necessary. The funeral will leave Barossa, River road, at 3 p.m. to-day, and a service, commencing at 3.30 p.m., will be held in the Milton church.