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Peter Ainslie

Ambassador of Good Will





PETER AINSLIE

Peter Ainslie

Ambassador of Good Will



By
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Finis S. Idleman
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*This volume
is a labor of love, and is
affectionately dedicated
to the children of
Peter and Mary Ainslie,
Elizabeth and Peter IV*

Foreword

THE unexpected passing of Peter Ainslie brought to all who enjoyed the blessing of intimate friendship with him a peculiar sense of bereavement. It was difficult to think of a world and a fellowship from which he had departed. In the wide ranges of his association he had so fixed and conspicuous a place that his going, premature as all his friends felt it to be, was an irreparable loss to many groups and many causes.

Dr. Idleman has rendered distinguished service to the wide circle of Dr. Ainslie's friends and admirers in gathering the voluminous materials of a very industrious and unwearied life, and putting them into so concise a form. It is a volume which all who knew the subject will find it necessary to possess, but which will appeal strongly to ministers of the gospel, particularly young men of vision and courage.

Peter Ainslie was a singular compound of gentleness and inflexibility. In his championship of new and often unpopular causes he was fearless and aggressive, and likely to arouse vehement opposition. It was an education in the art of self-control to observe his perfect serenity under the most virulent attacks, and the fine courtesy with which he responded to any such rhetorical barrage. One could have imagined that he was under conviction as he listened with concentrated attention to the arguments of his critics. It was only when he began to dissect their statements, in

his quiet and gracious manner, that their propositions fell apart and lay scattered over the place.

In the city where he labored for so many years he was a revered and beloved figure. The clergy held him in high regard, even the Roman Catholic cardinal according him a marked degree of friendship. By the press of all persuasions he was respected. Social and business groups called upon him often for addresses. In many ways he was the most distinguished citizen of Baltimore. He was untiring in his literary activities, as the list of his published writings attests. And other manuscripts on high themes lay unfinished on his desk when he laid down his pen.

One of the chief proofs of his flexible and courageous mind was his ability and willingness to modify his views on matters of moment on which his opinions were well known and supposed to be established and unchangeable. Dr. Idleman has pointed out the fact that in the earlier years of his ministry he held to millenarian views, and was in much demand as a speaker in gatherings of that persuasion. Later it was noticed that he rarely touched upon that theme, and on being asked the reason he said that the character of the audiences had led him to change his emphasis. Similar was his modification of views regarding the admission of unimmersed persons to membership in his church, a change that gave great offense to many of the conservative members of his own communion.

But the interest with which his name is most closely identified in the thought of those who knew him is that of Christian unity. In spite of the fact that the body of people to which he belonged, the Disciples of Christ, was committed by its origin and statements to this theme, yet of all who have entered the life eternal from this fellowship four alone stand out as consistent and unfailing advocates of the union of the churches: Thomas Campbell,

James Harvey Garrison, James McBride Philputt and Peter Ainslie. Many others have been loyal to "the Plea," as it has been termed, but none I dare to affirm have given it that devoted and persistent vindication which was the life-long habit of these four. And among them Dr. Ainslie might easily have been accorded the honor of *primus inter pares*.

From the beginnings of his ministry he gave constant emphasis to this theme. He threw himself with ardor into every movement that promised any measure of progress toward this objective. He was particularly hospitable to the proposals made by the Episcopal and the Congregational churches. He was a member of the deputation sent to the churches of Great Britain to propose a plan of union. He attended every one of the European conferences looking toward world fellowship of Christians, and wherever he went his voice was lifted in earnest advocacy of the cause that was so much upon his heart.

In the year 1910 Dr. Ainslie was president of the National Convention of the Disciples, the highest honor that could be conferred on a member of that communion. The convention was held in Topeka, Kansas, and in his presidential address he spoke with great frankness and urgency on some of the subjects on which he felt that plain words should be spoken. This gave offense to some of the delegates. But this disturbed him not at all. He felt that it was his opportunity to emphasize neglected ideals in the denomination. As the result of his advocacy the committee on Christian unity which had existed for some years was transformed into the Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity, an organization of which Dr. Ainslie was made president, in which office he continued for many years. Under his leadership it became one of the leading instruments of promotion in Disciple ranks, and its gather-

ings were among the most largely attended of the convention meetings.

Opposition later developed as the result of Dr. Ainslie's bold championing of more fraternal relations with other Christian bodies, more particularly his adoption of the practice of recognizing all Christians as entitled to membership in his congregation, without further requirement in the way of rebaptism. As a result he was passed over in the choice of a president of the association. This discourtesy he accepted with entire graciousness, and continued to labor untiringly for the cause he loved. He organized the Christian Unity League, under whose auspices conferences were held in many cities. For a score of years he published the *Christian Union Quarterly*. His friends and admirers were a great host in many parts of the world and among all the sections of the church, Protestants, Catholics and Eastern Orthodox.

Dr. Idleman has told in graphic terms the impressive story of Peter Ainslie's life and labors, a story that will bring to the minds of those who knew him fresh reminders of his charm, his dignity, his courage and his success.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

Introduction

IT IS the sincere hope of the author of this volume that it may enable the reader to meet and know the subject of it. He has no desire to superimpose his own views upon the picture or to portray the subject as other than he was; he seeks not to create a man out of new clothing put carefully on him but to let him stand before the reader in his own best loved suit; not to twist or warp him by opinions written about him but to uncover his own ideas; not to glorify him as a saint or superman but to show him as a normal human being; not to paint a likeness of him but to let him sit for his own portrait; not to display his strength and hide his weakness but to let him live in these pages, the human being that he was, and to leave him there for the reader to make his own judgment. For this reason generous inclusion of what Peter Ainslie said or wrote on any given subject is made here.

Nor is this an effort to propagate an idea or to promote a cause or to glorify a movement, social or religious, to which Peter Ainslie may have belonged. There is no intent to magnify any organization, save as the total picture of this man may create in other men a love for it or incline them favorably toward his spirit and so lead them to take up his causes through the instruments he devised or employed.

Most naturally the author would be gratified if anything herein set forth concerning the spirit and manner of Peter Ainslie might set other hearts on fire for the causes which were dear to him. But it is self-evident that no man

can fight in another's armor. Nor are the causes of one period the most absorbing for the next, nor yet is the method of one man or time best suited to serve the mind and mood of another. Each in his own time must elect for himself the instruments best adapted to his mind and spirit in advancing the common cause to which "the noble living and the heroic dead" of all ages are joined.

Professor Alexander V. G. Allen, in his life of Phillips Brooks, recites an amusing narrative about a young theological student who was one of the bishop's luncheon guests. Upon reaching the library after luncheon Brooks found this young man all but standing on his head, looking at the titles of the volumes on the lowest shelf. "What are you looking for?" inquired Brooks. "I am looking to see where you get it," frankly replied the young man.

When any gifted or good life appears on earth the first and most reasonable inquiry is just that. We should like to know how it grew to such stature and what were the contributing influences that combined in its making. We want to know "on what meat doth this our Caesar feed." If the wandering Ulysses could say, "I am a part of all that I have met," then Peter Ainslie can be at least partially accounted for by whatever conditions and influences united to beat upon his life.

Happily for the author, the source material for the biography of Peter Ainslie lies near at hand. The very house where he was born still stands, and some of the neighbors of his earlier life still live. A vast company of those who shared his life and labors are here to give their impressions of the man and to relate personal experiences which make him live again. Possibly the most dependable source is his church, the Christian Temple, under the leadership of Dr. Walter Haushalter. Many members of his congre-

gation shared his labors there for over a third of a century. From them valuable help has been received.

A wide company of men in communions other than his own have given valuable assistance. These men and women, who walked by his side and knew his spirit, have given a more intimate picture of this comrade of the way with whom they shared leadership in the causes of the American church during the first three decades of the twentieth century.

The *Christian Union Quarterly*, of which he was editor for all the years of its publication, furnishes a ready mirror of all Peter Ainslie was and did. In that journal he talked and wrote as freely as in conversation. From its editorials the author has culled not only quotations that are used in this volume but the arguments Ainslie advanced for his philosophy of the church. He has also made use of Ainslie's numerous books. These are the indices of Ainslie's maturing mind and reflect the various facets of his thought as they touch the absorbing trends of his interest on many subjects through two score of years and more.

Besides all these, the author has almost a hundred personal letters which he received from Ainslie over a period of more than twenty years. Possibly the reader will agree that the intimate self-revelations of what a man writes to a friend will more accurately reveal his mind than what he sets down in books.

It has been a deep satisfaction in the preparation of this work to be able to turn to Peter Ainslie's wife, Mary Ainslie, for help. She spared no labor to give a fuller knowledge and truer interpretation of her manysided husband in whose dreams and work she was an understanding participant.

The address delivered by Ainslie at Topeka in 1910 is

here reprinted by permission of the Christian Evangelist Publishing Company, St. Louis, Missouri, and the editorial from the *Baltimore Sun* is used by permission of the editors.

Rev. J. B. Hunley, minister of the childhood church of Peter Ainslie in Dunnsville, Virginia, has spent much time and labor in securing valuable data.

To Dr. Herbert Willett and to Dr. Frederick W. Burnham the author acknowledges his deep indebtedness. Both were intimate friends of Peter Ainslie and are familiar with the movements and experiences herein recorded. They have given patient and painstaking care in reviewing the manuscript and were most helpful with counsel and criticism. James E. Craig of the editorial staff of the *New York Sun* has given greatly appreciated assistance in the preparation of the final draft of this volume. Nor could this note of grateful acknowledgment close without a sincere expression of thanks to Rose Starratt and Josephine Horton, whose devoted labors in preparing this material have been most praiseworthy.

FINIS S. IDLEMAN

New York City

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Peter Ainslie

Ambassador of Good Will



1. The Virginian Inheritance

LET US begin by looking at the land and community of Peter Ainslie's birth, which were not the least of the forces that made him what he was. Peter Ainslie was born on June 3, 1867, in the tidewater region of Virginia, near the small village of Dunnsville, Essex county, which still exists very much as it was then. The village, like the region, has preserved its original characteristics better than have most sections of America. Its main highways are waterways, largely unbridgeable, since they are estuaries. Indeed the entire eastern portion of Virginia is quite unchanging. But because of its remoteness the birthplace and boyhood home of Peter Ainslie was much more constant in character than most areas even of Virginia. It was not that the community was so far from centers of radiating influence and engrossing human activities, but that it was out of the beaten path to them.

Essex county is situated between the Rappahannock and James rivers. (It was of the Rappahannock that Ainslie said in later life, "Its ebb and flow ever reminded me of the lights and shadows in God's dealings.") It is a community whose habits are scarcely disturbed by the cross-currents of the nation's thoroughfares. The low-lying land seems to be beneath the level of the estuaries that enfold it in their comfortable arms. Only one railway penetrates the region, nor does any national highway cross it.

For three hundred years of Virginia's history it has been so. This community has lived like a modern Acadia and

followed its own traditions. It has had few deep tragedies, save for the national tragedy of the Civil War (there known as the "War between the States"), which left its deepest wounds on the soil and in the minds of Virginia, of which the tidewater region is a vital part. It has preserved the early colonial way of life as few other sections of the east could do. The region of "Tappahannock on the Rappahannock" is unique in its preservation of American stock, unmixed with the blood of later immigrant peoples who have poured into the more accessible American ports of entry. There have never been any great industries here to attract large masses of population, nor are there easily got treasures to be dug from the ground. The soil is thin and gives scant reward for tilling.

This point of land, approximately sixty-five miles wide and one hundred miles deep, basks in imperturbable calm. Since early colonial times, life has been going on here with little change. The very buildings seem planted in the landscape, like age-old yew trees that belong to the soil. The people take on an air of tranquil permanency. From generation to generation birth and death, seedtime and harvest, yearly meetings and revival times succeed one another with the regularity of the stars, and with as little commotion. There is no evidence of strain which frets and wears the nerves. There is no struggle to keep up with the neighbors, for the neighbors live in blissful communal peace.

Yet this is not to say that ambition is dead. Since its earliest settlement, sons and daughters of this region have made their way to colleges and universities. They have sought for a life more than for a living. A man is here reckoned more in terms of usefulness and dependableness than in terms of financial or popular success. The tides of migration have swept round it rather than through it. Unlike their contemporaries of the state of Vermont, who

heard the call of the west and sent their virile sons in answer, the people of tidewater Virginia aspired but did not travel far physically. The land has been a brooding land, full of mystery and touched with melancholy. The very skies are tinged with an azure hue that seems to be shielding the earth from an all too brilliant sun. Such a land and atmosphere have contributed much both to make and to feed a mystical nature.

Yet despite its isolation it has been a land that stimulated its people. Essex county, together with its neighboring counties, gave the nation Washington and Jefferson, Randolph and Madison, Marshall and Patrick Henry. This small area was notable for the numerous historic figures born within its confines. The cherished memory of men who had their origin here became the goal of emulation for the later childhood of Virginia, who were taught to aspire to be like them. Sons of this region were lured by the very mention of their native kinsmen to high endeavor and noble living. So it came about that a heritage of greatness grew to be accepted as the birthright of every child born in the Old Dominion. This background of noble tradition was an inspiring endowment bestowed upon each of its children. There was reason for the aristocracy that was Virginia. Thus it came to be that this brooding land was filled with an urge to aspire and to attain.

More than that, it was a land that stayed put. The continual migrations that emptied many states, like the richer commonwealth of Iowa, until they could scarcely maintain their population levels, never robbed this portion of Virginia. The exhortation commonly attributed to Horace Greeley, "Go west, young man," might move multitudes elsewhere, but not here. Normally a tidewater man built his house and lived in it and died in it. His children dwelt

under the ancestral roof. People had time to live and think and be. Plain living and honest dealing were the warp and woof of its social and intellectual fabric. Even if poor, every home had its library. Though the books upon the shelves may have been few, they were good and they were well read. As in all colonial regions, a library was more than an ornament. Fortunately for the community, the deposit of its best culture remained at home. It enjoyed a manner of life that had its ingrowing peril, but also its virtues, of which stability was chief.

Thin as was the soil and poor as were the people, Peter Ainslie's community gave him something worth more than wealth: a gift of brooding and of aspiring. All that others might be encouraged to win by cleverness, the very atmosphere of his boyhood home offered him on terms nobler, though costlier, if only he would be at peace with it and choose to aspire through it. It was here he learned "to sit all night and listen" and to be caught by the contagion of noble ambition. It was here he learned that goodness and greatness were qualities one could touch and handle in the daily presence of stern realities. In such a community, life impinged upon life so intimately and so permanently that each left an ineffaceable impression on all the others. Neighborliness was its proud virtue and long visits were characteristic. Virginia was the pit out of which Kentucky was dug and that state became but an extension in miles and manners of its mother state. The proverbial hospitality of Kentuckians is but the perpetuation of the customs they learned "at home." Extending a call into a day and a visit into a month was typical of the life the original settlers knew "back east." The very languor in the atmosphere stole into the blood and made the unhurried mood of its people. The deep calm of all this land

must have contributed to the interior peace of one who knew its language and understood its moods.

It is little wonder, then, that at the age of sixty-five, almost half a century after he had left his Essex home, Peter Ainslie could recall the names of almost a hundred persons and families of his childhood environment. On the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the Dunnsville Christian Church, of which he had become a member in his childhood, he wrote a letter of greeting in which this astonishing list of names was set down. Characteristically, the list included humble people whom he held in high appreciation and great affection, as having contributed to his younger years a sense of loyalty and dependability. It was like him that he should have blessed the name of his Sunday school teacher, Miss Etta Garnett; that he should have been able to recall the leading elder, "who, when he rose to speak, fastened his eye on one spot in the building and never removed it until he sat down," but whose "goodness was as fixed as his gaze"; that he should have remembered the devoted brother who "always sat in the same pew and leaned his head against the same spot on the wall and slept, so that he left a mark that was visible from all parts of the building." He recalled neighbors who had helped his mother and who had taught him in the rural school, saying, "They still live with me in happy memory." His account of these companions of schooldays and of neighbors who farmed adjacent clearings reads like the book of Chronicles.

Best of all, he spoke of colored people whose given names he could still remember. One of these was a servant of his mother whom, as a lad, he was accustomed to drive to her church every Sunday morning before going to his own. Miss Emiline McGuire, a colored woman who had been

baptized by Peter Ainslie's father, was a member of his own church and was held in high esteem. The congregation by this act of social inclusiveness made a lasting impression on Ainslie's mind. He reflected that if one colored person could be so worthy of esteem and be so held in social fellowship, why could not the whole race be potentially worthy of it? His community thus planted in his mind a seed of social justice which grew and flowered into a veritable passion in his later life. It was this same Emiline McGuire who, at the age of eighty-two, recalled Peter's childhood habits: that he was "neat in his clothing and never lost his temper"; that when his mother "put an apron on him" and the other children taunted him about it and threw dirt at him he would not avenge himself; that occasionally he left the dresses in the woods and put them on again as he went home so that his mother might not be wounded. It was "Miss Emiline" whom Ainslie first sought out and greeted when, at fifty-seven, he returned to his community with his new bride.

The character of his community was reflected in the biblical names given to local churches. Those immediately about were called "Smyrna," "Mount Zion," "Ephesus," "Corinth," "Jerusalem," "Antioch," "Bethesda." This fact was indicative of the pervading religious sentiment of the time and place, which must have given a strong impulse to the generation of Peter Ainslie's childhood.

This Virginian inheritance likewise gave him two qualities which added greatly to the charm and attractiveness of his personality. The first was his gracious yet dignified bearing. All that history records of the best of colonial life as exemplified at Williamsburg, the early capital of Virginia, seemed native to him. He fell heir to a stateliness of public address which belonged to the traditional glory of Virginia's noblest period. He took to the plat-

form as one to the manor born. He loved the podium as William Tell loved his native mountains. He succeeded to the forensic wealth of Virginia and carried it to new heights. This was particularly true of his earlier public life. Tall and erect, dressed in a Prince Albert coat and with pendant eyeglasses, he made an imposing figure as he stood before an audience.

The second inheritance which his state gave him was his accent, a distinctly regional inflection of which he himself was unconscious. There was an intriguing lure in the very flavor of his voice that would have won him favor in any court in the world. Whatever he had to say was doubly interesting because it was couched in the soft and gentle wooing of his Virginian tongue and supported by the best of an eighteenth century civility. Something of the mellowness of an endearing southern mammy spoke in the quality of his utterance. He had the best of this heritage without suffering its peculiar defects in the clarity of his language.

This happy combination which his state and community bequeathed to him gave him great advantage in his public ministry. He could scarcely have done anything else than preach without doing violence to the inheritance he had received. He had breathed the air of public address and had grown up in the glamour of its appeal. These fortuitous streams of public life and service conspired to make him the preacher he became.

2. The Contribution of the Manse

WE HAVE been looking to discover what the community of Peter Ainslie gave to him. It will be more interesting now to inquire about the measure of the contribution which his home life gave him. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, in effect: "If you would grow a man, begin a hundred years before he is born." Peter Ainslie had just this background. He belonged to the third generation of the manse. His grandfather and father were ministers before him. As a child he breathed the air of religion. His ancestors were not only ministers but were such at a time when the ministry was held in highest esteem. The manse was the home of culture and intellectual excellence and the seat of moral authority and judgment in the community. To be born into such an inheritance was to become heir to true riches and to have the key to noble advantages put into one's hands. The manse was at once the community library and the center of public information. The preacher was a dispenser of wide knowledge and a leading interpreter of the best in philosophy. Public regard for him did not rest upon fear or awe of dictatorial powers. Neither the civil authority claimed by the clergy of the Middle Ages nor the supremacy of revelation claimed by the Puritans were elements in the exaltation of the ministry of this period. It was recognition of inherent worth alone which gave to the manse its regard and standing in the society of men.

Peter Ainslie was a natural product of this quality of Christian priesthood. He came to the church as a homing pigeon to its cote. The call to the church was a voice from home; its language fell on understanding ears. All that his century cherished most, came to him as a direct inheritance. A mentality that was being emancipated from a thousand years of restraint and hardness flowed into his thinking. The soul of courage that flowered in Luther and Wyclif and Hus entered into his life by direct succession. The rich culture of the rural pastor of Whittier's portrait cast its influence over his becoming. Even the best gift of the manse, its poverty, was his also. Like an apostolic succession, the traditions that most befit the ministry united to form Peter Ainslie's heritage.

The Ainslie name is a historic one, making its rich contribution to these hundred years of American history and to the record of the Christian church. This, then, was the something more than soil and climate and advantage of community which entered into the formation of the mind and spirit of the subject of this volume. It was a name and a tradition. The name consists of the Gaelic word *ain*, meaning a river or spring, and the Welsh word *lea*, meaning meadowland. Undoubtedly some early Ainslie assumed this surname from the location of his residence in a meadow near a stream. There is a village in Scotland called Ainslie. Many honored scions of the house of Ainslie appear in English and Scottish history. In English history Ainslies appear as early as the eleventh century. They were driven from England by William the Conqueror and fled to Scotland. They play a part in Scottish history for seven hundred years. Among those mentioned is Thomas de Ainslie in 1214. Sir Robert Ainslie was the English ambassador to Turkey in 1755. The mother of Sir Walter

Scott was an Ainslie, and Sir Walter held the name in such esteem that he had the coat of arms belonging to his mother's family enshrined in the ceiling of his study.

America has many families bearing this name widely distributed throughout the country, particularly along the Atlantic seaboard. Together with such honored families as the Lowells and Cabots and Adamses, we may well enter the Ainslie family. While they made no memorable contribution to the political life of this country, they did have a marked influence upon its moral and spiritual life and it may be safely claimed that they "spoke to God" more often and more intimately than even the Lowells and Cabots and Adamses.

