

PETER AINSLIE

AINSLIE, PETER, clergyman, was born at Dunnsville, Essex county, Virginia, June 3, 1867. He is the son of Peter and Rebecca Etta (Sizer) Ainslie. His father, a man of great earnestness and deep convictions, was a minister, and served a church in Little Rock, Arkansas, for a considerable period. Subsequently he removed to Richmond, Virginia, where he spent fifty years as editor of the "Christian Examiner." Mr. Ainslie's grandfather, Reverend Peter Ainslie, came from Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1815, lived for a while in Baltimore, and later removed to Virginia. The Ainslie Clan is well-known in Scotland, and their coat of arms is still preserved in Melrose Abbey. The Sizer family came from England before the Revolutionary war, and some of them served in the Continental army.

When a boy, Mr. Ainslie lived in the country, and part of the time in a village, where he greatly enjoyed reading, the companionship of flowers, and other surroundings not to be found in large cities. When twelve years of age he was taken ill of typhoid fever, and afterward was very delicate for many years. He says, "from a little boy I was trained to think of fitting myself for the ministry, and I preached to the chickens and the pigs and the trees. While learning to read and write, I worked a little on a farm and for six months sold books, but most of the time was in school." The books which he has found most helpful to him are, "histories and spiritual literature." "I read little or no fiction," he says, "but all kinds of histories. By ten years of age I had read and re-read all of J. T. Headley's works. Later I read Tennyson, Shakespeare, and the other great English poets, and ancient and modern histories before I entered college." His early education was obtained not without difficulty, on account of ill health. He studied at a public school at Dunnsville, and then, in 1886, entered Kentucky university, leaving there at the end of three sessions, owing to poor health. He had finished much of the work of the senior year, but for months was almost an invalid and was under a physician's treatment. He was unable to return to the university

to obtain a degree, and, in 1889, began active work as a supply of the First Christian Church, at Newport News, Virginia. He chose the ministry as a profession, owing to his parents' wishes and his own personal preference. "I never knew the time," he says, "that I did not want to be a minister, and I became a Christian when I was only ten years old." In speaking of the most powerful influences in his life, he asserts that the one which was strongest, first, last and all the time, was that of his home. He says, "My Christian parents made a beautiful home," and the general influences emanating from them were potent factors in forming his character. For eighteen months he served the church in Newport News, and in 1891 he accepted a call to the Christian Church on Calhoun street, Baltimore, where he remained for thirteen years. In 1905 he was called to the charge of the Christian temple on Fulton Avenue, Baltimore. In connection with the work of the Temple is the Temple Seminary (which was opened some years ago), with a three years' course in the study of the Scriptures. Students attend the classes, or take the course by correspondence, on the completion of which they are granted a diploma. This is followed by a four years' course of reading, when an additional seal is affixed to the diploma. Mr. Ainslie was, from 1894 to 1900, editor of the "Christian Tribune," a sixteen page weekly, published in Baltimore. It consolidated with "The Christian Century," and he is now on the staff of that paper. In 1899, he established the Christian Tribune Home for working girls, on Fayette street, Baltimore, and is now president of that institution, which is entirely undenominational in its work, and provides a home for poor, worthy, country girls.

From his pen have come the following books: "Plain Talks to Young Men," 1897; "The Signs of His Coming," 1900; "Religion in Daily Doings," 1903. He is now engaged upon a three-volume work on the Scriptures: Volume I, "Studies in the Old Testament;" Volume II, "Studies in the Gospels and the Acts;" Volume III, "Studies in the Epistles and the Apocrypha." Of these the first volume has been printed, the second is to appear this fall (1907), and the third in the spring of 1908.

For three years he has been chaplain of the St. Andrew's Society of Baltimore—an organization of Scotchmen of all creeds. He is also a director in the American Missionary Society and the Foreign Christian Missionary Society. In politics he is an Independent, but usually votes with the Prohibition party. He says that he was a Democrat

first, then an Independent, and in 1900 he voted the Democratic ticket again on account of the Imperialistic issue. He expresses the following thought for the American youth: "Have convictions, live for a purpose, be a helper in the world, always be cheerful, see the best in men and movements, never fear for the impossible, but undertake hard things, and accomplish the end desired, whether it costs sacrifice or not to accomplish it."

From "Men of Mark in Maryland", Volume 1, (pg 31-33)

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Published by Johnson-Wynne Company, Washington, DC – 1907

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