How much such a name and such a tradition may come to mean to those who share them is well illustrated in the life of the good Bishop Vincent, founder of Chautauqua. It is related of him that when setting out on one of his numerous journeys, first as a Methodist preacher and later as a bishop, he was accustomed to say to his boys: "My sons, I want you to be good boys while I am gone. If you are tempted to do wrong, remember who your daddy is." He shrewdly hoped that this reflection would cause them to hesitate before taking a false step or bringing disgrace upon his good name. But in the course of years he grew too old to carry on his former vigorous program and he realized that he must resign. When the time came for him to attend his last assembly as one of the official heads of his church, he departed with a heavy heart. His sons understood with what sadness he faced this ordeal. On the day when he must give place to younger men, they had a happy inspiration. They sent him a telegram of encouragement concluding with his own familiar admonition, now transposed: "Remember whose daddy you are!" For by this time the sons had come to a place of public favor and

high esteem in their own right, and were able to reflect on their father something of the glory he once had shed on them.

It is this quality of background that former generations of Ainslies bequeathed to Peter Ainslie III. It is a mark of advantage for a man to come from a Christian home. It is a mark of still greater distinction when a man can trace his lineage from two generations of the Christian manse. Such was the family inheritance of Peter Ainslie. It may be added without invidious comparison that he was doubly privileged because the manse of which he was an heir was Scottish. No people have more highly regarded the dignity and place of the preacher than have Scottish Christians.

Peter Ainslie I was born in Edinburgh in 1788. He entered the Presbyterian Church and later became a minister in that communion. He was drawn to the followers of the Haldanes, a group holding more liberal and inclusive views which were particularly agreeable to his mind. They advocated religious freedom and tolerance of opinion. When he came to America in 1811 he found no fellowship of that type. The Baptist Church appeared to him more hospitable than others; so he united with this communion, in which he became a distinguished preacher in Virginia. For a time he was a leader in the Dover Association of that state, but his liberal views caused him to be excommunicated from the association, along with six other ministers.

Contact with the Haldane group had prepared his mind for the message of Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Presbyterian ministers then preaching in western Pennsylvania. Later, when he became acquainted with their appeal for the unity of the church, he joined their adherents, then known as the "Reformers," afterwards as the "Disciples of Christ." The upright walk and humble manner of the

elder Peter Ainslie had given him great influence, so that his action was followed by a large number of his parishioners and admirers. His affectionate nature would not permit him greatly to offend others; so he never became a daring champion of the new views, nor could he have been very aggressive. But it was said of him after his expulsion from the Dover Association that "on this account he was the most dangerous of all his associates." Peter Ainslie I died in 1834.

Recollections of him preserved by his community reveal the genuine concern which he felt for the underprivileged. Like many prominent ministers of his time, including Alexander Campbell, and particularly like many of his fellow Christians, Peter Ainslie I kept slaves. One of these married a woman belonging to a neighbor. Later the neighbor sold the slave-wife to the owner of a plantation across the river. Seeing the grief of his servant at the separation, Peter Ainslie decided to buy the woman and bring her back to live in his own household. Carrying with him the ransom money and taking with him the husband, he attempted to cross the perilous Rappahannock river, then filled with floating ice. The boat, struck by an exceedingly heavy ice floe, capsized and both Ainslie and his servant were drowned. Six months later his body was found with the purchase money still in his pocket. This tragic story made a profound impression on the mind of young Peter. Both the condition of the colored people and the devotion that led his grandfather to lay down his life for one of them combined to kindle in the grandson's mind a passion to better the lot of the black man and to do it at whatever cost his championship might entail.

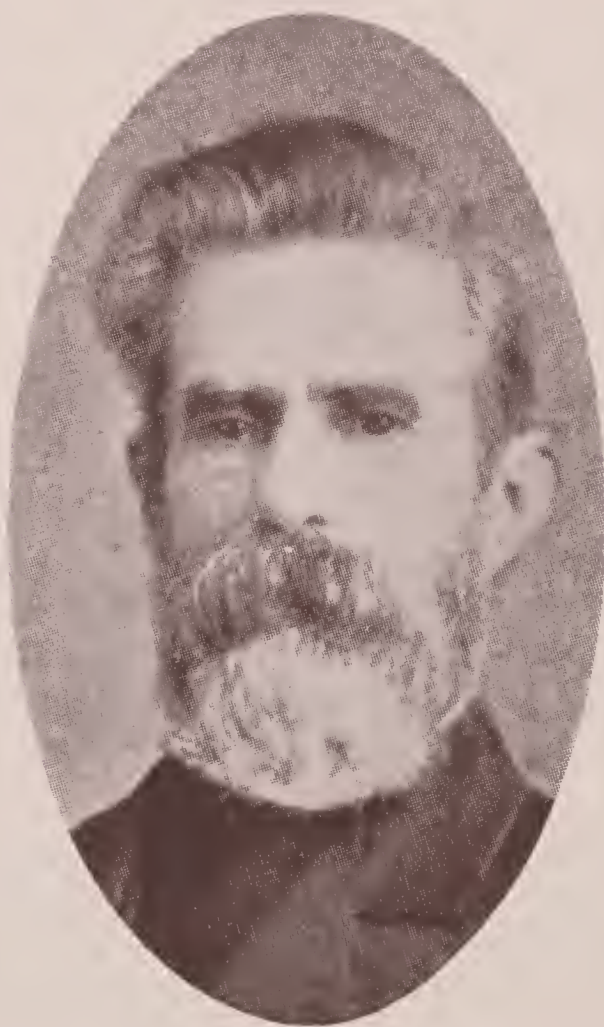
Peter Ainslie II was born in Virginia in 1816. He followed his father into the movement led by the Campbells and united with them in 1836. He graduated from Beth-



THE PARENTS OF
PETER AINSLIE

REBECCA E. AINSLIE
Born November 13, 1826
Died August 4, 1904

PETER AINSLIE II
Born December 25, 1816
Died March 22, 1887



any College, West Virginia, under the tutelage of Alexander Campbell. Like his father, he became a minister in the Campbellian movement, but unlike his father he was outspoken in his convictions and an ardent champion of the Reformers' message. He held various pastorates in the tidewater region but for a time served chiefly as an evangelist. In 1840 he went to Arkansas, where he was an evangelist for seven years. But in 1847 he returned to King and William county, Virginia, where he had married a southern gentlewoman, Rebecca Sizer, in 1839. For twenty years he preached in adjoining communities. He was on occasion little amenable to dispassionate and considerate reason and sometimes got into controversy with his congregations. Except for the quiet and calm disposition of his wife he might have been without a parish during the later years of his life. He disagreed with his congregation at Dunnsville and took his family ten miles away every Sunday to worship with another church. It was a full day's journey, but it marked the depth of his grievance.

Earlier in his ministry he was often invited by Alexander Campbell to preach in the beginning of the Disciples' movement. He vigorously espoused what was then the "modern" Sunday school program, and, against strong opposition, he advocated receiving money from all persons who were interested enough to contribute, whether Christians or non-Christians. On one occasion after such an address a dissenting clerk made this entry: "Brother Ainslie delivered an address urging upon the churches the duty of 'feeding the kids beside the shepherd's tent,'" and added:

Whereas the undersigned having been a member of the Rapahannock Church for something more than twenty-four years, never before having heard of any appeal or request being made to any other congregation of Disciples for the "world" to con-

tribute to its work for any purpose, and believing it to have been done in this instance in violation of any former practice and also in the opinion of the undersigned, in violation of the cardinal principles of this "Reform," taking from its character of consistency, therefore believes that it will be pernicious in its consequences and will sink the church to the level of the sects in this particular.

Such were the strength and courage of Peter Ainslie II that he showed little caution in meeting the extreme conservatism of his time. He was no docile antagonist, but a doughty foe of tradition who preached his gospel of liberalizing thought without great regard for the hesitations and fears of others. It is true that the antagonisms against which he waged battle were insignificant when compared with those against which Peter Ainslie III contended, but the matter of present moment is that the house of the Ainslies maintained the protest of a liberal attitude consistently for one hundred years. It was a century of heroic advocacy of progressive ideas and of revolt against the shackles of enslaving tradition.

This attitude became a habit of mind which was transferred from father to son. Few indeed are the families in American history whose record for brave witness borne, and staunch support given to the right of private conviction, can be said to surpass that of the Ainslies. The problems each Ainslie met in his time were not of equal gravity, but each in his generation dared to speak for the truth as he saw it. Possibly if each Peter Ainslie in his turn had not been true to whatever light he had, we should not have the gallant testimony of Peter Ainslie III. How much of the hard-won freedom of the American church, and especially of that portion of it known as the Disciples, is due to the three generations of the Ainslie ministry we can but faintly imagine. It is enough to know that all three consistently

championed freedom of thought and action and forward-looking attitudes of mind.

Peter Ainslie II built a home near Dunnsville, Virginia, where his younger children were born. The house still stands, much as it was. It must have been in its time quite an impressive building for that region. The gabled roof, with its small bedrooms, the great fireplace around which the family gathered in the living room, the deep basement where all assembled for their meals, still bear witness of a limited aristocracy set in simple grandeur. Behind the house clustered the quarters where the servants lived, and beyond, the cleared fields lay along the wooded hills. These still remain as mute reminders of a manner of life which has all but passed away.

Here Peter II lived with his family and some twenty slaves. In holding slaves he but followed the common custom of the south. Misgivings of conscience on this subject of slavery had as yet scarcely begun to make themselves felt. For that matter conscientious scruples respecting slavery were not a sectional virtue. Slave cemeteries are found in the north, but one reason why slavery did not flourish more widely there was because from earliest times it was not profitable. A few who are still living remember Peter Ainslie II, and recall his kindly demeanor toward his slaves. They were really an inheritance which grew through the dependent colored folk whom he took in, notwithstanding his rather limited resources. Much as we may now regret that any Christian minister ever held human beings as chattels, it should be remembered that many of them looked upon the possession of slaves as a form of stewardship, in which the slaves accepted their protection and the owner served as their buffer against the vicissitudes of life. To such masters the idea of ownership was not consciously present. At least it is true that twenty slaves

must have been all but exhausting to a poor preacher's purse. They were retainers who lived upon their master and kept him perpetually poor. Their services did not repay the cost of their maintenance.

Peter Ainslie II was respected by those who disagreed with him; they believed him to be a man of high integrity and of strong convictions. Like all the Reformers, he was a diligent student of the Bible. His generation of preachers, living in or near the frontier, had few aids in getting a clear understanding of the historic and progressive revelation the Scriptures contained, but they knew the text and could quote the Bible as few men in modern times can. The traditional memory of his community recalls that he was a preacher of rare power. He knew how to make effective use of long quotations which, like all the Scriptures, have their weight when used by sincere men — even of inferior abilities.

Altogether, eight children were born to Peter and Rebecca Ainslie. But the tragedy of the America of seventy-five years ago struck them severely. Mothers in those days were without the aid of modern science; especially were they without the knowledge of proper diet for their babies and of prenatal care for themselves. Consequently many small children died. That was especially true of the south, where the heat worked havoc. Peter Ainslie's mother had been brought up surrounded by servants. Her practical knowledge of domestic matters was naturally limited. Five of her children died in early infancy. Peter was the youngest of the three who reached maturity. A brother, Charles H., was Peter's senior by ten years. He, too, started in the ministry, but later entered business. A sister, Etta, seven years his senior, became his strong support in later years, giving him capable assistance in his writings and in the work of his church, and helping him to establish



COTTAGE HILL

*Peter Ainslie's birthplace and the home
of his boyhood days*

the Girls' Working Home in Baltimore, which he organized and conducted in connection with his church. This sister remained a member of his household until she passed away in 1904. Like his mother, she was the well beloved of a fond and devoted bachelor brother, who counted it his greatest joy to minister to all her needs and wants.

The father was absent much of the time fulfilling his duties as an itinerant preacher, though he was never far away. But he could give little time to the education and development of his children. The mother was never robust in health, but her very frailty gave her opportunity for a delicate ministry to a son who was similarly frail. Son and mother were bound together in the bonds of mutual intellectual and spiritual interests. By close association, as well as by desire, the child became a kind of facsimile of his mother. As previously observed, servants were numerous — too numerous for the economic well-being of the family — but none of them, nor all, could do for the ailing mother what her sensitive son could do, particularly since his own earlier years had been constantly conditioned by frailty. The normal sports of other children were denied him. This very handicap brought him into still closer intimacy with his mother. Like all men who have accomplished something in the world and have maintained a spirit of self-respect and of deep gratitude, he had his homage to pay. Late in his life he said: "For some reason I have found favor with God, for not often is one so richly blessed as to have the sacred burden of an invalid mother and an invalid sister through many years. I shall wait in the glow of the sunset for the morning light, when I shall see them again."

The secret of this good mother's greatness was her gentleness. It was of the kind that the Psalmist acknowledged: "Thy gentleness, O God, hath made me great." Always

a lover of good literature and a devout and pious woman, she imparted to her children both a thirst for the best and a heritage of Christian grace. The atmosphere of the family was much like that of the early Quaker homes. Lessons of kindness and courtesy had first place. She planted the seeds of Christian attitudes in the unfolding lives of her children. She taught them to suppress desire for revenge and insisted that they return good for evil, and expected them to act according to her teachings in their relationships with other children. She drew a sharp distinction between revenge and spiritlessness, however. Daily she insisted that young Peter regard it as more important to preserve his dignity than to establish a reputation as a fighter. Such training inevitably fostered a conciliatory spirit, ready to manifest itself in situations that called for the courage of a soldier. It would have been astonishing if a child so brought up had not in later life become a champion of pacific means of adjusting controversies.

His mother's fondness for the delicate child caused her to dress him as she would have dressed a little girl. She even made "protecting" aprons for him to wear over his school apparel—a fact which sometimes tempted his schoolmates to copy the trick of Joseph's brethren, namely, cast him into the ditch. Peter Ainslie the man did not hesitate to acknowledge that this experience had a vital effect upon his moral growth. His mother's restraining hand held him back from the expression of many an early impulse to avenge himself. He said of her: "My mother laid constantly upon my heart this teaching of Jesus when I was a mere boy, that forgiveness is the first qualification in the discipleship of Jesus. It radiated from her as well throughout our village life."

Those of his childhood friends who still survive marvel as they recall that the boy never fought back when he was

roughly treated. Something of his lifelong inner superiority marked him even then. How much of it was due to pride that would not stoop to the bully's manner, how much to what later became a strong inclination to non-resistance against violence, the reader may decide for himself. There was in him something that would not let him sully his hands with the dirt of low conduct. Whether it was his Virginian aristocracy or his Christian conviction or both that made him so inoffensive as a lad we cannot fully know. Doubtless it was a blend of the two.

The literary habits of Peter Ainslie's life were fixed early. The companionship of good books, the habit of church-going, and the "sitting" in the front pew where in childhood he was accustomed to sleep, made their slow but certain contribution to the texture of his mind and spirit. The closely knit family circle, with its "other member," Miss Emiline McGuire, lifelong servant in the home, together with the constant influence of his Sunday school teacher, Miss Etta Garnett, and his rural schoolteacher, Mr. John Hunley, constituted the intellectual and social and moral world in which he grew up spiritually strong and tall.

Strangely enough, the very poverty of his home gave wings to his imagination. He did not come to man's estate by dint of hard labor, as did most great Americans whom we memorialize. This he could not do. But his isolated environment, with its scarcity of outside appeals, had to be compensated for by the creative impulses within his own mind. Of his early home he said:

My cottage home gave me many advantages. My father had a good library for a village minister – about five hundred volumes. Being a delicate boy and having to remain in the house a good deal, I had an unusual opportunity to read. My mother required me to read or to be read to every day. I was never

restricted in my choice of reading, but I could not go very far wrong in reading any of the five hundred books, which I knew well enough to select any one of them in the dark.

On long winter evenings we would gather around the open fire. My father would be seated on one side of the table; on the other side would be my mother, my sister and myself. There we sat for hours reading. When bedtime came we would have to tell what we had read. The character which we discussed became as real as our neighbors. In the long summer days I would sit in the shade of a tree or throw myself on the ground and read for hours.

Here he absorbed Shakespeare and Emerson and, strangely enough, all he could find on the life of Napoleon. He said:

Like most boys, I was thrilled by stories of war and the military tactics of great warriors. I used to sit for hours listening to stories of the Civil War. I read Headley's *Napoleon and His Marshals* so constantly that I knew it almost by heart. His *Table Talks* furnished many aphorisms that I can never forget. . . . Every life I could buy or borrow on Napoleon and his marshals I eagerly read. I was thoroughly familiar with his great battles. For a time I included his name for my middle name. Some years after, when I visited his tomb in the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris, it was like visiting the tomb of an old friend.

One can but smile at the strange anomaly if the Peter Ainslie that his generation came to know had become permanently named Peter Napoleon Ainslie.

But his admiration of the Little Corporal waned. Presently he began to contemplate the results of Napoleon's wars: how they cut short the physical stature of Frenchmen by three inches; how they left scars that have never healed; how they were the precursors of other wars; how they were everywhere followed by disease and poverty and death, "covered up with uniforms and brass buttons and labeled patriotism." In later life Ainslie observed of Napoleon:

“ His brilliant military tactics amazed the world, and still have a charm to some, but that which impressed me most was the inability of the sword to settle things.”

A little later in his boyhood he came upon the writings of Tolstoy and these completed his conversion to the principle of peace as alone holding the key to the well-being and prosperity of mankind. Indeed, it was the absorbing personality of Leo Tolstoy, swimming into his ken in his unfolding years, that most powerfully affected the later life and thinking of Peter Ainslie. The union in Tolstoy of the soldier's courage and the shepherd's gentleness made a strong appeal to young Peter. Something of the quality of the great Russian found in him a responsive and kindred chord. That this early warrior should have deserted the path of Napoleon, broken his colonel's sword and, with a daring no soldier ever knew, championed the pathway of peace for men and nations on the basis of nonresistance, caught the imagination and the allegiance of Peter Ainslie's whole being. At last he had found the best of Emerson and of Napoleon combined in one man, held together by the strong bonds of the beatitudes of peace.

It was the influence of Tolstoy's writings also that released young Ainslie's mind from orthodox thinking on social problems. The glory of Napoleon lost its glamour for him because this Russian nobleman had set him on a new path of inquiry and interest. Thereafter, he said, “ I had no further difficulty in finding my way to what seemed to me a finer standard in international affairs. I decided to denounce war, nor would I have anything to do with war under any circumstances, even though my country became involved in one.”

Such was the development of his youthful mind in what was and is a setting of primitive beauty, though it was one of humble but proud poverty. If that meaningful phrase,

"We climb on a ladder of created souls," was ever true in human experience, then Peter Ainslie's unfolding is one of its best illustrations. He said: "I was taught to think in the sphere of the universal and to claim in my kinship all good men irrespective of their nationality, politics or theology. Out of such training, which was a university in itself, I learned to be open-minded."

But it was the influence of his mother that led him to choose the ministry for his career. Peter Ainslie discovered his passion for preaching under her gentle persuasion. She called him "my preacher." To this appeal was added the benign influence of a devoted aunt to whom he was a "son" until her death. He grew up a protected child in a rural manse, yet he was always under an unrelenting compulsion that this one thing he must do. He was constantly reminded that before his birth the family kept eagerly asking, "When is Little Moses to arrive?" At his birth the old mammy shouted to the neighbors, "Little Moses done come!"

Old neighbors remember the spot at the edge of the woods near his Dunnsville home whither as a mere boy he went every day to "preach" — a Wordsworthian setting, still untouched, an open spot surrounded by tall trees, silent willing auditors, together with singing birds and flying clouds and sheltered beasts. Here Peter Ainslie learned to lift up his voice and to be unafraid of its sound. It was his mother who sent him there. She had put into his mind the idea of preaching, and now she sent him to the quiet of the woods to learn how to preach.

What youth could escape such persuasion even if he were so minded? Quite normally and naturally "Little Moses" became a member of the church at ten years of age. He was baptized in Essex lake by the village mill to which for a hundred years the families of his community

had been accustomed to go for their weekly grist of meal and flour.

We cannot turn away from this consideration of the contribution of the community and home life of Peter Ainslie to what he was and what he did in later years, without reflecting upon the quality of life which that simple environment could produce. One wonders whether the competitors for time and energy and ambition which so complicate our modern civilization can ever equal the stimulation of such unmixed motives and simple influences as beat upon this young life in that modest and remote corner of the New World.

3. The Seminary Years

THE Christian manse has proverbially beaten a path to the academy and the college and the university. The plain living and high thinking which ordinarily belonged to the life of the manse in former days, both built colleges and filled them with its sons and daughters. Ministers lured their children to seek the greater knowledge waiting to be discovered beyond the boundaries of home. This experience was reproduced in the life of Peter Ainslie. The five hundred volumes in his father's library, the quickening conversation about the hearth, the deep family interest in the life of the world outside, combined to set the mind of young Peter on fire to find other teachers and wider knowledge than his childhood home could afford. He must go to college.

In that generation the church college was considered the most logical place for a young Christian to be sent. Parents felt their children would find there Christian companions and Christian teachers who would influence them more than all books and libraries. They expected such institutions to supply an atmosphere that was morally wholesome and uplifting and free from the "atheistic" influences which might be encountered in other academic circles. Since Peter was planning to be a minister, it was most natural that he should seek some such center in which ministers were made.

The early colleges of America were established largely by Christian men and women. Inasmuch as the earliest

and strongest of American traditions was the separation of church and state, there was neither a desire to appeal for public taxes to build Christian institutions, nor any likelihood that a favorable response would have been accorded such a request. The only means of recruiting and preparing a ministry was to establish and endow academic centers where the courses taught and the influence exerted could be controlled by Christian people. There was as yet among the struggling and contending communions no general spirit of cooperation or of unity that could persuade them to establish union seminaries. Consequently each denomination founded its own colleges, with the deliberate purpose of making them centers for propagating the views of the Bible and of the Christian faith peculiar to their founders. The idea of ecumenicity, as it is now conceived, had not entered into the mind of the frontier church.

The Disciples along with other communions established such colleges throughout America as far as their movement had spread and their ability permitted. The first was founded by Alexander Campbell at Bethany, West Virginia, in 1841. This institution was essentially a place for equipping and inspiring young preachers. High academic standing was not its primary aim.

As the Disciples grew and spread, they established new colleges in their more thickly settled centers of population. Among these was the College of the Bible at Lexington, Kentucky, which was later affiliated with Transylvania University. The history of the two institutions is somewhat involved. Transylvania Academy was the first educational institution established west of the Alleghenies. Later Bacon College was located at the same place and presently merged with the academy. The outgrowth of this merger was an educational institution called Kentucky

University, which in time came under the control of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), whose members contributed large sums for its endowment. Apart from the university a new school was established called the College of the Bible, a separate institution, though its students had the privilege of attending classes at, and graduating from, the university. When the legislature of Kentucky established at Lexington a college which was later called the University of Kentucky, the curators of Kentucky University, in order to avoid confusion, changed the name of that institution to Transylvania University.

Young Ainslie followed the traditions of his family and of his communion in selecting Transylvania and its associated College of the Bible as the second home of his mental and spiritual growth. He entered college in October 1888. Here he found a later edition of Virginia in its temper and culture. By its architecture, as by its manners, it was a transplanted facsimile of its elder sister. The sense of tranquillity and of inbred hospitality had been carried to its campus. Ainslie senior, being a minister in the "Reformation," knew of Transylvania and had talked much of its famous president, John W. McGarvey. Nor was President McGarvey unaware of the coming of young Peter. He knew Peter Ainslie II to be a staunch Reformer, and welcomed his son to the campus as a child of his own.

Professor McGarvey, as he was affectionately called, was in every way a remarkable man, but he was preeminently a teacher. He could put his material into such simple language and express it in such a logical and convincing manner that it was unforgettable. The tendency of his teaching was to fashion the mental processes of his students as surely as a sculptor shapes his marble. Those who remember his manner of teaching unitedly join in declaring their high appreciation of his capacity to make his ideas clear

and unforgettable. It is their general testimony that more than any other man they remember he presented his ideas in a manner that made it difficult to escape them. The Honorable Joab H. Banton, one of his pupils and a classmate of Peter Ainslie's, wrote of him:

Had John W. McGarvey become a lawyer, he would have been one of the greatest lawyers of his time. He had a faculty for ascertaining the facts regarding any case or question and being able to marshal these facts in such a manner as to bring a firm conviction of the justness of his cause. He was a legalist and a mathematician. McGarvey had a legal mind. It was hard for anyone of the spiritual type of Ainslie to adopt McGarvey's thought and accept his conclusions. The same difficulty lay in the mind of James Lane Allen, a classmate of mine. Hence, he was shocked at the legal tendency of McGarvey. This tendency never shocked me. Fortunately, I was born and trained to be a lawyer and my mind always ran in legal channels. Therefore, I was able to appreciate John W. McGarvey. Had I gone to a school with atheistic tendencies, I probably would have wound up either an agnostic or an atheist. I finished college with a firm faith which I owe to John W. McGarvey.

McGarvey had strong convictions from which he was not easily moved. He was a true child of the "Reformation." He believed that the brotherhood of the Disciples had come to the Kingdom "for such a time as this." He held his views so tenaciously that, unconsciously, he often made preachers in his own image, embryo McGarveys, as immovable as their teacher in their assurance of what constituted the truth. Like many another strong man, he was a combination of two dissident qualities. On the one hand he was possessed of the gentlest and sweetest of natures whose high quality was equaled only by the clarity of his utterances; on the other, he was inclined to be intolerant of a differing point of biblical interpretation. His devotion to the Bible amounted to a worship of "the

Book.” A man of extraordinary tenderness and kindness, he could be transformed into a veritable warrior when he encountered what seemed to him disloyalty to the text of Holy Scripture. When “higher criticism” appeared it was to him a particular enemy of the Christian faith. Like another Samson, he fell upon all such interpreters of whom he heard and “smote them hip and thigh.” Like so many strong minds, he grew more conservative toward the end of his life. During these years he sent out capable students into the contemporary theological Canaan, to bring back reports which he might contradict. These embassies were not so much to learn new truth to be shared as to discover sources of “destructive criticism” to be combatted, to bring information concerning “errors” to be refuted.

President McGarvey had associated with himself on the faculty of the College of the Bible other strong minds, scarcely less capable than his own in their ability to set forth their ideas in simple, lucid and effective style. The combination of such a company of honored successors of the Campbells drew young men from all areas where Disciples were established. Transylvania, in fact, constituted a theological mecca for young men of this movement who were looking toward the ministry. Here were gathered some of the most distinguished minds of the Disciples of Christ of that generation. Among them were Professor Charles Louis Loos, Professor I. B. Grubbs and Professor Robert Graham, though none of them was equal in persuasive and compelling power of statement to Professor McGarvey.

For thirty years this great man and his faculty took the pliable material of Disciple youth that came to their hands and hammered it into trumpets of “the Plea.” * They

* “The Plea” is a term used widely among the Disciples, and the reader will often come upon it in this volume. It originated in the appeal

filled their long generation with men who went out across the new west as flaming evangelists of the "Plan of Salvation," convinced that they had found an adequate and authoritative formula by which men could find salvation, and so build the true Church of Christ. Happily these capable teachers could not create permanent reproductions of themselves. But they could and did bequeath a desire for simplicity of interpretation of the New Testament, and a faith in its Christ and in the church which they believed it clearly outlined. The more self-dependent minds among their students held to the essence of these teachings, but eventually released themselves from the bonds of the more rigid conclusions. But the tendency among more docile minds was to become dogmatic.

Into this battleground came young Peter Ainslie. He was strange material for the doughty Thor, McGarvey. In spite of his sensitive spirit and irenic soul, his believing nature was prepared, both by the reputation of his teachers and by their sureness concerning the truths of the "Reformation," to accept the interpretations offered him as final pronouncements of biblical truth. In Professor McGarvey he found the soul of conviction and an incarnation of the crusader type. So trusting a spirit as Ainslie could not but be deeply moved by such a robust interpreter of the movement of his fathers. His whole being bowed before this man of genuine worth and unyielding certainty. The basic

for the unity of the church. The Reformers believed that the only authoritative basis for such unity was to be found in the restoration of the New Testament church. Rev. Walter Scott, a colleague of Alexander Campbell, was the first to use the phrase, "the Plan of Salvation," as meaning the steps necessary to conversion. As he set them forth they were: Faith, Repentance, Confession, Baptism. The "Plea" was at first a passion, then it inclined toward a doctrine, and, by usage, came in the minds of many to mean a "scheme" of redemption. As in all spiritual movements, the "Plea" tended to become confused with the "Plan."

principle of his teachings implied an unquestioning acceptance of the letter of the law. Professor McGarvey was not a fundamentalist, but he was a legalist. His method of treatment of Scripture fastened upon the mind of young Ainslie for many years. As he himself wrote later:

When I started upon my preparation for the ministry at nineteen years of age, the verbal and moral theories of the inspiration of the Scriptures were having a struggle for the right of way. My college was on the side of the former. I followed my college in its thinking and became a legalist and with that attitude of mind I entered upon my ministry.

It was Ainslie's attachment to the authority of the letter which prepared him to accept, for a considerable period, the odd divergence of premillennialism, as we shall later discover. (The premillennial view was held by not a few pioneer preachers and it made a strong appeal to pious and tractable minds.) He came to advocate the conception of the second coming of Christ in physical form, because that seemed the evident teaching of the apostle Paul. However, he began soon to distrust finalities, especially those which made for unbrotherliness. His nature revolted against barriers which shut out others from divine privileges even though for a time his mind assented to "chapter and verse" authority which seemed to erect such barriers.

Ainslie's college companions recall little about his external reaction to his tutelage except to say that he was "different" from others in the spirit of his relations with fellow students. Having never been robust, he took little part in the normal athletic life of the campus or in its social activities, save debating. He entered zealously into his studies. His classmates had a general impression "that he applied himself seriously to the task of becoming fit for the ministry." Young Ainslie actually began that ministry

during his college days, since young men preparing to preach, in that period, were encouraged to begin preaching as soon as any congregation was willing to hear them. The practice was based on the famous phrase borrowed from contemporary politics, that "the way to resume is to resume." Ainslie preached according to the best tradition of the Disciples and became a capable pleader for the Plea. All that can be learned or recalled about his early preaching is that he accepted Professor McGarvey's teachings, though he never accepted his method and spirit of propagating them. He himself later wrote of his alma mater:

There was a denominational atmosphere there, more or less, as in all similar colleges. It was a college of a denomination and a denominational atmosphere was inevitable. At first I resented this, but I had sense enough to know that a fellow in his teens should suppress his mental fermentations; besides, everything was so pleasant that it looked unappreciative to be protesting. Unconsciously, however, I yielded little by little until by my third year I was a thorough denominationalist. I did not recover for the next fifteen or twenty years.

That is what a denominational college did for a young man like me preparing for the ministry, and I was an average young man. If my parents had been of any other of America's two hundred and fifteen denominations the likelihood is that the result would have been the same: I might have come out a Catholic priest, or a Southern Baptist preacher. Some escape and retain their freedom, but that number is small in comparison with the great number of ministerial students who come out with a definite attitude toward other Christians, not so friendly necessarily as with those of the same denomination, perhaps even definitely unfriendly, depending upon which denominational factory got the raw material. These perpetuate the scandal of division as a sacred trust.

He was soon in the apostolic constraint — betwixt two minds. On the one hand all that he was being taught fitted well into his heredity and training. On the other hand

he felt that the method and spirit of what he had earlier learned were at variance with the "truth" being taught by his professors. His college days were never at ease. While still under the spell of so good and so great a man as Professor McGarvey he was never able to detach himself from the professor's engaging mind. Only as maturing years gave him immunity from any imputation of irreverence for his teacher did he come to distinguish between the letter and the spirit of revelation. By his own reasoning, he came to share in what was not then discussed in his circle — the "historic" approach. One of the severe wrenches of his life came through a conviction that obliged him to choose between his sense of indebtedness to the teachers of the College of the Bible and the new understanding for which he was debtor to friends of wider horizon.

The period of Ainslie's early ministry was an epoch of intense propagation of the Plea. It was an energetic, an evangelistic age, when enthusiasm for the growth of membership in the communion outran devotion to the cause of Christian unity, which had given to the movement its original impulse. This passion for unity became for a time obscured by a passion for the "correctness" of the process of becoming a Christian.

But as we shall find in other emergencies of Ainslie's life, he had a process of his own which delivered him from legalistic chains. Experience was his university. He accepted the pragmatic test; namely, what worked well was good, what would not work was false. He later said concerning legalism: "When I got disturbed over social or theological problems I established the method of reading the New Testament through on the point in question, and later of reading the Synoptic Gospels chiefly. It was thus that I usually came out on the right side of the problem."

His emancipation seems still more remarkable when we remember that it was out of a home holding like-minded views and conceptions that young Ainslie had come. The essential difference was that his home was steeped in an atmosphere of liberty, of freedom to go wherever truth might lead. Professor McGarvey, on the contrary, assumed that he had arrived at the truth, in so far as conversion and the outlines of the church were concerned. To be a good student under such a teacher was to listen and remember well. This Peter Ainslie could not do. Another teacher had been at work on him before Professor McGarvey and his associates had become the preceptors of his unfolding years. This was none other than his mother. She too had loved truth, but she loved love more. The way of truth might not always be clear, but the way of love was. She taught her son to follow that. When therefore love conflicted with the truth, he knew that this was not the whole truth, that he must seek elsewhere to find it. Thus he had the clue to ultimate reality; thus he had found the road to the fuller facts of revelation. He did not have time in his brief life to seek them out to the end in any particular, but he had the chart and the compass and was well on his way when he was summoned into the eternal light.

4. The Early Ministry

DOGGED by continual ill health, Peter Ainslie left college in May 1891 without graduating. Notwithstanding this disappointment he was undiscouraged. He had set his mind on having a pulpit of his own. Like St. Paul, he desired to labor where no man had labored. He wanted to build on his own foundation. He could not see himself fitted into another man's armor or into another man's work.

After a period of recuperation and reflection, he began to take account of the invitations which had come to him while in "retreat." His gifts as a preacher and his family connections had already made him widely known in his communion, so he had many flattering offers. Since he was tall and handsome and possessed a winsome personality, made more appealing by a deeply spiritual nature, he was not without opportunity to preach. But he was not moved to accept what seemed the most alluring field that opened to him. He conceived his ministry to be a laboratory where he could adventure in spiritual explorations, believing that an experimenter must have freedom. He turned away from more flattering pulpits and from securely established churches.

While yet a student he had planned to enter the service of the foreign mission field and to offer himself for some "hard place" in the world. Because of his uncertain health he was dissuaded from this by the advice of his college president. He then turned to the home field and to

its more difficult aspects. Since he had rejected the idea of a "made" pulpit he surveyed the openings which seemed to offer the largest opportunities along with the most hazardous chances of success.

Among these was one in Baltimore, Maryland. A small church of the Disciples, the Calhoun Christian Church, had been organized there and was already in great distress. Its handful of members had fallen out among themselves. It had neither social prestige nor the repute of good works. But Baltimore appealed to Ainslie for personal reasons. It was not far from his mother and his sister, who lived on the farm along the Rappahannock river. Theirs was a lonely life. He could visit them often if he were in Baltimore and he hoped later to make a home for them. Moreover, Johns Hopkins University was in Baltimore and it would afford him opportunity for further study. Most appealing of all, Baltimore was a difficult field and one in which he could adventure without too great loss if he should fail.

In October 1891 Peter Ainslie preached his first sermon in that little mission church. His salary was eight hundred dollars per year, with no guarantee of getting it regularly and with little hope that it would ever be fully paid. His congregation numbered fewer than fifty, none of them conspicuous in the life of the city. Neither he nor his people had influential friends or important contacts. In addition, the church was poorly located. Worst of all, it was greatly in debt and deeply divided in opinion.

There was, too, the unfriendly environment. Disciples were few on the Atlantic seaboard, for in the earlier period of their expansion many had followed the westward course of empire. Moreover, Baltimore was a non-Protestant city, the seat of a Roman Catholic cardinalate. Still more, it was a city of fixed social habits where minds were

not easily changed and where newness had scant welcome. Such Protestant churches as were there were historic and well known. Even these found it difficult to expand in such stolid surroundings. Ainslie had few accessions to his church from the Disciples at any period of his ministry; he had to depend almost wholly upon converts made through personal contacts, or on members of other communions who wished to join a fellowship they felt to be more congenial.

It would seem that any one of these forbidding drawbacks would have deterred a less daring soul. If Ainslie had been only one more preacher, Baltimore would never have heard of him. But he was not just one more; he was, as he called himself, an "experimenter." Despite the protest of many friends and those who already had high hope of what he might ultimately attain, he embarked on this unpromising venture. He was twenty-four years old and he felt he had a full lifetime ahead of him in which to prove his ideas. He was eager to begin, but he was not deceived about the length of time it might take to make such proof. He had set down some principles to guide his ministry:

1. I will meet my problems courageously, leaving the results of my labors as matters between God and me, rather than between the people and me; consequently, I shall always try to be hopeful.
2. I will cultivate my kinship with all peoples, irrespective of race, religion, politics or social conditions; consequently, I shall always try to be friendly.
3. I will remember that my time at most is short and that there is much to be done in helping to redeem the world; consequently, I shall always try to be industrious.
4. I will be free in my search for truth, not tying myself to any special system of philosophy or theology; but I will read freely what others have written and listen to what others say; consequently, I shall always try to be open-minded.

5. I will be indifferent to adverse criticism of myself, however cutting it may be, other than to profit by it if it is true, or leave it to die if untrue; consequently, I shall always try to be patient.

6. I will be careful regarding money, not only making interest in it secondary to my interest in people, but I will so conduct my own finances as to make my method commendable to others, always living within my income and paying my debts; consequently, I shall always try to be economical.

7. I will serve the people, both saints and sinners, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, and if I must choose between the two, my choice must be to the poor and ignorant; consequently, I shall always try to go to the one who needs me most.

8. I will treat others as I would have others treat me, and should others violate this principle by some antagonistic conduct toward me, I will endeavor to be patient at first and then, if conditions justify, I will forbid further encroachments; consequently, I shall always try to prevent others from unnecessarily bothering me by encroaching on me.

9. I will keep alive in my heart the desire to live in the spirit of Christ. I shall always try even to be ashamed of repentance toward God and apologies to others.

With such high ideals to begin his ministry, he decided to forget numbers or any idea of building a big church. He said he had observed that when men began to count the people, the figures obscured the spiritual ends for which they should have been set. He would have agreed heartily with the lamented Sylvester Horne of London, who one Sunday morning discovered a reporter counting the members of his church as they went out. Mr. Horne laconically suggested, "Do not count those who do not count." Yet Ainslie gave himself with abandon to win new converts and to broaden the base of his ministry. At that time he began saying a prayer which he repeated "thousands" of times later in his life: "O God, let me be forgot, but let this thing be done in the name of the Lord Jesus."

He began his work in the mission church with a determination that his pews should not be empty. He inaugurated it with a campaign of publicity in printer's ink, a course which he followed for many years. Hand bills were generously used. From week to week the young minister distributed them with his own hands. Once a policeman, seeing him nail the bills to telephone poles, rebuked him roundly for damaging the property of the public utilities company. Later, when he had audiences that taxed his building, this same officer was assigned to prevent accident or injury in the milling crowds that sought entrance. Ainslie held annual evangelistic meetings, conducting many of them himself.

Peter Ainslie's characteristic venturesomeness became apparent early in his ministry. At first he showed the greatest consideration for the judgment of the office-bearers of his church, never leaving town without informing them. But as his grasp of the situation grew more secure, he suggested that they all resign, leaving him free to select such persons as he might choose as likely to give more capable service. Indeed his mastery over his congregation grew until later, in an unhappy situation in his church, he asked his elders to resign. Such high-handed tactics could have had the consent only of a congregation that had come to love and trust their minister because of his singleness of mind and his devotion to the church. His example in this respect could not be followed by other pastors unless they had won the same esteem from their people.

He dared to do what has broken many a minister's heart and back: he asked to be made president of the Ladies' Aid Society for their annual bazaar. He had an ulterior motive. He did not like bazaars and thought the church's energies were consumed with much ado about nothing in giving dinners. Church support should come out of the

generosity of the heart. He used his opportunity to keep a detailed record of every activity connected with the bazaar and of all monies received and expended. In due time he gave his congregation a complete report, including a number of petty incidents he had witnessed in the course of his presidency. It was enough. Bazaars were done for in his church.

Early in his ministry he began publishing a weekly religious journal which he continued for six years. His original intention was to make it a means for propagating the message of the Disciples in the east. But to his credit it should be said that he mainly educated himself in the process. While presuming to enlighten other Christians on their incomplete discipleship, he came to see that being a propagandist makes for sectarianism. In later years, he confessed, "Being an editor intensified my denominationalism," and added frankly, "Denominational editorship usually does that."

The early years of his ministry however were marked by a vigorous evangelism with a denominational outlook. As Dr. William Adams Brown said, "I think he could have become a doughty denominationalist." He was just that during the first period of his preaching. However, he lived to repent of it and to confess, "My early ministry was characterized at times by strongly denominational preaching marked by caustic criticism of which I am now ashamed." But he did make converts and his handful of fifty grew to be a hundred, then two hundred, three hundred, five hundred, a thousand. His little building was crowded.

But his path during these years was not altogether smooth. The Calhoun Christian Church had gone through some internal dissensions and was destined to pass through more. At the beginning of the new pastorate all went well. Harmony seemed to have settled at last over

this turbulent flock. Ainslie confidently believed he had entered on a ministry destined to be happy, and had expectation of permanent tranquillity. But he had yet to go through his fires of discipline. He was to learn by experience that preachers are not made in Eden but must fight Apollyon before they can enter into the city celestial of pastoral blessedness. Here as everywhere he was to discover that "there are many adversaries." The congregation broke into more open contention and soon fell into deep discouragement; officials of the church even counseled giving up the effort.

All of this induced a return of Ainslie's earlier illness and within the first year he had to retire for months. On his return the responsible leaders of his congregation suggested that the work be closed. He replied by asking for the resignation of these officers and requesting the congregation to elect a new board. Thus he got rid both of the spirit of defeatism and of inefficiency.

This period of the ministry of Peter Ainslie was after the "most strict of the Pharisees" so far as zeal for the Plea of the Disciples was concerned. Many of his sermon-notes and addresses of that period remain as witnesses to his most ardent convictions on the theory of conversion with its purpose and place of baptism. A sense of the importance of the name "Christian" and the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper overwhelmed his mind. This was, he felt, the most important message for the world. That he preached it correctly after the manner of the fathers did not imply that he manifested a hard or proselyting spirit. An innate grace saved him from that unfraternal exhibition so common to zealots. Like Saul of Tarsus he could not believe anything half-heartedly. What he espoused at any period of his life was to him for that time the all-consuming will of God. If the total effect of his earlier ministry was

inhospitable and sectarian it was due to his intense passion for the truth as he saw it. There are those who think of his crusading years with their championship of the distinctive message and practice of the Disciples as contradictory to his later ministry of reconciliation. He would be the first to admit this charge. One can but protest that if he had not shown this measure of enthusiasm for what he then believed to be most vital, he would never have become the flaming prophet of reconciliation he was in his later years. As he was stout in his loyalty to truth as he saw it at one period, so was he strong in his later advocacy of a more tolerant message. In this, however, did he differ from other equally loyal proponents of the Plea, that he learned by what he saw and shared; namely, that Christian unity must be predicated on the fact that there are other Christians with whom to unite.

5. *The Christian Temple*

The Lengthened Shadow

IN 1902, eleven years after the beginning of his ministry, Peter Ainslie found himself on the threshold of fulfillment of a long cherished dream. His influence had grown until his little church could not hold the crowds who came to his services. A new and larger church seemed a necessity. Both because of improving health and because he had overcome the earlier congregational difficulties which for so long had plagued his endeavors, Ainslie was now able to undertake the task. He had no wealthy people in his congregation, but he had faith and he inspired faith in his people. He bought a corner lot and began building, a small section at a time, as funds were available.

Such was the beginning of the Christian Temple (its name was suggested by one of Ainslie's devoted parishioners, Mr. Walter Lane). The Temple was many years in building. It grew slowly, as the medieval cathedrals grew, the result of the skill and sacrifice of all the people who were drawn together to advance its progress and worship in it. The first great triumph was the opening of the chapel in 1905. This was made possible by the gift of Mr. William Newcomer, a member of the Disciples church in Hagerstown, Maryland. He had known and heard of Ainslie's work and courage, and volunteered to contribute enough to complete the chapel and thus set the congregation free to do what it seemed capable of doing under this



THE CHRISTIAN TEMPLE

Chapel opened January 15, 1905

Main building opened September 29, 1907

energetic young preacher. He made his gift without any strings attached — a procedure contrary to the sorry habit of many philanthropically minded men.

But Ainslie's vision was constantly enlarged. As soon as there was promise of sufficient funds to pay for one section of the building, he began another. The main building was completed in 1907. It was not until January 20, 1920, however, that the Temple was entirely completed, inside and out. Thus its congregation was made to feel that the Temple was really part of themselves. Each nook and cranny of it held precious memories of sacred partnership. It was a challenge rather than a burden, a daily invitation to self-denial, never a crushing weight of debt.

When completed, the Christian Temple was a more or less composite structure, without a distinctive architectural style. Yet it was a serviceable building, with a neighborly and intimate auditorium for worship and fairly adequate space and equipment for religious education work. One of its finest and most meaningful features was the ceiling of the auditorium. In 1910, as we shall see in the next chapter, Ainslie espoused a new conception of Christian unity and of the duty of his own communion in relation to it. He determined to give his new vision physical expression in the church auditorium. He drew up a list of great religious leaders of all times and countries and had their names inscribed on the ceiling of the auditorium. The roster is as follows:

Eight pre-Christian leaders: Abraham, Moses, David, Ezra, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Hosea.

Four Christian pioneers: Peter, James, John, Paul.

Four Christian teachers: Augustine of Hippo, Wyclif of Oxford, Alford of Canterbury, Drummond of Glasgow.

Four Christian preachers: Chrysostom of Antioch, Robertson of Brighton, Spurgeon of London, Moody of America.

Four Christian artists: Michelangelo of Italy, Raphael of Italy, Bach of Germany, Watts of England.

Four prophets of international peace: Origen of Alexandria, Grotius of Holland, Penn of England, Tolstoy of Russia.

Four prophets of Christian unity: Cyprian of Carthage, Calixtus of Germany, Baxter of England, Campbell of America.

Four Christian mystics: Francis of Assisi, Bunyan of Bedford, Spener of Dresden, Wesley of Epworth.

Four prophets of theological reform: Savonarola of Italy, Luther of Germany, Calvin of Geneva, Knox of Scotland.

Four prophets of social reform: Wilberforce of England, Howard of England, Booth of England, Willard of America.

The unveiling of the ceiling was accompanied by a week of special services. The chief address at the opening service was made by Dr. Alfred Ernest Garvie, principal of New College, London. Then followed throughout the week services conducted by local pastors and their congregations according to their own peculiar liturgies or ceremonies. Among these were one held by a colored pastor and another, a Sabbath evening prayer service, conducted by a Jewish rabbi. This series of services was meant to express in concrete fashion the religious fellowship which the roll of prophets and reformers and distinguished religious leaders inscribed on the ceiling conveyed.

Every Sunday morning large congregations read these noble and historic names which at first may have meant little to them, but in time became household words in their thinking. It was a daring list to inscribe on the ceiling

of a Disciples church, for many of these men were outside Disciple orthodoxy; some were even outside Protestantism! They did not belong to the true succession, nor had sacred hands been laid upon them, nor had they all been immersed. Ainslie dared to do this, however, as a means of widening the sense of fellowship within the minds both of his own congregation and of guests and passing visitors. Once in an anniversary service he said:

As I stand in this pulpit Sunday after Sunday, I am frequently reminded of the comradeship of souls that occupy these pews — not only our devoted members, but usually persons from other Christian communions, ministers as well as laymen; and likewise I am frequently reminded of the lesson in fellowship of the forty-four names frescoed yonder in the border in Missionary Hall — all placed there irrespective of whether they were Hebrews, Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholics or Protestants. In the remembrance of these experiences I feel that the Christian Temple is bearing a modest witness to the reality of the fellowship in religion.

A friend, visiting me on one occasion, read carefully over these names and then remarked: "Some of them are Roman Catholics, some do not practice the ordinances, some of them were put out of the church, and most of them practiced sprinkling or affusion in baptism." I replied: "That did not occur to us when they were placed there. We had thought of them only as heralds of the Kingdom of God." But my friend said, "Would you take them into the church?" And I replied, "They are already in the church. Who am I that I should add to or take from the church of God, be they the living or the dead?" "But," persisted my friend, "if they were living would you take them into the membership of the Christian Temple?" I answered: "I feel that they are now more a part of my work than hundreds of persons whose names have been on my church roll during my ministry here of thirty-odd years, and, to each of them, I am personally indebted. I could not think, however, that the Christian Temple would refuse membership to David Livingstone or General Booth because they had not had the same form of baptism as I had. I would as soon think that the Christian Temple would forbid their en-

trance into heaven." Then said my friend, "From that I would conclude that if Dr. Robert E. Speer, or Dr. John R. Mott, or Miss Margaret Slattery should come down the aisle some Sunday, bearing letters from their respective churches, you would receive them." My reply was: "I certainly would, and, further, I believe that the members of the Christian Temple — certainly a large majority of them, if not all of them — would doubt my Christian integrity if I hesitated to do so because they had another form of baptism than I had."

Ainslie carried to the Christian Temple the techniques he had tested and developed in the Calhoun Church. The first of these was pastoral and community visitation, to which he attached the greatest value. One of his diaries has this entry:

In the month of October I made 325 calls, preached 21 sermons, including holding a meeting at one of our branch churches, delivered 11 addresses, dictated a lot of letters in the office, read several books, and I am still alive! I am enjoying getting back to the work.

He gave himself passionately to such pastoral work as long as he lived. He refused, even in later life, when it overtaxed his powers and was against his physician's advice, to give it up. He contended that no service he might be able to contribute to the public generally could ever be comparable in value to that of journeying to the homes of men and women as evidence of interest in them. He put his philosophy of this service in a significant paragraph:

I learned at the very outset of my ministry that the one fundamental method of pastoral visitation is a definite and personal concern for every member of the flock, becoming kinsman to all. As the physician goes on his rounds, believing he has the cure for most of the ills of the body, I go on my rounds with no less confidence, believing the gospel of Jesus Christ is the one cure for all the ills of the soul. If in the preparation of a sermon or an article my mind did not work with

ease, I would put on my hat and make a round of calls to come back with messages seething through my brain.

His exacting work enlisted the sympathies of a layman of Baltimore (not one of his members) who became his good Samaritan. This man saw to it, as far as he was permitted, that Peter Ainslie should be spared the harder discomforts. On one occasion, in the generosity of his heart, he sent Ainslie the gift of a prancing horse and a new carriage, to lighten the labor of pastoral calling. The spectacle of so fine an equipage appalled the humble preacher. He kept the horse in the stable so long and fed it so well that, when at length he hitched it up and started on a pastoral round, the gaily stepping prancer cut such stylish capers that Ainslie decided to return it to the stall. He called up his benefactor to say he could not use so grand a horse to drive up to the homes of humble widows and lowly folk. He therefore begged to be excused from keeping the animal and asked that he be permitted to return the gift with thanks.

By similar acts of gracious helpfulness other good friends sought to relieve the strain of pastoral cares, almost always with similar results. Ainslie insisted on being all things to all men, without any display of riches, to which he was ever a stranger. Innately he loved beauty and the comforts of life. He liked to carry a cane on occasion, as a symbol of peace. But he would not permit himself to become the victim of an easy life, and soon put by all tokens of affluence and returned to the common drudgeries of the world as better suited to the station of the men and women among whom he moved. Nevertheless his friends' solicitude heartened him.

He was further heartened by the coming of two kindred spirits from his beloved Virginia, Dr. T. M. and Dr. J. C. Lumpkin, and their families, whom he had known for

some time. They joined his congregation and were like Aaron and Hur, upholding his hands with unwavering devotion. For almost two decades these "beloved physicians" remained with Peter Ainslie as his invaluable counselors and supporters in all that he sought to do both at home and abroad. He often said that but for their vision and encouragement he would never have been able to maintain his wide public ministry.

He had friends outside his congregation also, people who had heard of or observed the good work he was doing, and offered their help in carrying it forward. One of these, Mr. William Newcomer of Hagerstown, has already been mentioned. Another was Mr. W. H. Hoover, a well-to-do manufacturer of North Canton, Ohio. From time to time other men of wealth offered to help him in his various enterprises. Usually, however, they wanted to attach a string to their gifts, and Ainslie was not the man to allow his objectives to be entangled with causes he considered harmful. Of one such would-be donor he told this story:

On one occasion a millionaire friend whom I had known for several years had heard favorable things of what I was doing and had become interested in its possibilities. He said he was now ready to endow it. He took up the matter at once and said that he was prepared to put into my hands a check for the first payment on this endowment but there were certain conditions I would have to subscribe to. When these conditions were presented they were so conservative and denominational that I could not for a moment think of accepting them. My friends were disappointed in my attitude and tried earnestly to persuade me to accept the conditions. The discussion continued from ten in the morning until ten-thirty at night. It was a contest between conservative, denominational theology and liberal and undenominational theology. "No," I said, "I will not take so much as a cent that has a string to it. I would rather see the work close than accept it under this prescribed dictation of one generation to another.

Of all gifts those having to do particularly with religious education ought to be free."

Ainslie records the sense of exaltation which he felt when this rich friend departed:

I felt a sense of freedom, free from being bought, that was worth more to me than if I had safe in my pocket a check for a quarter of a million dollars. After twenty-five years of experimentation I was thoroughly convinced that "not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts," great difficulties can be overcome and what to many appear as absurd dreams become realities.

Like many another well known servant of the public good, he stood upon the shoulders of others whose names are unknown, but without whom he likewise would have been "unhonored and unsung."

Next in importance to pastoral visiting Peter Ainslie put his program of expansion. His nearest counselor among Disciple preachers was the strong and capable Dr. Frederick D. Power, pastor of the Vermont Avenue Christian Church in Washington, D. C. It was the oft-expressed judgment of Dr. Power that no church which had more than three hundred members could develop the personalities of its congregation, that a small church uses and unfolds the talents of its individual members as a large one cannot do. Ainslie adopted this point of view, which inevitably led to the policy of establishing what he called "branch churches." He insisted that his congregation "swarm" as often as possible. He opened new centers of Disciple worship in various parts of Baltimore as fast as he could persuade any group of his members to launch out for itself. Often he mortgaged the mother church in order to encourage another branch church to establish

itself in a new center. He likewise encouraged likely young men in his congregation to begin preaching in these new mission centers. He made many Timothies. These were not always adequately prepared, but they had a noble passion for the church and did an average measure of good work. By this process he subdivided his congregation again and again, though it involved constant financial strain to meet the expenses incident to the formation of new organizations.

How successful this method was we may still debate. It is true that some of these branches have closed their work or united with other churches. Big business would doubtless vote against such a program as inefficient and wasting too much energy and expense in overhead. The modern tendency in business is rather toward the combination of smaller groups into strong and effective organizations. Possibly the testimony of the church also would now be against Ainslie's policy. Whereas a former generation saw city mission boards planting their denominational churches systematically up and down city streets, these latter years have witnessed the merging of these small congregations.

The Presbyterian Church of New York city furnishes a telling illustration. One hundred years ago it began a program of expansion which marched up Broadway and Fifth avenue with the growth of the city. It proposed to establish a Presbyterian church within walking distance of every Presbyterian in Manhattan. But for the past twenty-five years this policy has been reversed. Presbyterian churches have been merging and have been encouraged to create fewer centers, each with larger and better equipment. It is the judgment of the New York Presbyterian board, after a century of experiment, that the part of wisdom is to centralize the financial and spiritual powers of the church.

Ainslie's method had in its favor the fact that it released and drew out the talents of individual members, thereby sharply opposing the tendency toward the sense of ease with which an individual can lose himself in a large congregation. Something is still to be said for it. But there is a loss of energy, as of stimulation, when capability is spent in small tasks or small groups of people. Possibly one of the strongest influences now making for Christian unity is the sense of loss Christians feel in small separate congregations with their inevitable impoverishment in worship because insufficient means prevent them from securing the best art and talent. At any rate, the idea of the branch church is passing, whether for good or ill.

But many as were his helpers in the growth and expansion of the congregation, the Christian Temple was still the peculiar possession of Peter Ainslie's mind and heart. He organized it and was its only pastor until he died thirty-five years later. No one ever thought of disputing with him the course of its destiny or the program of its activities. He consulted with many about methods of procedure, but his confreres always waited to catch the drift of his mind and concurred rather than advised. The measure of his devotion to the church was such that they hesitated to attempt to change his mind once it had been set on a given course. Thus the Christian Temple became the lengthened shadow of its minister. The singular spiritual unity of the Temple fellowship was no doubt due to the closely knit bond between Ainslie and the members of his church. Without this sense of a family tie binding pastor and members together, it would scarcely have been possible for him to keep his church together during so many years and through such long absences as his travels necessitated. His people were most patient while he was away, feeling that

they themselves had a part in whatever good cause he was promoting.

Always when he returned from a long journey Ainslie would give his congregation a detailed account of his experiences, like a father's intimate recital to his family of the incidents he had shared while far from home. This practice, together with the fact that they knew he had many invitations to leave them for pulpits which offered much greater financial compensation, made his people appreciate him the more and created within them a sense of self-dependence and a readiness for self-denial. The laymen would carry on the services of the Temple for many weeks each year, even doing the preaching and conducting funerals. Ainslie delighted to recall the young men who had gone into the ministry from his church. The need occasioned by his absences and by the establishment of the numerous branch churches first called them out and thus led them to discover themselves.

In spite of such lay activity, however, the Temple remained essentially a one-man church. What Ainslie wanted done was done. He had so stamped his people with his spirit and quality of mind that the relation between him and them was like that between a devoted couple who, through many years of marriage, had shared so many joys and sorrows that any question might as well be put to one as to the other — the answer would be the same. Ainslie was the center of the Temple organization. If one can say it without being misunderstood, his pastorate was a benevolent dictatorship.

If he wanted something done, he spoke about it. If that did no good he began doing something about it, and in such fashion as to make the whole church obligated to move with him. Among the last examples of his "direct method" was his purchase of a new site for the Christian Temple. The character of the Temple community had

been changing, the area was being depopulated and property values were declining. Peter Ainslie felt that there was little future for his ministry in the immediate neighborhood. He proposed that the congregation purchase a new site in a rapidly growing suburban section. As always in such cases, there were varied opinions. Many opposed the change both on account of the added difficulty of going so far away from the more central location and because of fixed habits and the power of sentiment and tradition which bound them to the old location.

Ainslie did not argue. He simply bought a new site. He bought it by mortgaging his own home. His members could not argue with such conviction. Any man who believed so strongly in his convictions as to risk for them the one sure possession he had was beyond persuasion. There was nothing for the church to do but to assume the obligation. It was only Ainslie's sudden death that prevented him from starting to build in the new location.

In the same mood of kindly authority he once asked a fellow minister, "Do you have elders in your congregation?" "Certainly," the other responded; "it would not be a Disciple church without elders. Do you not have them?" "No," Ainslie replied, "they bother me." While this was a whimsical statement, yet it was literally true. At that time and for some years after he himself was the only elder in his congregation. Because he had brought the church into being and had given it his complete devotion, few had the audacity to seek to dissuade him from any dream upon which he had set his mind and heart.

The Christian Temple therefore grew to be a patriarchal society. Its pastor became the spiritual godfather of all the babies born in the congregation and the elder brother of all the children. He belonged to every family in his parish as the "other member" of each separate

household. For almost thirty years he remained unmarried, a Protestant priest. The bachelor years of Ainslie made him the son and brother and friend of all the families of a numerous parish. The intimate affairs that belong only to the inner family circle were shared with him and had his absorbed interest. With an all but infinite patience he listened to the endless confidences poured into his receptive ear. The fortunes and misfortunes, the least joys and sorrows of all his people became his own. In no irreverent sense his people could have said of him, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."

He had the adoring affection of the children of his parish. Generation after generation of little folk followed one another in his long pastorate. All in turn sat on his knee while his kindly arm encircled them. There was no aloofness which they felt or feared. His mystic mind did not cause them to stand in awe of him or create in them any sense of detachment on his part. So intimately did he enter into their affairs that in their thought he had no business so important as listening to their prattle. Whatever duty pressed him at the moment, their coming swept all other obligations aside. It was not his family experience that gave him that magnetism for children, but his love for them that bound them to him by inseparable bonds. There are many hundreds of these children now grown up who feel they possessed him personally. They scarcely comprehended then the absorbing concerns that were upon his mind because he lived with them in their world, at their angle of interest. He was capable of becoming all things even to little children and so gained for himself their deathless love. One of his reflections gives the clue: "Children's faces are pictured on my heart as easily as on a camera."

As the children of a masterful father are often less capa-

ble of aggressive leadership and of enduring the white light of publicity, so the congregation whose minister has an exceptionally strong personality is likely to be less assertive in its ideas and opinions. The very strength of the man tends to overshadow the views and capacities of his laymen. The depth of his passion for any cause Ainslie espoused made it hard to oppose him without seeming to wound him. Since members of his church knew best the delicate sensitiveness of his nature and the strong compulsions that moved him, they were less willing to contend against his proposals. But effective churchmen, like great oaks, grow by the measure of opposition they exert toward differing opinions and judgments. If Ainslie had been less gentle and lovely in soul his people would have felt less keenly the pain of opposing him. Their choice was either to "withstand him face to face" or to yield their judgment to his and so deprive the church of a more general counsel and assertive leadership. Possibly every minister must gauge his effectiveness by the degree of his ability to reproduce in multiple a capable leadership which can maintain and carry on what he has begun. T. DeWitt Talmage had a congregation of thousands when his Brooklyn Tabernacle burned. In a year this vast throng was gone like the leaves scurrying before the November wind. Many humble ministers have wrought unhonored and unsung, but when they relinquished their task, their congregations had the inner resources and powers to continue an effective witness.

Each man's ministry must supply the proof of whether a pastor best develops his congregation by exercising a larger measure of the necessary decision himself or by cultivating their powers in directed channels and areas of service. Possibly the former course saves a congregation from much wasted effort and futile experimentation, while

the latter develops a capacity of leadership that can meet new situations when the strong hand shall be relaxed. It is quite probable that eventually a pastor will derive more satisfaction from his church's ability to carry on when he has quit the field than from having made it an effective instrument for his own designs while his hand was at the helm. However, every man must choose the armor that best fits him. He can use only the material that is in him. Jesus' way was to grow leaders. One man may work more effectively toward this end by employing the method of the potter molding his clay, while another succeeds by imitating the gardener who cultivates his seed and helps each plant to grow "after its kind."

The celebrated Dr. Russell Conwell of Philadelphia, pastor of the Baptist Temple, was accustomed to say that he was able to carry on his extensive work there because he was so frequently absent from his church. If he had always been present, he declared, the congregation would have devoured him with its petty interests and personal problems that could easily be taken care of by his assistants. Dr. Conwell contended that he was able to bring back from the round of lectures and travels which took him away from his church more than two hundred nights each year, an enrichment of understanding and of experience that enlarged the vision of his people also. But how few Dr. Conwells there are and how many pastoral wrecks would follow in the wake of any general attempt to imitate this method! The value of Ainslie's ability to bring back to his parish his widening experience depended on their appreciation of his contribution to Christendom. No doubt the patience of the Christian Temple was the direct result of the larger vision its members gained from their minister's reports of all he had seen and shared. Moreover, his widespread activity gave his people a sense of

importance and pride in the fact that their church could present so capable a leader to the church universal. They had somewhat the same satisfaction that a mother feels when her son is recognized in distant places. Very naturally the compulsions which led him far afield grew precious to them also, the more so since Peter Ainslie's causes were always enlarging and ennobling to contemplate. If he had absented himself from his pulpit for such long periods for purely personal reasons his church would most surely have disintegrated. But the very selflessness of his ambassadorship challenged his people to measure their devotion against his. Possibly this was the secret also of the Baptist Temple in Philadelphia, for Dr. Conwell brought back the proceeds of his extended lectureship to build a college for poor boys and girls, and this fact bowed his congregation under a sense of obligation to equal his devotion. Despite these long absences, Ainslie did a great deal of pastoral calling whenever he was at home.

He seemed indeed to be tireless. His work was his play, and the "extra-curricular" demands he made on himself but added zest to the game. He seemed never to weary of new experiments. The word "experiment" had a most prominent place in his thought. He was always trying something new. But an experiment was not a mere flare-up of his mind; it was always an attempt to meet some exigency which he saw within his parish or community.

One of these experiments was the Working Girls' Home, of which we shall speak later. Another was what he called "Seminary House," a miniature school of religion which he opened in connection with the Temple shortly after the building was begun. He was the president and, together with fellow pastors of other communions whom he invited to share this task, carried on a widely diversified program of religious education. There were courses in

the Old Testament and New Testament, in church history, in missions and kindred subjects of interest to laymen, given at regular hours and seasons. Credits were given and students "graduated." Commencements were dignified by cap and gown and all the formalities that belong to accredited academic institutions. Students entered these courses from other Protestant and even from Catholic fellowships. A sense of universality was engendered. Neighboring pastors found new usefulness in those who returned from sharing this experience.

Ainslie's ministry was not without its remarkable evidence of his skill as a promoter. In the earlier years he was not content with the audiences which filled his building to capacity, nor would he permit his modesty to restrain him from seeking larger audiences, and in a way hitherto unfamiliar to churches. He embarked upon the difficult and perilous experiment of holding theater meetings once each month. His church officials sought to dissuade him from this venture because they did not think that the theater could be filled. To the astonishment of those who doubted, and even to his own surprise, he drew such large audiences that he had, on occasion, to be taken to the platform by policemen who forced a way through the crowd for him. By such methods the city was made conscious of his presence and of the presence of his church.

Nor did he limit his efforts to the winning of a public hearing in theater meetings. He capitalized on whatever public issues arose. He reached out into the entire city for comrades of the spirit whom he called into conference, whether on some burning issue of the race problem or for the purpose of giving civic recognition to some cause or person. By his widely embracing interest in the communal life of the city he was brought into intimate contact on the one hand with the Quakers and on the other hand with

Cardinal Gibbons, prince of the Roman Catholic Church in that area. Some of the most prized letters he ever received were from this distinguished prelate. Against the judgment of many of his fellow Protestant ministers he accepted an invitation to share in a public welcome to Cardinal Gibbons upon the cardinal's return after a long absence. By such a spirit of fair play and widespread participation he won, in the course of his long pastorate, a place for himself and for his church, which made his name familiar to Jew and gentile, Protestant and Catholic, rich and poor, throughout the city.

6. *The Chrysalis Broken*

The imprisoned Chrysalis is now a winged Psyche.

THOMAS CARLYLE, *in* SARTOR RESARTUS

THE year 1910 saw a distinct widening in the conceptions of Peter Ainslie. He once said in private conversation that had he passed away before that year he would not have been known outside his beloved city of Baltimore. That was not wholly true, but it did approximate the facts. Until that time his energies had been largely consumed by his parish and his denomination. Among the Disciples he was widely known and honored because of his ardent devotion to the Plea. What Ainslie had written and preached until then was concerned chiefly with that theme. He had followed the traditional paths of his religious group. During the first twenty years of his ministry in Baltimore he had, for the most part, preached a gospel of exclusiveness. While he was never harsh or bitter in his message or attitude, none of his contemporaries was more thoroughly persuaded of the finality of the Disciples' position or more comfortable in its proclamation. Whatever growing compulsions toward larger inclusiveness were striving within his mind, his recorded sermons and written addresses give scarcely a hint of them. Ordinarily the human mind follows the law of evolution in its unfolding; it does not break abruptly with its past; but twice in his ministry, Ainslie broke with what seemed startling suddenness with his former course, both times in the direction of greater inclusiveness.

The first of these sudden shifts came in the year 1910,



PETER AINSLIE

in 1910

at the end of his term as president of his denomination's annual convention, an office to which he had been elected at Pittsburgh in 1909. His office necessitated a wide visitation of the churches of his communion, and he was called upon to speak at many of the Disciples' state conventions. These contacts gave him a new understanding of the mind of his people. He was startled to find how slowly they had traveled toward the dream of the Campbells. At the dedication of the first church building erected by the Reformers Alexander Campbell had said that it was a church "whose door shall be as wide as the Kingdom of God." But Peter Ainslie found that the door had been closed to multitudes who belonged to the Kingdom. Here, as throughout his life, experience was his university, the school where he learned quickly and never forgot.

But if the duties of his presidency awakened his mind to the failure of the Disciples to follow the vision which had first lured them, it likewise quickened his thought toward the "other sheep, not of this fold." Instead of the cautious carefulness that tracks down many men suddenly thrust into places of leadership, causing them to parrot the familiar shibboleths of their groups, Peter Ainslie was shocked into daring courage. His spirit was stirred within him as he set about preparing his presidential address for the annual convention of the Disciples at Topeka, Kansas, in 1910. Traditionally, the presidential address set the pattern for the communion for the ensuing year. It offered Ainslie his first great opportunity to strike a blow at the evil he had recognized, and to lay bare his heart. He did not spare the feelings of his own brethren where their limitations detracted from their usefulness to the issues of the Kingdom. He rebuked those among the Disciples who manifested uncharitableness toward other religious bodies, who preached Christian union

as if it were an original gospel of their own and presented it merely as an appeal for conversion to the Plea of the Disciples. He condemned denominational absorption of all Christians as being incompatible with the mind of Jesus. That address is given here in full, since it marked a distinct turning point in Ainslie's life.

OUR FELLOWSHIP AND THE TASK

We who wear the name Christian only have climbed a hundred rugged steps and today, standing on God's balcony, we look down the past, and yonder is Jesus moving in that mightiest drama of all time. The cross is still stained with his blood, the tomb of Arimathaea lies broken, and the ascension from the Mount of Olives is as fresh as though it were the action of yesterday. Yonder are the apostles telling the story of Jesus and the resurrection from the dead. Yonder is Paul preaching in Ephesus, Philippi, Athens and Corinth.

Yonder is Luther nailing the ninety-five theses to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg, and Calvin, a refugee from persecution, writing his *Institutes*. Yonder are the Wesleys calling all believers in Jesus to the life of personal holiness, and the Campbells pleading for a united church by the return to the New Testament in name, in ordinances and in life. What a host of saints! Some were called "Nazarenes," others "Christians," still others "Roman Catholics," others "Reformers" and some "Disciples," but whatever be their names all these are our brethren. If they were authors, we have their books in our libraries and we quote their sayings; if they were artists, we have their paintings in our homes and admire their achievements; and whatever may have been their contribution to Christ, we hold them as our brothers. Some of them thought differently from what we think but they all loved our Lord and sought to reproduce him in their lives. Say what you will, they live because Christ lived in them.

But standing on God's balcony, we look about us today and yonder are millions in all parts of the world witnessing for Jesus. Some are preaching to the multitudes with a passion like that of those brothers of the holy past. Others have left homes and friends and are preaching Jesus and the resurrec-

tion from the dead to the heathen nations. Here and yonder are hospitals for the sick, asylums for the orphan, homes for the aged and schools for the ignorant. Some are ministering to the poor and friendless, others are crutches to the lame and stumbling, and thousands are serving in obscure places for the sake of Him whose we are. What a host of saints!

They are called "Presbyterians," "Baptists," "Episcopalians," "Congregationalists," "Lutherans," "Methodists" and "Disciples," but whatever be their names, all these likewise are our brethren, for they show that they have been with Jesus. Some may doubt this fellowship, but I will not, for I feel in my heart the kinship, as I feel within me the love of God.

Still standing on God's balcony we look into the sacred future and yonder are vast multitudes of believers out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. They are servants of Jesus, because our brethren of the past and our brethren of the present served. The currents of fellowship, too frequently unrecognized by us, have so passed from one heart to the other, until all the saints of the past and all the saints of the present and all the saints of the future belong in this blessed circle of the redeemed. Love, fraternity, friendship and brotherhood are passing from dream into fact. Sectarianism is going to its entombment and a united brotherhood is rising with its undivided message for a lost world, for yonder down the ages is one flock as there is one Shepherd.

There nobility of soul is holding an unbroken fellowship with Christ and with all who worship before him, for out of the travail of the church, all denominational names and their dependencies are lost, and out of the Christ-spirit shall rise for perpetual adornment the name which is above every name and before which every knee shall bow. For yonder on the rim of the horizon, unnumbered hosts of angels assemble and the unnumbered hosts of the redeemed of humanity meet and mingle, like where the blue of the sky and the blue of the sea touch and the line of the sea is lost in the line of the sky. What a host of saints! They both wear his name and reproduce his life. Yonder among them and yet above them all is Jesus in his majesty and the glory of the universe hangs upon the wheels of his advent chariot.

What a vision from God's balcony! Whether we look into the past, or around us, or into the future, we see our brethren.

Then let us remember as wearers of the name Christian only, we hold in this period of God's providence the cure for the divided church. Our message, therefore, to the present and to the future is to remove the barriers to brotherhood by a larger loyalty to the personality of Christ. The rightful contribution of the Disciples to modern religion is the widening of faith's view, for the best asset in this world is faith in Jesus Christ and love for all who love our Lord.

We hold the deposits of the past; we are the joint creators of the present; we are debtors to the future. It is the broadest platform in the world. Holding with deep conviction to personal faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to his commandments, we must hold with equally deep conviction to fellowship with all believers, else we drop to the level of a sect.

About a hundred years ago, some Presbyterians and Baptists proposed to return to Christ by way of the New Testament in name, in ordinances and in life. These abandoned their human creeds and denominational names and became Christians only and their proposition to all Christendom is to do likewise, for human creeds and denominational names are the greatest barriers to a united fellowship.

These Christians, who were first called "Disciples of Christ" about a hundred years ago, propose going back to Christ and Christ alone, for Christianity started neither from theological ideas nor ethical principles, but from the personality of Jesus Christ. To be in possession of its original power, it must go back to fidelity to that personality. There has been no message like this since the church divided and its practicability is simple and axiomatic. It at once overshadows all other propositions for the union of Christendom, for only in unstinted loyalty to Christ do we find the key to brotherhood. To turn aside, to surrender the ordinances on the one hand or to narrow the fellowship on the other, is to give a sectarian complexion to an unsectarian message. We have no choice other than fidelity to Christ, into whom we have been baptized and with whom we were raised up to walk in newness of life until there shall have been such friendship between him and us that all men shall know that we have been with Jesus. We have among us some of the noblest spirits of this world, brave and true men in the pulpit and faithful and consecrated members in the pew.

I beg that you will pardon me if I speak too frankly, but

these are serious times and soft words will not suffice. If I mistake not, the Disciples of Christ are facing the most critical period in their history. It is so with all movements. After passing a new decade or a century at most, they drift from their original principles either into wreckage or crystallization. It was so with every order started in the Roman Catholic Church and it has likewise been so with every movement in Protestantism. Loyola upstayed a falling church by his genuine piety, but the Jesuits became the curse and shame of Rome. The Lutheran movement crystallized as has also Methodism and every other Protestant body of any years. The Disciples are passing the way of all others, and I fear that the prow of our ship is too decidedly set toward sectarian harbors, and unless we turn our course in conformity to Thomas Campbell's clarion call, the fact that we have so much truth, we are destined to become one of the most sectarian bodies, as love unused becomes unlove. These conditions must not be smoothed over with self-laudatory sentences and self-congratulatory reports, but it behooves us as students of history and servants of Christ to face the bare facts and humbly set ourselves to the solution.

In the last twelve months I have traveled more than sixteen thousand miles in the interest of American missions. I have spoken to thousands and have held conferences with hundreds, from which I have learned that, in the opinion of many of our brethren, not more than a tenth or at most twenty-five per cent of our membership know anything at all about what the mission of the Disciples is. They may know that the New Testament baptism is by immersion; but if that is all, they might as well be Baptists. They may know that the churches of Christ have elders and deacons; but if that is all, they might as well be Presbyterians. They may know that the New Testament government is congregational; but if that is all, they might as well be Congregationalists.

I do not speak as a partisan, but it must be recognized as axiomatically true that where there is division and discord, it is wisest to refer the whole matter to a supreme authority. It is so today. The church of Christ is divided into many unaffiliated bodies and the greatest call of Christendom is back to Christ by the way of the New Testament, in name, in ordinances and in life.

However thoroughly one may be educated in literature and science, if he does not understand the mission of the Disciples, he is counted among the ignorant in our membership; intelligence among us is that vision and heart that sees and believes that the absolute leadership of Jesus Christ is necessary for a united church and a redeemed world. If it is true that only ten to fifteen per cent of our membership — and most of the opinions center around these figures — if it be true that these figures represent the intelligence among us, it is impossible to fulfill our mission, unless some definite plan be established whereby the ninety or eight-five per cent of our membership shall be educated into the responsibility of the sacred commission, which we hold as Christians only.

I do not know but that the problem of ourselves at this period is quite as urgent to us at least as the problem of the divided church. Do not misunderstand me, for I am not advocating the study of a catechism. Far be it from me. But I insist on a systematic and devotional study of the Scriptures until every Disciple shall recognize the personal leadership of Jesus in his life and shall intelligently practice the principles of Jesus both as to himself and as to those about him, that every home shall have a family altar and that religion shall be lifted out of the pale dogma and be made the life of mankind.

It is an auspicious time and it is a pertinent question to ask ourselves, as Disciples of Christ, what are we doing for the solution of this problem? And the answer is that our contribution to the union of Christendom is speaking faithfully regarding it from our pulpits where it is heard only by our own people and the inactive members of other churches and persons of the world, and by writing of it in our papers, which are subscribed for largely by our own people. I beg that you will pardon me, but you know that this is not enough, and unless we do more, especially in this period, the Christian world will have a right to doubt our sincerity.

They know little of us and our mission, and it is largely if not entirely our fault. I doubt if there is another religious body of the same numerical strength in the history of the world that is so little known as the Disciples of Christ, and, considering the commission that we hold, there is no other religious body that ought to be better known. I question

whether this contentment to be so little known and this indifference to making world-wide this proposition for the union of Christendom is not grave disloyalty to Christ. If this proposition is not of God, it ought to be abandoned; if it is of God, it ought to call for an unparalleled enthusiasm on the part of every Disciple of Christ, until all Christendom shall hear in kindest words that back to Christ in name, in ordinances and in life is the only cure for the scandalous division in the house of God.

The Episcopalians have incorporated the Christian Unity Foundation with the purpose of promoting Christian union at home and throughout the world until the various Christian bodies are knit together in one organic life. Such is the aim expressed in their charter and we rejoice in their splendid vision; but we who are Christians only should likewise establish a foundation in this interest and it should be as important among us as the Foreign Christian Missionary Society or the Christian Woman's Board of Missions or the American Christian Missionary Society or any of our colleges.

This foundation should put out a magazine, not as a propaganda, but as a clearinghouse of thought on Christian union. As we exercise the right to think, we must grant that right to others, for until we have stood on their level we cannot lift them out of denominational names and human creeds. Open wide its pages to all who have convictions on Christian union and let them speak without criticism through its pages to their brothers who are thinking with them on the necessity of a united church, and make it the exchange of every paper in the English-speaking world. Send it both to Disciples and certain other disciples, if you please, for there are ripe souls in all communions who would gladly receive this as a benediction of peace, and the instincts of a united church would burn more deeply within us. Besides all this, who knows whether the last word on Christian union has been spoken? So far, our proposition is in advance of all others, but maybe another voice of the Campbells marked the beginning of its decay.

Such a foundation should receive an endowment as large as that of a college and all the churches should have a part in the contribution, for the union of Christendom is of first importance and the necessity is laid more upon us for such a service than any other religious body, for to this end did we

become Christians only. The Protestant world needs it, and it is riper now than at any other time in its history and we ourselves need it for our own salvation. Others may see another way out of our danger, but to me the broader field of fellowship is preeminent over all other policies, for out of a friendly conference, we would find a common basis and the leadership of Jesus would make us forget all our unbrotherliness and leave behind all sectarian barriers.

We are accustomed to speak of preaching the whole gospel when it includes faith, repentance and baptism — and I would not lessen the place of these; but the fine exhortation is, having conformed to the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us press on unto perfection. The whole gospel is not alone faith, repentance and baptism, but love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control. We have established among ourselves a conscience on faith, repentance and baptism, and I am not ashamed of it; but the time is at hand when we must likewise establish throughout our whole brotherhood, equally as deep a conscience on the fruit of the Spirit. The spiritual necessities of our time demand God in all our being and at the same time these spiritual necessities proclaim God.

As wearers of the name Christian only, we are bound by all the sufferings of Christ and the hope of the resurrection to a vital brotherhood among ourselves, yet the last decade has witnessed the culmination of a division among us on missionary society and anti-missionary society methods, which is as absurd a cause for division as the wearing of buttons instead of hooks and eyes among the Anabaptists in the seventeenth century caused to rise a "Button party" and a "Hook and Eye party" that lasted for generations. The fever on these little matters is too contagious. If the missionary methods do not just suit us — and I say this for those who are regular contributors and then stop — because the officials of the society do something we do not like, let us remember that the missionaries on the field are the representatives of Christ to the unsaved. They must not suffer because of our folly, but we are honored in being allowed to contribute to their support. Such persons may take their spite out on anything they please, if they please to do that way, but never on the men and women

who have left home and friends to go to the unsaved to tell of Jesus and the resurrection from the dead.

While the union sentiment is so prevalent among all Christians, we must see that it is the preeminent sentiment among ourselves. It is not an uncommon thing to hear it said among us, "I am a Standard man," or "I am an Evangelist man," or "I am a Century man," as it was said years ago, "I am of Paul," and "I am of Apollo," and "I of Cephas." We ought to be ashamed to line up in any such fashion, for it betrays as much carnality now as it did in the days of the Corinthians. For my part, I would as soon wear a denominational name among my religious neighbors as to wear a class name among my own people. I read these three papers every week and I know of no reason why I should not continue to do so, but I belong to none of them, other than I am a part of all my brethren. Instead of so much fault-finding, let us stand up in the gateway of this new century and pray for the editors of all our papers, for more things are wrought by prayer than the soul has dreamed.

I hear a thousand voices around the world crying against war — some are the voices of Christians, some pagans, some infidels; but I have heard no loud voice among the Disciples, and yet logically we ought to have been among the loudest voices for international disarmament and universal peace. I will not take up arms against my brother, for I carry in my bosom, as you do in yours, a greater power for the solution of national and international problems than the combined armies of the world. As wearers of the name Christian only, hostility to war should be as deeply rooted in our conscience as it is in the conscience of our Quaker brethren and especially at this time since the fever of war is burning in the bones of certain European and Asiatic nations.

These times demand men of education. Both brain and heart are made to be developed. The schools can do only a part of educating. They give the student the tools by which he lays the foundation for a structure, upon which he climbs to its wide-visioned heights. Too many men drop their tools on the college steps and go stumbling into life and finding fault because their education is not appreciated. The fact is the man is not educated. He has the tools, but they have

rusted from misuse. It is not education to know the roots of words and the solution of geometrical problems, but as Nicholas Murray Butler says: "Education is a gradual adjustment to the spiritual possession of the race," and "its purpose is," said Herbert Spencer, "to prepare us for complete living." Away with that barbarous interrogation, "What has the young man learned?" But I ask the question of civilization: "What has the young man become?" Our young men for the ministry should have the best educational equipment that they may become the best servants possible to the Lord Almighty. After their college days, they should seek to make this life the schoolroom for their real education, as well as real service. Every college should teach the ministerial students not only how to make a sermon according to the rules of homiletics, but how to write a readable article for the secular press, but there is as much art in the one as in the other, and the neglect of the former, especially by the Disciples, is another instance of our failure to use God-given opportunities, for both the pulpit and the press are mighty avenues for God, and his ministry should seek to be skilled in the use of both.

A radical defect in the training of our modern ministry in all churches is not teaching young men the secrets of holiness and the power of prayer. The disciples did not ask Jesus to teach them how to preach, but how to pray. I do not mean literary instruction, I do not mean the lessons of the classroom, but I mean a man in touch with God ought to lead young men out of his own experience into the experience of the consciousness of God, the fellowship of Christ and the blessedness of prayer, until the young man is able to say out of his own experience and conviction, "I know whom I believe." This is the ministry the world is waiting for and until that ministry comes the nations will not be brought to the foot of the cross.

All this is preliminary to the first and chief purpose of our existence as Disciples of Jesus Christ. Fellowship with the good, union with all believers, faithfully practicing Christian ethics — these are but the beginnings, for the task over all is working together with God to make ourselves like Jesus. Our confession meant this, and if such was not our conception of baptism, our baptism has become unbaptism.

With this utterance Peter Ainslie crossed his Rubicon. The die was cast. He could no more live within the prescribed circle of denominational molds. He had no idea of deserting his communion, nor did he dream of asking other Christians to desert their separate folds until a common passion for and conception of the grounds of Christian unity could be agreed upon. But he saw where his duty lay, and determined to follow it.

Not only the experience of his presidential office, but the expanding ministry of his own Christian Temple led Peter Ainslie to see that no congregation "liveth unto itself"; that in the end the spiritual health of any fellowship can prosper only as the health of all communions prospers; that the gain of any single branch of the church can be assured only as the fortunes of all other fellowships are likewise advanced. During these years multiplied missionary societies had been organized and endowed in the several communions to propagate the "true faith" at home and abroad. Their representatives visited each center of population without regard for the total issue of religion. Such zeal but served to create local conflicts. Home missions often came to be but the fingertip of the arm that reached out from invested funds and worked to perpetuate an unholy and unneighborly condition in every part of America.

Consequently, Peter Ainslie's thought went out to the whole church. In his mind the sin that most blighted the church's welfare was disunity. The policy of isolation and ostracism which churches practiced toward one another seemed to him a scandal. He loved to quote Principal Fairbairn's statement: "That man is not the worst infidel who says that there is no God, but rather that man who says there is no God for you."

The former pastor of the Madison Presbyterian Church

in New York, Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst, once said: "At one date one branch of the church would be making saints and another would be boiling and broiling them. There would be nothing to hinder ordaining unlovely, unloving Calvin even, if it were the occasion of sending Servetus to heaven in a chariot of fire." This was to Ainslie the sin of schism, that men who differed from their fellows did not have grace enough to bear and forbear.

In his earlier ministry he had given all his strength to the advancement of his Temple as a part of a communion which he stoutly defended and promoted. But when the fallacy of denominationalism began to offend his soul, he turned instead to think in terms of the whole church. It came to him as a strong conviction that the central motive of Christianity is love, and that divisions mark the absence of love's fundamental quality. This urge in his mind was inspired, not so much by scriptural argument for unity, strong though this was, as by what he himself had discovered in his own experience. It became the ruling passion of his life. He had learned first at the bedside of his sick mother, then out of the pain of his boyhood's experience, and finally as a grown man, that the greatest compulsion in the world is love. This persuasion, sectarian division denied and thwarted. Ainslie's conviction was that the trouble at the root of division was moral. Christians were unwilling to sacrifice prejudice and pride in their denominations for the truth of fellowship. He was profoundly influenced by the statement of an English churchman who said: "When I read your American denominational journals I cannot help but feel that the writers carry pistols and knives in their pockets with which to assault their brothers." As Lincoln had vowed that he would strike a blow at slavery, whenever the chance offered, so Ainslie

now made a covenant with himself that he would contend against this scandal of division.

The great change that has taken place in the last ten years in the general Christian attitude toward denominationalism leaves us unprepared to appreciate the state of the ecclesiastical mind on that subject even a generation ago. It is difficult to believe that one brief lifetime could span such extremes of narrowness and prejudice in the religious mind of America as the bitter denominationalism that existed forty years ago and the liberal thought that manifests itself in the search for fellowship which is going on today.

Perhaps the picture of the theological barriers which shut good men off from one another is nowhere more clearly shown than in these lines by Dr. W. Russell Bowie in his Yale lectures:

To hold that none have entered into the fullness of Christian discipleship unless Christ means as much to them as he meant to those who wrote the Nicene Creed is one thing and a right thing; to say that no one loves Christ completely and exalts him as Lord unless he expresses or belongs to a communion which expresses Christian loyalty in the same words which the men of Nicea used is another thing and a very unhappy and mistaken one.

The latter point of view has its staunch supporters even today in many areas of America. But it survives only as a relic of a fading past. Comparatively few can now be found who defend it. The tragic thing about it was that whereas it was offered as an evidence of "conviction," what it meant in practice was a broken body, and this was what made its effect so disastrous. How much of this transition can be attributed to such men as Ainslie we cannot fully estimate. But as we look back on the two decades of wit-

ness which he gave to this cause we cannot but believe that the happier mood existing among churches of the present generation owes much to his tireless energy and devotion. That he did a great deal to make sectarianism appear the sorry and sordid thing it is we cannot doubt. We owe it to ourselves and to posterity both as something due to him and as an encouragement and challenge to others to take up this cause with confidence.

7. Ambassador of Christian Unity

AINSLIE'S long ambassadorship for Christian unity began with his speech at Topeka. Following his address he proceeded to call for a special session where those who were interested in the cause of amity might meet. The response he received was indicative of the hunger within his own religious group for a more inclusive fellowship. The place was overcrowded. The general desire to follow the example of Thomas Campbell in a new "Declaration and Address" to Protestantism was revealed. An organization was set up known as the "Council on Christian Union," later incorporated by Ainslie as the "Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity." Ainslie was unanimously and enthusiastically elected its president, as he had been its originating genius and its prophet. At once he sent a telegram of greeting to the Episcopal Commission on Unity, which was meeting that very day in Cincinnati, Ohio, where the Episcopal Church was assembled in its triennial convention.

Thus he entered upon his greater task of bridge-building. Now that he had been officially commissioned by his own fellowship, he set out to give to the movement unstinted time and labor and widespread travel, preaching everywhere the gospel of unity. He whose traditions and training made him unsympathetic to ecclesiasticism now began to court churchmen in high office and urge upon them the need for action. He spoke to countless

gatherings of the various denominations, pleading with them to let down the barriers of dogma and doctrine which kept Christendom divided.

He made use also of the printed page. With the backing of Mr. R. A. Long of Kansas City, who came forward with a generous offer of financial help after the stirring address at Topeka, he launched a publication devoted wholly to fraternal appeals to a divided Protestantism. This was the *Christian Union Quarterly*, which during the twenty-five years of its existence was Ainslie's own paper. Undaunted by the fact that it had few readers, he continued it in enlarging proportions as its only editor until his death. He was not one to follow beaten paths, nor did he deal with his subject in ancient phrases borrowed from cherished documents of faith. As Rufus Jones said of him:

It was not his scholarship we thought about, nor brilliance of speech, nor matchless style; it was the simplicity of speech, truth, honesty, reality of a good life. He had knowledge of acquaintance. He was admirably fitted to be a unifier because he lived and worked in a spirit of unity.

The organization of the Inter-Church World Movement immediately following the World War of 1914 reinforced his confidence. That movement revealed a hunger beneath and beyond denominational barriers which gave new courage to many. True, the scheme collapsed all too quickly, for it had been promoted without adequate preparation. But notwithstanding its premature failure, the ideal behind it was not wholly lost to view and the daring plan never completely faded from believing minds. For men like Peter Ainslie, who had been waiting in the temple of hope for the appearance of some new messiah, it seemed the ground swell which presaged the rise of some move-

ment that would be permanent and unifying. At any rate he took up his cause with greater devotion.

His ambassadorship of Christian unity took Ainslie many times to Europe. In these contacts and conferences he came to realize what great distances were yet to be traveled and what patience it would be necessary to exercise in the task of winning any considerable measure of concord among the churches of Europe, and among those of America also, since most of the American denominations had originated across the sea. An experience at a conference in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1920 showed him how deep was the chasm. Together with F. W. Burnham, Raphael H. Miller, Finis S. Idleman and H. C. Armstrong, Peter Ainslie had been appointed by the Council on Christian Union to take part in that meeting, which was to set up the Faith and Order conference. A spokesman for the Eastern Orthodox Church — one of the distinguished and bearded retinue representing that fellowship — declared in his opening sentence, “We have come a very long way.” Doubtless he was referring to the physical miles they had traveled (though it was a short distance compared with that which many others had come), but the remark could more appropriately have been applied to the ecclesiastical miles they had traversed. For a thousand years there had been no such contact between the so-called Eastern and Western churches.

In this first meeting of representatives of widely separated denominational groups it was necessary, in order that all might become familiar with the issues, for each body to present a statement of its belief. Ainslie made the statement for the Disciples. The place which he gave in that statement to the Disciples’ emphasis on unity, and the winsome spirit in which he spoke, made a profound

impression on the delegates, many of whom knew nothing about this communion. Unfortunately one delegate arose to express his appreciation of a movement whose dominant emphasis was so nearly central to all that that conference had met to consider. He concluded by asking how it worked at home. Ainslie was compelled in all candor to reply that the Disciples were divided over the use of musical instruments, and nearly divided over the question of liberalism.

It was in this and similar gatherings that Ainslie became fully aware of the mind and spirit of the various branches of the church universal. He learned the measure of generosity which it was needful for the communions to exercise toward one another. He became familiar with the values which each separate division of Christendom regarded as sacred and inviolable. He learned how highly the time element was esteemed in the thinking of the Christian leaders of Europe, where antiquity amounted to authority. He became aware of the delicacy with which men had to approach the various deposits of experience which these ancient branches of the church had stored up. He exercised himself in the technique of prudent approach which stood him in such good stead in the conferences he later conducted in America.

He was often a disturbing guest at ecclesiastical conferences. On every occasion he proclaimed the equality of men in the sight of God and the necessity for recognition of one another as Christians. This Lochinvar both gladdened and startled his fellow churchmen by the freshness and vigor of his words. When had anyone come with such eager devotion to the cause of the church's unity or when had anyone made it so embarrassing to reject his reasonable proposals? As Bishop Vincent of Ohio said:

The meetings of the American Commission on Christian Unity [of which Ainslie was a member] were not always harmonious but there was always one man there whose mind was so large, and whose spirit so harmonious, and who was so free from all limitations of creed and confession and ecclesiastical organization, that he embodied for us all the ideal unity of the church.

Ainslie stood up in the conference at Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1927 and proposed that the many warm words there spoken for Christian unity be sealed by a common communion service. How simple and how sensible his proposal seemed — “but how unprecedented,” others commented. Ecclesiastical bodies which placed emphasis on the historic succession were most naturally shocked by a proposal which seemed to violate their traditions of centuries.

But no subterfuge or substitute could satisfy Ainslie. He returned persistently to ask, “Why not?” and often made bishops and archbishops blush with confusion in their efforts to avoid this determined disturber of ecclesiastical regularity.

While that particular communion service was not held, the suggestion could not be forgotten. “If not, why not?” the delegates went away asking. The query measured at once the difficulties of uniting all the branches of Christianity into one church and the distance yet to be traveled. It took all pride of achievement out of the minds of delegates and humbled them before the lack of Christian spirit that had been revealed.

This incident constituted another illustration of Ainslie's preference for direct methods. He spent little time with inconsequentials but speedily discerned the vital weaknesses and centered his attack on these. He took to the councils of Christendom the habits of mind and action

he had developed in his Baltimore parish. He was always willing to pay the greater price out of his own purse or comfort to gain the end which to him was clearly the will of God. As Dr. William Adams Brown said, "To him the unity of Christ's church was a plain duty, and where duty was concerned he could find no justification for delay." He had great faith in the power of contagion. He believed that one bold brave action would be followed by like actions on the part of others. He even believed that a few brave men, gathered from various communions, could break the power of denominationalism and eventually effect the unity of the church. On that hypothesis he struck out wherever new convictions led him.

Indeed his first hope of the Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity, which he had founded at Topeka in 1910, was that it might accomplish that purpose. When at length he became convinced that it was too cumbersome and slow an instrument, when its effectiveness was inhibited by minds that had too little courage or were too hesitant in their convictions, he let it pass into other hands and organized a new society which would have less machinery and more daring. The Christian Unity League for Equality and Brotherhood was organized in 1927. Instead of being made up of representatives from denominational bodies who were constantly fearful of going beyond their party dogmas and traditions, this organization was composed of independent individuals from various communions, who had to answer only to their own consciences for any part they took or any action they endorsed toward unity. It was a freer society of more venturesome souls who, like soldiers driven to guerilla methods in defense of the right, could sally forth here or there, as occasion offered, to strike a blow for the liberation of those fettered folk in all communions who sought a way of closer asso-

ciation. The league attempted to remove all the hindering traditions that have destroyed Christian brotherhood, and encouraged the practice of open membership, open communion and open pulpits. Ainslie declared, "The church has no moral right to practice closed membership, closed communion or closed pulpits."

It was characteristic of Ainslie that when an organization, even one he himself had formed, became an intolerable weight, like Goliath's sword and shield in the hands of young David, he would cast it aside for more effective instruments. He became convinced that denominational organizations created to foster the cause of unity were futile. His experience led him to believe that only interchurch commissions could bring about interchurch fellowship.

This new attitude was largely the outgrowth of Ainslie's experience at Lausanne. Indeed Lausanne marked the second distinct curve in his approach to the problem of Christian unity. His attempt to make progress through denominational delegates had failed not only on account of the hesitancy of such representatives to act freely because of the fear of group reactions, but more especially because that approach had been solely through attempts to reach an agreement on faith and order. Like St. Paul, Ainslie now decided to "turn to the Gentiles." Henceforth he would build his conferences around men and women of a free spirit who would neither be bound to denominational thought nor wait upon the traditions of creeds and orders. Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, writing in the first number of *Christendom* in 1935, summed up the effect of the Lausanne conference on Ainslie's thinking:

Peter Ainslie returned home a changed man. . . . He could see that a basic fallacy underlay the procedure of any con-

ference having to do with faith and order; it was the erroneous assumption that our divisions (however they may have been caused, originally) are now maintained in virtue of profound convictions on creeds and orders, and that if we can come to an agreement on these questions our divisions will disappear. He challenged this assumption. Any method based upon it, he now saw, is sterile and futile. We can never reach Christian unity by discussing doctrinal differences, he was now convinced. We can resolve doctrinal differences, if it is necessary to resolve them, only by affirming and practicing Christian unity. Unity is not a goal to be attained; it is the point from which we must set out if we would attain the great goals of Christian endeavor. Disunity and doctrinal differences are not commensurable. They do not stand in a sequence of cause and effect. They exist on wholly different levels. Disunity is not the unfortunate result of disagreements in the realm of history and doctrine; it is sin, and we are craftily using our disagreements to rationalize and justify our continuance in sin. Moreover, this sin, Ainslie reflected, is personal, as well as corporate, and must be repented of by individual Christians before there can be any hope of a united church.

. . . He had long since lost the illusion that his own denomination, or any other, could be counted upon as an instrument of unity. Now he has been disillusioned as to the fruitfulness of interdenominational conferences on doctrinal differences. He turns therefore to individual Christians in all communions, determined to lay upon their consciences the responsibility for bringing about what he has now ceased to expect by way of ecclesiastical initiative. Ecclesiastical action will come only when there has been developed among the laity and clergy of the churches a body of conviction and feeling sufficiently vigorous to call the various communions to corporate repentance. Individual repentance for the sin of schism must precede corporate repentance. And there is no possibility of church unity until our disunity is seen to be not merely an ecclesiastical misfortune, but downright sin.

These new insights and convictions led him to make a new appeal for unity, centered around a single phrase, "The equality of all Christians before God." He began

to plan for a conference in New York city which would focus the attention of liberal-minded leaders of all religious bodies. It was to be a demonstration of unity, centered in the celebration of a communion service administered by representatives of various denominations. He easily won the cooperation of Dr. Carl Reiland, then rector of St. George's Episcopal Church, who, with the hearty concurrence of his vestry, offered his church for the service. A large number of prominent Christian leaders joined in calling the conference, among them Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, President Hibben of Princeton University, President Faunce of Brown University, Bishop Francis J. McConnell, Dean Brown of Yale Divinity School, President Coffin of Union Theological Seminary, Dr. Norwood of St. Bartholomew's Church, Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, editor of the *Christian Century*, and many others.

As has been said, the central service in this conference was to be the Lord's Supper, to be observed with non-Episcopal ministers participating in its celebration. This act was to symbolize the unity of the clergy in their hope for the unity of the church. Dr. W. Russell Bowie, rector of Grace Episcopal Church of New York, Dr. Robert Norwood, rector of St. Bartholomew's Church, and Dr. Howard Mellish, rector of Holy Trinity Church of Brooklyn, joined with Dr. Reiland in this attempt to break the tradition of closed communion in the Episcopal Church. The conference was widely publicized for many weeks with this central feature clearly announced. "This thing was not done in a corner." For some months the news of it was a matter of comment in religious circles.

When the hour of the conference arrived it found a distinguished company of Christians, clergy as well as laymen, assembled from the eastern half of the United States. The manifestations of the desire for unity were marked by en-

thusiasm and there was a general feeling that the united communion service would seal the cause. But on the day appointed for the service, a message came from the bishop of the diocese of New York requesting that it be not held in St. George's Church. The bishop had the law of the state of New York as well as the canon law on his side. The conference could do nothing else than to yield to his request. It was a bitter blow for the liberal clergy of the Episcopal Church, many of whom had committed themselves to this act of symbolic unity. But it was a keener disappointment to Ainslie and to those who shared with him understanding of the profound significance such a communion service might have and had come to this meeting with high hopes for the impetus it would give to the cause of unity. It was to have been an act such as few of those present had hoped to see in their lifetime. But the spirit of exclusiveness had not died nor had it lost its power. The bishop, no doubt conscientiously, employed that day the authority of tradition to throttle the new life that is everywhere seeking to be born.

A second choice was forthcoming. Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, president of Union Theological Seminary, came to the aid of the bewildered assembly. He offered St. James Chapel in Union Seminary as a place in which to hold the service. This offer was accepted and the service was celebrated with two of the Episcopal clergymen, Dr. Reiland and Dr. Norwood, humbly participating as deacons who distributed the emblems. It was a deeply moving occasion. Something of the inward pain of the Master in the upper room lingered on in this company of his followers, shut away from their anticipated altar. It was all too clear that the churches had yet to learn that they cannot honor Jesus by dishonoring fellowship. The loss could not be wholly made up by Dr. Coffin's generosity. The

value of the original plan lay in the idea of permitting non-Episcopal ministers to share in the conduct of the communion service in an Episcopal church; that was lost. Recognition of one another's priestly validity had been denied. No one suffered as much as Ainslie. Once again, as at Lausanne, he had met defeat. Here, as there, the force of tradition was too strong and he had to bow before it. He realized with a new pang that the great principle for which he was contending — recognition of the equality of all Christians in the fellowship of an open communion — was still being denied.

His keen disappointment on this and other occasions led Ainslie to write at that time:

There were two questions . . . before me. Can any worthwhile contribution be made to Christian unity by a denomination working separately? Hardly. And can my denomination be brought, in this day, to adopt love for the brethren — of all denominations — as the primary factor toward Christian unity? This likewise seemed hardly possible, certainly not in my generation.

But his courage was undaunted. He began to center his approach upon a document which he drew up and distributed widely. It was known as the "Pact of Reconciliation." He prefaced this statement with these words:

As the time has now come when all Christians should be Christians to all other Christians, can Christianity survive if this is not done? Yes, it may survive in form, but the life and spirit which Jesus Christ reveals for the redemption of the world cannot function through a divided church. The two hundred different and independent organizations with more than half not on speaking terms with the other half, with some Christians refusing the Lord's Supper to other Christians, other Christians refusing other Christians membership in their churches and the courtesy of their pulpits, the whole condition is ugly, awkward, and repugnant to modern intelligence.

The heart of the pact was as follows:

We acknowledge the equality of all Christians before God and propose to follow this principle as far as possible, in all our spiritual fellowship. We will strive to bring the laws and practices of our several communions into conformity with this principle, so that no Christian shall be denied membership in any of our churches, nor the privilege of participation in the observance of the Lord's Supper, and that no Christian minister shall be denied the freedom of our pulpits by reason of difference in forms of ordination. . . .

We Christians of various churches, believing that only in a cooperative and united Christendom can the world be christianized, affirm that a divided Christendom is opposed to the spirit of Christ and the needs of the world, and we are convinced that the christianizing of the world is greatly hindered by divisive and rivaling churches.

Therefore we desire to express our sympathetic interest in a prayerful attitude toward all conferences, small and large, that are looking toward reconciliation of the divided Church of Christ. We propose to practice in all our spiritual fellowship the equality of all Christians before God so that no Christians shall be denied membership in our churches, nor a place in our celebration of the Lord's Supper, nor pulpit courtesies to other ministers, and further, irrespective of denominational barriers, we pledge to be brethren one to another in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, whose we are and whom we serve.

After securing the signatures of more than a thousand outstanding religious and professional leaders in all denominations, Ainslie literally sowed the American church with this famous reconciliation pact which Dr. Morrison called "one of the most pregnant and illuminative insights in the history of the modern movement for unity."

Throughout the country Christians read his pact and, as a sign of their hearty agreement, set their names to it. Soon the letter-forms, each containing many names, began to pour into his office. For a time Ainslie tried to keep

a list of all whose names were signed to this document, but finally gave up the effort. It was enough. The seed was being sown. A new idea had been planted and was finding root everywhere. The stoutest denominationalist found it very hard to combat this idea of equality, no matter how superior he might feel his communion to be in matters of faith and doctrine. It divided the church between the self-satisfied who thanked God that they were not like other men and the humble in spirit who prayed God to be merciful unto them. It reached the heart of the best intelligence of the generation. Here was an approach to unity which no ecclesiastical authority could interdict and no denominational machinery control. It was in the hands of the individual laymen. It passed by the shepherds of the sectarian folds and made its appeal to the individual disciple, no matter where he was or to what group he belonged or through what forms he worshiped. It was unofficial and therefore free. It was as simple and direct and inclusive as the Declaration of Independence. To the millions who will doubtless read it in the centuries to come, it will seem as a great light set on a hill in the twentieth century.

Under so noble and free a banner, Peter Ainslie became an inspired prophet and ambassador of good will to all the churches. He was a much sought-after guest at religious gatherings. To mention his name was to call to mind the forgotten prayer of Jesus "that they all may be one." The common people heard his message gladly because they understood it. His appeal was in no creedal or theological terminology. It began with God the one Father and ended with each believing disciple as the object of His affection. Always it breathed the passion of the Master for the "other sheep." It was as simple as the demonstration of Columbus that the world is round. It

was an avowal as affirmative as it was inclusive, rebuking sectarianism by its exalted affirmation and making divisions to appear "exceeding sinful." It was intended to supply the last proof of fellowship, one that could be put to the test by the realities of life.

To Peter Ainslie the sin of division was not only a sin against the mind of Christ but also a vast tragedy for the church in the presence of its supreme opportunity. Once he said: "What a challenge this hour is for Christendom to set its own house in order before it further infects the Eastern world with sectarianism that robs the gospel of its corporate power and gives the people a stone instead of bread."

He said everywhere that he was seeking to compel each sect to look to its own house and sin in a way that "would reveal the thin crust of shallow reality which gave its separateness standing"; that "every divisive and sectarian practice and preachment must be seen as sin."

This pact became the charter not only of the Christian Unity League but also of the many conferences on unity of which Peter Ainslie was the moving spirit. Here was a principle which gave courage to kindred souls of all communions, who had like passion for this cause. It restored to them the liberty of expression which had been so long suppressed, and allowed them to meet and take counsel without let or hindrance. It did not propose a merger of churches, nor a federated course of common action. It went above and beyond federation and cooperation. It was a standard for all those children of God who looked upon their fellows as equally children of God. It assumed a common heritage and a common devotion to a common cause. Here was a mutual recognition of brotherhood on the basis of a free fellowship and a common loyalty to Jesus, their Master. All the conferences based on the prin-

ciples of the pact were a concrete demonstration of the "unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

One can interpret the boldness of this proposal only by regarding it in the light of American sectarianism and its history of tragic divisions and subdivisions for the last hundred years. In the unfettered political freedom of America, Protestantism ran riot. A small grain of truth was often magnified into a granary. Here and there a strong man found what he thought was a neglected text and expanded it into a revelation, or seized upon some vagary which for the moment appealed to him. It was not so much a passion to save men that one observes in this period, but the passion of small groups to save men according to their peculiar conceptions of salvation. Consequently, a century of religious life in America was marred by the hard and argumentative spirit wherein each sought to prove his own point of view correct and his neighbor's wrong. Competitive sects wasted not only the people's spiritual substance but, worse still, their potential capacity for good living. The well remembered retort of one stout disputant, who could be brought no nearer to tolerance than to say, "You go on in your way and I will go in His," is quite typical of the mood of the American church during the nineteenth century. Nonrecognition of any mutuality of Christian standing or of ministerial station was common, and its sinfulness scarcely dawned even upon the best people in the churches. Exclusiveness was taken as the proper attitude of "loyalty."

Then came this daring spirit who "saw things whole." He called this nonrecognition "the scandal of Christianity." He wrote a book under this title. The burden of this volume is that the scandal is not in differing over secondary matters, for there must always be diversity of opinion in any permanent unity, but in "making these differ-

ences the occasions for unbecoming behavior of one group of Christians toward another group of Christians"; that when the World War ended the churches were, "through their sectarian interpretation of religion, left lying in the dust and Christianity stalked forth as a skeleton of form, blind and deaf to the moral and social crimes of the world"; that divisions were "not only pagan but immoral."

In view of this impasse between the churches, Ainslie's appeal for recognition on the basis of equality and brotherhood put the denominationalist in an embarrassing position. For, as Ainslie said, "to dissent from equality leaves the dissenters in an awkward attitude. They have no whips with which to chide and no anathemas with which to curse."

Open communion, open pulpits and open membership became the new watchwords of this ambassador of Christian unity. There were few denominations which he did not stab with conviction by this triple-headed javelin, declaring that

there are many barriers to unity but there are three immediate barriers to full fellowship in Protestant Christianity. Three-fourths of the church refuses the Lord's Supper to other Christians while the other fourth refuses them membership in their churches and courtesies in their pulpit. The whole condition is awkward and repugnant to modern intelligence.

His last issue of the *Christian Union Quarterly*, which was his instrument for carrying a world-wide appeal in the interest of Christian unity, published his closing words on this subject:

I am as strongly bound to Jesus as I know how, and therefore, bound to every follower of Jesus, irrespective of class or race or creed. Some day the spirit of Jesus will find its outlet in the world through a real brotherhood among his followers.

I can help a little toward it, as can every one of his disciples, by being unafraid to make experiments in love of the brethren and I propose to work at it as long as I live. For myself I do not want to see Christ either in prayer or in eternity with any less fellowship than that of the whole church of God.

And with these words he dropped his pen which had so consistently championed this cause nearest his heart.

The following summary of Ainslie's ambassadorship to the churches was written by the author for the Christian unity number of the *Christian-Evangelist*, September 14, 1939:

The distinct contribution of Peter Ainslie to the cause of Christian unity lay chiefly in his spirit, rather than in any proposals he inaugurated. In this particular there were three factors:

The first was his passion for the reunion of the church.

In this respect he was scarcely exceeded in his generation. The sorrows of a divided church amounted to him as a scandal. The evils of sectarian and denominational barriers were a burden on his soul. Like Cato the Elder repeating "Carthage must be destroyed," he went about ceaselessly saying, "Sectarianism must be destroyed." For him, every theme led to the insistence upon the unity of the church. Every trouble of the human race rooted back into this wrong. So ardently did he believe that disunion was a sin against the Holy Spirit that it was unpardonable in his mind. He planted the seed of his advocacy in the minds of young Christians and he led their elders to counsel how the wounds of a divided household might be healed.

With the passion of the men who hunted down the apostle Paul, refusing to eat or drink until he should be taken captive, so did Peter Ainslie forget the current absorptions of the day, in his burning desire for the unity of the church. In the language of Gamaliel Bradford, it became his "one unchanged obsession wheresoe'er his feet had trod." Just as one heart sets another heart on fire, so his strong passion for unity kindled a fire across the nation, and into other nations where

his work and influence spread. This, then, was his first distinct contribution to unity, his all-consuming passion.

His second contribution was the medium of his personality, through which diverse minds could meet. He was most at home in leading conferences on Christian unity. The temper of the average man who guards the faith of his particular communion was put at ease by Ainslie's spirit of fair-mindedness. Like the gentle pastoral figure of Isaiah, he could be patient with the young. Every speaker was given time and liberty, and those who might have come with a controversial spirit usually remained to pray. The medium of his willingness to listen, and his power to absorb punishment during long hours when unimportant discussions cleared lesser minds of fearfulness, all this combined to fit him for mediation between differing minds. Possibly Ainslie will be missed more from this realm than from any other.

There are few men good enough to submit themselves to be ground to powder between the upper and nether millstones of the trivial against the trivial. It all seems so futile. The actual gain made by listening to endless dissertations on the inconsequentials of denominational interpretation soon exhausts the most saintly. This was the unique service Peter Ainslie rendered in his time: he could listen. In every gathering of Christian representatives where he presided, the least conspicuous participant soon became assured of a friend. The consciousness of relative littleness was soon forgotten.

Ainslie magnified the office of mediatorship. He took up this difficult job as a necessary piece of the task of reconciliation. He took the way of the mediator, which is the way of the cross, in order to unite all men in the mind of Christ. This was the second contribution, and perhaps the greatest, that Peter Ainslie made to the slow process of attaining unity among the churches.

His third contribution was the element of grace that was within him.

Now it was the essence of Ainslie's mind that he had this grace to deal inoffensively with sometimes offensive people. No sharpness was ever remembered. The door for mutual approach was always left open, the atmosphere of kindness was preserved even at the cost of more intelligent contribution.

Passion, mediation, grace; these are the chief contributions

of Peter Ainslie to Christian unity. They kept the way open for counsel and conference, which otherwise might have remained a wall. What other contributions he made in the realm of intellectual liberation and illumination as certain methods of approach, or of theological paths cleared, are not now so impressive as one surveys the record of his service in this cause. It may appear at long last that not ideas, but spirit may have better served the Kingdom. If so, Peter Ainslie will be remembered as one of the elect who bore permanent witness to the unity of the church, and the way to its attainment: patience, mediation, and grace, and the greatest of these is grace.

He offered a proposal which thousands signed. It was called the "Pact of Reconciliation." Possibly he would rather be remembered as its author than by any other emanation from his mind. But what are the few thousands among the many millions who still constitute the warp and woof of denominationalism, and what results from this pact have led to concrete and substantial movements toward unity? Such union movements as have arisen within religion since his death, or such as are being contemplated, either are within denominational family circles, or are being conducted on quite other bases than the "Pact of Reconciliation." While it is impossible to estimate how much influence that noble conception may have had, and still is having, upon the Christian church, yet it remains a random guess to attempt to weigh the value of that document.

But those who signed it, and all who may read it hereafter, must be elevated in mind by its comprehensive inclusiveness. It must continue to weigh upon the conscience of Christian leaders for generations to come. It has the flavor of the Beatitudes and can be fairly judged only after centuries have passed.

8. Ainslie as a Churchman

IT WAS most fortunate for Peter Ainslie that the administrator in him never overshadowed the pastor and the prophet. He loved the church and so gave himself to it that, had he been a member of a communion which had bishops, his sense of duty might have obliged him to accept such office. In that event the contribution he was able to make toward Christian unity might never have been possible. The prophet in him would have been smothered in an environment which did not offer full scope for the experimentation and exploration necessary for such a leader to do. Furthermore, the capacity to supervise was not a part of his peculiar mental equipment. That task requires more methodical and detailed and exact labor than he was interested in giving. His reverence for the individual always would have got in the way of his efficiency. One human appeal anywhere along his path could always stop him. One inconsequential but important questioner could prevent him from being punctual on a platform where he was to address a thousand. No place to which he was going was ever so important as the person who had just now broken into his presence. People were always more important to him than organizations.

Peter Ainslie passed away just as the modern resurgence of the emphasis on the church was beginning to absorb the Christian mind. He had seen the liberal movement come to its flower. During his lifetime the modern missionary movement had reached its climax and evangelism had come

to its greatest ascendancy. He had no small part in all these developments. A conception of religion as a matter of personal faith and conversion and worship was vital in his advocacy. He was even deeply impressed by the "Faith" missionary movements and the China Inland Mission, which were sporadic and had no denominational rootage. While he believed in cooperation through church organizations as a matter of economy and assurance, he had a wide sympathy for all men and movements that were venturesome enough to explore new avenues or make new experiments as acts of faith. He would never shut himself within the boundaries of any organization, not even within the church as an ecclesiasticism. Any closed conception of the church that arrogated to itself the function of mediating divine grace made him impatient. He went far afield from the idea that a man could be converted only through the church, and utterly rejected the conception that salvation was to be found solely through its ministrations and sacraments. He welcomed every man who without shibboleths or ecclesiastical traditions had found new or untried ways of rediscovering God.

Yet during the years that he sought to work through it, no man was more heartily welcomed by the high-church party than was he. Something about his sense of reverence for all that other men and generations had found good in religion made ecclesiastics generally extend to him a hand of cordial fellowship. They could feel that in him they had found an understanding and appreciative mind, however nonconformist in practice he might be.

Moreover, no man could sit more unweariedly through endless conferences. He who had appeared to break away from the machinery in which religion had involved itself now seemed, oddly enough, a valiant champion of the organized church. Those who knew him yesterday as a

leader of a renaissance of religious liberty, emancipated from all the fettering weights of ecclesiasticism, might now behold him sitting with the doctors and the lawyers who were exponents of all he had opposed. On what ground can the Ainslie of almost two-score years of advocacy of fierce individualism be made one with the Ainslie of later years who spent himself in endless endeavor to acquaint churchmen with churchmen?

Anyone who interprets this phenomenon as indicative of a change in his convictions or as a proof that ripening years had led him to believe that the hope of a free religion lay in the organized church as a corporate body, reckons without true understanding of the man. Those who most intimately shared his latter days were persuaded that his patient courtship of the ecclesiastics of his generation was due not so much to any change of conviction concerning the church as to his deepening love of his fellow men. His desire for the reunion of the church was part of his desire for interracial and international good will. It was because he had become, not more theological, but more social, that he thus gave himself to the "Una Sancta." Much as he desired Christian unity, he desired the "one great society" of men still more. His burning concern was that men and women of all faiths might come to share one another's deepest interests and to enjoy the mutual tasks and common good which tolerant men had discovered in their several spheres. The kingdom he went out to build was not a form of ecclesiastical authority, but the Kingdom of God wherein love and good will would reign over the whole of human affairs.

It would have violated his most fundamental convictions if the divided church as he knew it had suddenly united on some fixed conception of a sacred system outside which worship could not properly be offered or conversion take

place. Desirable as the one church was to him, it was only because it would prove the most serviceable medium through which the spirit of man might ascend in adoration to God, and then proceed from God to render humble service to his fellows. The divided church, in his mind, causes a man to sin against his fellow men in antisocial ways. A united church would offer to man the undivided family of God as the widest possible area for his love and helpfulness. It is quite consistent with all that he said and wrote to say that if the unity of the race could have been achieved without an organized church, Peter Ainslie would not have felt robbed of any indispensable good. His esteem for the Friends, widely and generously proclaimed, was but one of many indications of his nonecclesiastical mind. He loved the church because it was a means to a high end, not an end in itself. That end was our one humanity which had no other equal or comparable means for attaining its destined goal. The church had not arrived in its totality. The conceptions men had formed of it were still capable of readjustment and of enlargement.

It was not astonishing, therefore, that Ainslie, the puritan, should have been so readily accepted by the high churchmen both of America and of Europe. It is easy for one inclined toward ecclesiastical conformity to read into his mind what was never there, namely, a doctrinal conception of the church which was opposed to nonconformity. It was true that he was at home with high churchmen and archbishops, not because he shared their theological points of view but rather because he could be all things to all men for the sake of a united church. His Virginian gentility could easily be mistaken for high churchmanship. His inborn dignity and courtesy made him appear much at home among the ecclesiastically elect. But anyone tempted to classify him as being inclined to conformity

has only to recall his disappointment over the ecclesiastical opposition to a common communion service in the Christian union conferences he organized. Earlier in his life he revealed his mind in the following paragraph:

I was greatly impressed with Alexander Campbell's freedom and catholicity. He gave me a new awakening on the scandal of denominationalism, and his logic enabled me to see in my own denomination that which he condemned in all denominationalism. Campbell also awakened my interest in Bible study. One of his great statements that went deep down into my thinking was: "I have endeavored to read the Scriptures as though no one had read them before me; and I am as much on my guard against reading them today through the medium of my own views yesterday or a week ago, as I am against being influenced by any foreign name, authority, or system whatsoever."

After the Lausanne conference, of course, when it suddenly became clear to Ainslie that unity could not be achieved "from the top" — that is, through the high office-holders of the churches — but must come "from the bottom," he frequently absented himself from the gatherings of hierarchs. He was following another trail now. But always he was a liberal and a democrat, at whatever cost. If he seemed hospitable to groups interested chiefly in the doctrines of the church, it was for the sake of understanding and fellowship. At long last he remained always a puritan with the puritan conception of religion. He could be attentive and receptive, but here as everywhere he was "velvet to the touch and granite to the push." A cavalier by birth and education, he was a puritan in spirit.

We can best do Ainslie justice in attempting to interpret his conception of the church by introducing a poem of his found in the *Christian Union Quarterly* of April 1934. It is his best reflection on this subject. As the poet is always

prophet and seer, giving the truest perceptions of the mind,
we leave this analysis of Ainslie's churchmanship in the
following verses:

Forgive, O Lord, our severing ways,
The separate altars that we raise,
The varying tongues that speak Thy praise!

Suffice it now. In time to be
Shall one great temple rise to Thee,
Thy church our broad humanity.

White flowers of love its walls shall climb,
Sweet bells of peace shall ring its chime,
Its days shall be all holy time.

The hymn, long sought, shall then be heard,
The music of the world's accord,
Confessing Christ, the inward Word!

That song shall swell from shore to shore,
One faith, one love, one hope restore,
The seamless garb that Jesus wore!

9. *Ambassador of Peace*

A MIND so set as was Peter Ainslie's upon the unity of the churches would naturally glow with equal ardor for peace among the nations. Everything that made his soul revolt against the unhappy spectacle of a divided church kindled in him a resistless passion to create understanding and good will among hostile peoples. He conceived the task of creating unity as one, whether it concerned the churches or the races or the nations. This did not mean that he was a dabbler in many causes, but only that he was a tireless advocate of the one great cause, good will. To him, these various causes were inextricably bound together. One could not prosper unless all prospered. If he placed greater emphasis on Christian unity, this was because he considered it the primary responsibility of the church to bring about its own unity in order that it might establish a kindred unity of spirit among races and nations.

Peter Ainslie was born in an atmosphere of peace. The unhurried life of his community made for it. The spirit of the manse made for it. His first lesson at school was the discipline of self-restraint when he was set upon by his fellow pupils. By temperament he was disinclined to violence. The conception of love and forgiveness planted by his mother in his childish mind bore magnificent fruit. If the boy for a time worshiped the memory of Napoleon, the glory of that hero soon became dimmed, and another hero, Tolstoy, took his place. In the great Russian prophet

of peace the growing Peter found a kindred spirit whose influence upon him became ever greater. Later in life he paid a great tribute to Tolstoy:

There was no other such fine and free interpreter of Jesus in his day as the Russian idealist. A real Christian! Yet he was excommunicated by one of the largest denominations of Christendom because he had been judged by the Orthodox as a heretic, and his excommunication was concurred in by most of the other denominations. I began to feel the biting atmosphere of an unfree and unspiritual church. I did not doubt God for a moment, but I became skeptical as to the direction toward which the churches were headed. Although they were not having much to do with each other, they were all headed in the same direction of denominational pride and denominational achievement. There appeared to be no moral sense in their leadership relative to general hatred against other nations and the practice of mass murder of the population of other nations, although great missionary programs were in operation!

Tolstoy released me from orthodox thinking on social problems. I had no further difficulty in finding my way to what seemed to me a finer standard in international affairs than the churches had dared to champion. I decided definitely never to make another address on war except to denounce it, nor would I have anything to do with war under any circumstances, even though my country became involved.

In the development of Ainslie's pacifism, the influence of the Quakers also counts for much. He became acquainted with their views early in his life. "Their position," he later wrote,

helped me very much. I was heartened to know that there were some Christians whose denominational tenets were against the use of war for adjusting disputes. They are a small group, but they have convictions that war is the wrong method; and they have not been afraid to affirm their belief through many years, while the larger denominations had no conviction on the unethical machinery of war, except in rare instances of individuals here and there.

Nevertheless, the absolute pacifistic position which Ainslie later took was the result, not merely of temperament, but of long thought and study. From the very beginning, however, he contended in his public utterances for the theory that love will win over any alienation, and put that conviction to the test wherever he encountered hostility either toward himself or toward movements of which he was a part. "Why do you let people hurt you?" he was always saying. "If someone fails in attitude or act to do the decent thing toward you, it is his loss of character — not yours. Be hurt about your own acts and settle that with God." And in one of his books he wrote:

Forgiveness is the first qualification in the discipleship of Jesus. It is not something we may do; it is something we must do. My mother laid constantly upon my heart this teaching of Jesus when I was a mere boy, and it radiated from her throughout our village life.

I was greatly helped when a distinguished minister and friend of my father visited me once. He inquired about the trouble I was having with a fellow minister whom I had helped. I told him I did not like to tell it, for I had discovered that the oftener I repeated it the more difficult it was to suppress resentment; but he insisted on knowing at first hand some of the points. I made them as brief as possible. When I got through, he said: "I have never been treated as badly as that. You have an opportunity that I never had." Opportunity? I had never thought of it in that light.

Of course it was an opportunity to forgive. If one has not been treated badly he has nothing to forgive. I had a real job and I saw it. My father's friend made my victory easier, and later I discovered that there was no ill-feeling in my heart against the young minister. But that is not enough. I recalled one of the great sentences of Trench, who was a favorite in my father's library: "The rule of life is that thou shalt render good for thy brother's ill; the shape in which thou shalt render it, love shall prescribe."

The following instance is quite typical of Ainslie. Rev. Daniel Somers was for many years editor of the *Octographic Review*. This journal was the mouthpiece of the very considerable body that withdrew from the Disciples on the ground that the organ was an unscriptural instrument and as such not to be employed in the worship of the church. Gradually many other irritating differences of opinion gathered about this original dispute. The situation became more acute as Somers vigorously championed this separate movement. The all but irreconcilable cleavage within the Disciples — a movement which had been organized to foster Christian unity — became very embarrassing.

Ainslie invited Somers to come to Baltimore and spend a week as his guest. Somers accepted the invitation. For seven days Ainslie showed him every courtesy within his power, gave himself to his guest with utter abandon, even persuaded him to preach to the Temple congregation. The mooted question was silenced by Ainslie's explanation to the worshipers that out of respect to the guest preacher the service would be conducted without the use of the organ. That deference, together with Ainslie's gracious patience in hearing Somers through to the last word of his seemingly inconsequential argument, completely won the mind of the erstwhile bitter critic. When at length he returned home Somers declared he could no longer dispute with so good a man.

Possibly no single event in Ainslie's life revealed more fully his capacity to be a mediating influence than his experience with the Grand Army of the Republic. To his astonishment he once received an invitation to preach before these veterans at their annual encampment. It is to be remembered that Peter Ainslie was born in Virginia

three years after the close of the Civil War, and in his early life must have shared the keen disappointment over the defeat of the south and the dismay over the social chaos incident to the release of the slaves. It would have been surprising had he not drunk in the dominant passions then running like a fever through his contemporaries. No doubt he had to struggle to overcome this resentful attitude. Overcome it he certainly did. Nevertheless, that he, a southern minister, a Virginian by birth and breeding, should receive this invitation to preach before the veterans of the north, seemed beyond comprehension. But he accepted, in the hope that he might help heal the scars the war had left on both north and south. Let him tell the story:

There was something suspicious and embarrassing about the reception received when I reached my host's home, a few blocks from the station. My southern accent brought from him at once the question as to which side my relatives were on in the Civil War. When I told him that they were on the southern side, I was suddenly left alone in the room as though I had a contagious disease. I entertained myself for several hours by browsing among the books on a center table. One on Jefferson Davis, written with a vitriolic pen, particularly interested me; another on Robert E. Lee was equally bitter. I scanned these with intense interest until I saw coming up the walk to the house some of the men whom I had seen at the station, all wearing their reception paraphernalia. The maid ushered them into the room without announcement. I arose immediately, introducing myself and shaking hands with each of them. They took their seats and the spokesman, a stocky and abrupt man, went straight to the subject. He said:

"I am sorry to inform you that the colonel made a great mistake in inviting you here. Some of us had read your sermons on the labor problem in the daily papers here in the west and we concluded that you were a northern man and a man much older than you appear to be. Besides, the colonel is run-

ning for Congress this year. It is going to be a close election anyway and this thing will hurt him. It would never do to have a southern man preach a sermon at the national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic. We men went through the war and some of us feel that we do not care to have a southern man to preach to us! ”

When there was an opportunity to respond, I said: “ I see no occasion for any embarrassment either to you or to me. There is a train going east about midnight. I shall take that train. In order that no item of any payments to me may appear on your books, you need not even reimburse me for my expenses in making the trip here. I came on the railroad pass which your committee kindly sent me, so that I shall be out very little. Such an adjustment will be entirely satisfactory to me.”

“ But,” said the spokesman, “ this thing will get out. It may not do you any harm but it will ruin the Grand Army. We have made a great mistake.” I said: “ I am perfectly willing to withdraw. But I was born after the Civil War, and am I to understand that you men of the north want to extend your animosities to the southerners of my generation? ”

We had an interesting conversation for fully an hour before they withdrew, informing me that a meeting of the full committee had been called for the evening, and that I would be informed of their decision. It was nearly midnight when two of the committee called and informed me that they had decided that I should deliver the annual sermon as originally planned, and bade me goodnight.

I preached. Some of the reception committee occupied the front seats. After the services were over, they held a brief consultation and informed me that it was their wish that I should deliver the same sermon that evening in the largest auditorium in the town. But I declined, having performed my part of the original agreement, and I left for the east that afternoon with many misgivings on war.

That sermon was published in full in the town paper, and the following excerpts appeared in many of the daily papers throughout the country:

I come with no apology from my fair southern land, whose escutcheon is still untarnished; from her defeated battlefields arises a fragrance sweeter than the fragrance of a crushed flower. With uncovered head, and heart heaving with deep emotion, I stand amid her graves, her marble shafts, her broken swords and her mildewed flags, and I believe that I am standing on sacred ground. Yet I lift up everlasting thanksgiving that God Almighty threw the dice of battle and lifted the nightmare of human slavery from the American republic and preserved our sisterhood of states into a compact union. In the words of the goldenhearted Grady, "Now, what answer have the men of the north to this question? Will you permit the prejudice of war to be kept alive in the hearts of the conquerors when it has died in the hearts of the conquered?"

I would gather the burst balls, the broken bayonets, rusty swords, and old worn-out muskets, and I would pile them into a great heap, but above them all I would place the document of emancipation that broke the shackles of American slavery as far greater than all the battles in the war between the states, prophetic of the time when the arts and implements of war shall be declared as remnants of a barbarous age, and the human mind and human heart, under the meridian splendor of divine grace, shall solve all problems in courts of justice, until humanity has grown into the likeness of its God.

He had won his audience; he, a southerner, had made good among northerners. He left the city with the sweet consciousness of having fulfilled his ambassadorship.

The Spanish-American War was Ainslie's first direct encounter with large-scale violence. His thought on war had not yet reached maturity, but he protested against participation in this war both because offensive action was unnecessary and because war was opposed to the mind of Christ. There was as yet no general Christian sentiment on the subject. The church tended to go along with the state, as it had usually done wherever and whenever hindrance to the state's greed or ambition made war seem reasonable and right. Save for a small contingency of Friends

and similarly minded religious groups, there was no agitation on the subject of Christian conscience and the sword. Yet in this no man's land of inert Christianity Ainslie ventured to lift his solitary voice in protest.

The outbreak of the World War in 1914 precipitated Ainslie's thought on violence. Now his temperament and his mind came to a focus. His study had thoroughly prepared him to defend on a material as well as on a moral level the conviction to which his intuition had long led him, and he took his stand openly as a pacifist.

The beginning of the conflict found him in Paris on a mission of Christian unity. He saw a continent set on fire with the passions of war. Though he had little hope of the effort, he joined Graham Taylor in calling on a London editor and conferring with that gentleman on ways to stop this senseless attempt to settle international differences by force. But matters had gone so far that no nation would heed the voice of conciliation. Returning to New York, Ainslie went directly to the home of Andrew Carnegie, whose gift of twenty million dollars had just endowed the Church Peace Union as a new agency of the Church Universal.

"How far are you willing to go for peace among the nations?" Carnegie asked Ainslie. Ainslie answered, "I don't think there can be peace among the nations until war is abolished." "You surely don't think there will ever be another war among the civilized nations?" asked Carnegie. Peter Ainslie replied: "I think it is inevitable so long as extensive preparations are being made for it as is evident in Europe. I have followed Tolstoy so closely on this subject that I have adopted his philosophy, recognizing the impossibility of averting it." Carnegie asked, "Will you support such a war?" "No," answered Ainslie, "long ago I decided that I would never support any war. Until there are

enough people who refuse to use arms and to support war, we are going to have war." "But," asked Carnegie, "have you counted the cost of your refusal?" "Yes," answered Ainslie, "if my government sends me to prison for my refusal, I shall endeavor to make converts of the prisoners to this ideal. Or if my government orders me to be shot, I would much rather be shot by my government because I contend for a moral principle than to be shot by the enemy whom I tried to shoot at my government's order. I am not afraid of the test."

Carnegie asked him to become a member of the Church Peace Union board of trustees, a position which he filled until his death. The words he then spoke in advocacy of peace come back to us now with striking appropriateness:

Across the fields of politics and of economics one encounters those towering terms that lie back of war, which are fear, insecurity, suspicion, greed, race, emigration, raw material and discrimination. Out of a combination of these, in some instances out of a single one of these, war has sprung forth like a lion out of his den. But wars cannot adjust such problems; they complicate them. For the adjustment of these problems the facts must be carefully gathered and justice must be seriously exercised.

He carried the message of these words to all America, making a tour across the country to denounce war as a method for adjusting international disputes. After the United States entered the war, on every Sunday until the armistice he prayed in his pulpit for all the nations involved in that unprecedented shambles, mentioning each nation by name and supplicating God to have mercy upon their madness and folly. This shocked not only his membership but other patriotic citizens who attended his services. "Some," he wrote,

became indignant at what they regarded as my lack of patriotism. But the chief concern of the larger part was fear that I might be sent to one of the government prisons. From a full auditorium my congregation dwindled. The impression went out that I was pro-German, whereupon my auditorium was filled with Germans until they discovered that I was opposed to war, and then they left too.

But this advocate of peace was prepared for discouragement and criticism. When, a few days before Christmas in 1917, he sent a letter to the daily papers throughout the country, proposing a truce on Christmas Day and suggesting adjustment of the dispute by some method other than that of the battlefield, editorial denunciations were heaped on him and columnists and stout patriots attacked and derided him. But he persisted by night and day, at home and abroad, in reciting his convictions about war. He said:

Written in the conscience of mankind is reverence for personality. It is not something we are taught, although teaching may develop it. It is intuitively a part of us. This something in us is necessarily weakened when we kill a human being; particularly is this true when the killing is done wholesale under the protection of the state, as in a case of war. Consequently war is a moral question of first consideration and becomes associated with murder.

At no period of the World War was he swept off his feet by the widely publicized atrocity tales. Sunday after Sunday he stood in his pulpit and preached tolerance and non-resistance. While all about him the theme of every conversation was enlistment and reinforcement of the military regime, he talked peace and a spirit that makes for peace. When he was assailed for disloyalty, he maintained that he had a higher loyalty to which he must be true. He bravely controverted the time-honored conception of loyalty and patriotism.

Notwithstanding the fact that he shared in the ministry to soldiers in the camps and made the Christian Temple a center for men in uniform to meet Christian people and to enjoy the society of good men and women, Ainslie was convinced that the chaplain, as a representative of the churches, has no place in the army. If he wears a military uniform and receives military pay he is expected to obey the military authorities. It becomes his duty to strengthen the morale of the soldiers so that they may murder as many of the enemy as possible, and to give thanks to God for victory — in Ainslie's own words, "to uphold in the name of religion the lying war propaganda and the beastly murder of the battlefield." He called this a "dreadful tie-up of religion with iniquity" and insisted that it ought to be abolished.

He was utterly opposed to the church's associating itself in any way with war. "The most amazing fact in history," he wrote,

is that the church has wholeheartedly supported war through sixteen hundred years without a blush of shame; and it looks now as though it is going to be more difficult for the church to disentangle itself than for the political governments to do so. History abounds in paradoxes. Christianity started as a peace movement. In the life of its founders are the most powerful and fruitful peace principles the world has ever known. Those were the days when Christianity was not as yet a doctrine. It was a way of living. It was a life. Yet the followers of Jesus, after getting a century and a half away from his life in the flesh, not only gave their support to war as a method of adjusting disputes, but so wholeheartedly identified themselves with it by enrolling in the army and giving God's blessing upon it that, by the year 416, the Roman senate passed a bill making it obligatory upon all soldiers to become Christians in order to murder human beings legally.

His keen sensitiveness in this matter made Ainslie a dreaded foe to Christian leaders who were forever endeav-

oring to make Christianity fit into " patriotism " and " loyalty." Consistency in the attitudes of peace was of the essence of sincerity to him; lack of it was the essence of insincerity. While thousands of his fellow ministers were acclaiming the moral value of force and praying that God might bless the American or British swords (and afterward repented of it in sackcloth and ashes), Ainslie went on saying what he had, in substance, been saying for a quarter of a century. He thought that the evil of war was rooted in the common sins of intolerance and exclusiveness. " This war," he wrote, " is the indirect product of sectarian bitterness and religious controversy which in politics is called militarism. Consequently the military policy, which is now destined to destroy Europe, has its roots deep down in the church." By accepting war as sin for himself and his community of Christians, he gave evidence of sincerity and fairness and justice which won him the high esteem of the more thoughtful people of his time.

There was therefore no alibi of " disillusionment " that could have brought Ainslie to make public confession of a changed attitude after the World War. He had no later embarrassments to swallow because of superpatriotic effusions in the heat of battle. Nor did he have any disappointments to confess, since he had never expected war to do anything except breed more wars. The last hope to be entertained by him was that war could ever " end war." Nor could he be included in the condemnation now leveled against the ministry that it has no evidence of clearer certainty than industry has; as John Haynes Holmes said of him, " he had a way of coming clean." His pacifism was of no milk-and-water variety. He denounced apologists of war to their faces and indicted them for " treason against God." Yet he never fought with bitterness. That made him all the more dreaded as an antagonist. He might pro-

voke an opponent into irrational statements, but he never forsook the mood and language of love. His consistent course gave him a calmness and a sureness that were the envy of all who later came to his position through penitence for past utterances.

His capacity to detach himself from the environing fury that sweeps most men with it was illustrated in two pictures he chose to hang in his study. They were simple and elemental. One was of a baby building a block tower which was toppling. It was entitled, "The Little Builder." The second was of a baby also, a baby splashing in a bowl. It was entitled, "Tempest in a Teapot." He often referred to these pictures when men and nations became discouraged or, at the opposite extreme, went wild. They belonged to the philosophy which had enabled Emerson to write to a peppery minister whom he had heard preach, "Why so hot, little man?" When his generation lost its head in the great war and good men uttered unguarded and unworthy statements and crowds were moved to say and do cruel and untrue things, Ainslie maintained a poise that was not the result of living apart like the gods on Olympus, but the result of dwelling above the petty and temporary.

After the war, Ainslie continued his campaign for peace in the midst of the aggressive superpatriotism which victory had inflamed. A wider phase of his ambassadorship for peace began when, along with others, he was sent by the Church Peace Union to visit the churches of Europe in order to create among them a better understanding and to build a new state of mind which might prevent recurrence of the evil of war. So strong, however, were the habits of war and the esteem for military paraphernalia in the minds even of church leaders that one member of the deputation carried along his wartime uniform with all the decorations

he had received from other nations. Each day he put on his regalia and swept around the deck of the ship. Ainslie could not endure the incongruity of this display of the symbols of war by a delegation on its way to reopen the paths to peace on a continent still bleeding from its wounds. The perennial graciousness which never forsook him stood him in good stead now. One day, confronting his fellow commissioner, he expressed amazement at the numerous and strikingly rare tokens of regard by which the warring nations of Europe had expressed their esteem for him. Then he added, "Don't you think, Brother ———, that the sea air will tarnish them and that you are risking their beauty by exposing them on shipboard?" It was enough. The daily dress parade was finished.

The five counts Ainslie later drew up against war were as follows:

- (1) War is a most horrible method of the murder business.
- (2) War is the most wasteful business in history.
- (3) War is a most senseless business.
- (4) War is the lowest standard of business.
- (5) War is an outlawed business.

If Peter Ainslie had lived to see the beginning of the struggle which is now threatening to put out the lights in Europe, he would have suffered deeply. He would not have closed his eyes to the horrible facts, for his pacifism was realistic. But he would not have been discouraged. His love of peace and his immovable conviction that it must ultimately prevail were rooted in his Christianity, whose Founder declared that all men are brothers and that the way of love alone will lead to happiness in the Kingdom of God both on earth and in heaven.

10. Crusader for Social Justice

AKIN to Ainslie's interest in peace and growing out of it was his interest in racial and social justice. He was not afraid to lay direct hands on the most delicate social problem. Once, for example, when a race riot broke out in Baltimore, caution would have counseled a course of extreme wariness. In no city had the "white" and "black" tradition been stronger. Colored people had their places in public buildings and conveyances. No stranger could have touched the problem without awakening blind rage. But here was a citizen, well known to all alike. He belonged to one of the noblest Virginia families. He was of the elect in the estimation of the whites. They respected his judgment. Likewise he had the confidence of the colored population. He called a conference of representatives of the best and most widely known in both races, and not only brought the rioting to an immediate end but laid a foundation for better race relations in his city.

He became the conciliator between black and white. Always he kept a calm spirit. His often expressed creed was: "I may not be able to make another see my point of view, but I can make him respect the difference through my attitude of love." He believed strongly in the capacity of humble people to rise in the scale of social and political life and maintained that no race could keep another race down. He had grown up with Negroes. Some had been his playmates as a child, others his protectors as a babe, still others had received communion in his church. Peter

Ainslie would not have taken the extreme position of the north and given the colored man political control of vital public insitutions, but he would have done more: he would have loved him and patiently borne with him as he grew capable of leadership. He deprecated the haste which wrecked the political standing of the colored man during the carpetbagger period, but he ardently defended the chance of the Negro to win his place in the sun through exercise of his powers in positions of trust and responsibility. A man, whatever his color, was to Ainslie still a man, entitled to respect and social acceptance according to his inner worth.

The following incident reveals his attitude. Once, traveling by train through Virginia, he looked up from his book and noticed a Negro girl of about twelve or fifteen standing in the aisle, though there were some vacant seats. "I had forgotten about the Jim Crow law in Virginia," he said.

There was no partition in the center of the car, as I have seen in other cars — just the customary arrangement that the Negroes were to take the front of the car and the whites the back. . . . I beckoned the little girl to a seat by me. She accepted it reluctantly, but was too frightened to be sure as to whether it was an order for her to obey or a courtesy for her to accept. I had hardly lifted my book to my eyes to continue my reading when a tornado of protests came from all parts of the white section of the car: "Call for the conductor!" "Stop the train!" "Put him off!" "We'll teach these damn Yankees a few lessons!"

I was apparently reading through it all when the Negro porter approached me and inquired if I had asked the girl to take a seat by me, to which I said, "Yes." He informed me that it was against the law of Virginia, at which I expressed some surprise — "Ah, indeed!"

But I continued reading. Then shouts multiplied in number and force. "Get the conductor here!" "Put him off the train!"

A big burly fellow, two seats across from me, shouted: "If the conductor don't put this here damn Yankee off, I am big enough to do it. No nigger gal shall sit beside a white man on a train that I ride on."

By that time the conductor had arrived. . . . He asked me if I had asked the Negro girl to take that seat by me. I assured him I had. He then reminded me that it was a violation of the law of Virginia. I expressed my regret that Virginia had such a law and, turning to the girl, I assured her that she would not be moved by my request. I shall never forget the big eyes that looked at me as if she were wondering what I meant and, at the same time, she gave me an expression of pity for fear that I might be blamed for what I was doing.

Up to this time the conductor and I had spoken in modulated voices amid some disturbance around us, protests and jeering remarks from the whites. . . . We came to a water tank and the train stopped. Then I asked him in a loud voice in order that everybody might hear: "If Robert E. Lee had been seated where I am and this little Negro girl had come down the aisle looking for a seat, and he had refused this seat to her, would Virginia have any respect for his memory?" The conductor bent down and whispered in my ear: "No, and I'll lose my job before I'll put you off this train or make this girl move."

In Ainslie's growing acquaintance with distinguished Negro men and women he deplored increasingly the reluctance of the majority white element to accord them the privileges and advantages to which they were entitled. He took every opportunity of meeting and recognizing capable colored leaders and counseling with them about the future of their race. He stoutly defended the colored race and as stoutly condemned the inhuman practice of lynching. On a visit to the south he was a luncheon guest in the home of an attorney. "After the meal," he said,

my host called my attention to some of his collections from Europe. I saw a piece of rope, about a foot long, hanging on the wall. I inquired about it and was told that it was a piece of a rope with which a Negro had been lynched some years ago in that town.

“ You don’t mean to classify a remnant of Negro lynching with these works of art? ” I asked.

“ Well, of course not,” stumblyingly replied the host.

My hostess interrupted: “ I have told Howard a dozen times to throw that piece of rope away. I am ashamed of it.”

“ Well, with two against me, I will yield. Here it goes,” the host declared.

“ Thank you,” I answered. “ I could not feel comfortable as your guest so long as you retained in your home a remnant of a Negro lynching.”

This experience, which Ainslie loved to relate, illustrates both his sense of social justice and his naive method of getting done the thing which he was after. The social and economic barriers which a prosperous white majority had built up against the Negro offended his soul. He tilted against them whenever opportunity offered. On one occasion, when he visited a southern city for a speaking engagement, he was met at the railroad station and taken to the leading hotel. “ After luncheon,” he continued,

one of the members of the committee and his wife called to take me for a ride. They did the usual thing: they took me through the parks and the wealthy sections of the city. When we started back to the hotel, I asked that they show me also the poor section. With surprise they looked at me as though they thought I was joking, and drove back to the hotel. I then hired a guide to show me where the poor lived. When I had seen the wealth and poverty of the city, I was able to have some idea of its contribution to civilization, which I gave to the audience in my address that evening.

But the problem of the colored people, in his mind, rooted in American life and grew out of a political tangle for which the whites bore inescapable responsibility. He presented his scheme for solving the problem in a vigorous address championing the colored cause:

Seventy years ago Lincoln wrote his Emancipation Proclamation, but the Negro’s freedom has been badly bungled. It would have been far better for him to be educated for the ballot

than to be made a political pawn, and then later to be disfranchised. In the southern states there are now, according to the United States Department of Commerce, nearly two-thirds of the Negroes in the United States twenty-one years of age and over, or something over four million disfranchised Negroes.

It is not right, but what can be done? There may be at least three answers to this question. The first would lift the disfranchisement act, which would mean, in some southern states, the majority, if not the entire, officary passing to the Negroes, including United States senators, congressmen, governors, legislators and judges. This would not be fair to the whites and would be more unfair to the Negroes, who are, of course, not prepared for such a radical shift of responsibility. The second would reduce southern representation in Congress. The third, and I think the best, would give to Negroes representation in Congress and in state legislatures according to the percentage of their tax payments or, perhaps, of their population. For example, if they paid ten per cent of the taxes in a state, or had a population of so many thousands, that state should give them one representative in Congress and one in the state legislature. When they got to the place where they paid a fourth of the taxes in that state, they should be given a fourth of the representation. The Negro would be a national congressman and a state legislator-at-large. Two or more Negroes would stand for election irrespective of political parties. This would eliminate making the Negro a political pawn in the south; it would split the southern whites into two parties, which can never be done under the present system but which ought to be done. It would give to Negroes not only a place of dignity in the state, but a voice in state and national councils.

As Ainslie made no distinction between white and Negro, so he made no distinction between gentile and Jew. The Jewish problem was brought home to him in the early years of his ministry. Let him tell the story:

It was a common occurrence for groups of children to meet me in the afternoon as I turned the corner in sight of my home. Among these were several Jewish children from a Jewish family who lived several doors from me. One afternoon I was walking

up the street with two Christian women, when one of these little children, this time a Jewish girl, ran to meet me and caught hold of my hand in her usual friendly fashion. One of the Christian women inquired with contempt: "What are you doing with that little sheeny?"

Instantly, as if a brier had been struck across her face, the little girl burst into tears and pulled away from me. I excused myself from the two Christian women and held on to the little Jewish girl as she walked along crying. I went to her home and explained to her mother what had happened, and apologized for the remark; but the ugly thing had been done. Could a child forget it? I think she tried to, but we were never as good friends thereafter. I called on the Christian woman who made the remark and told her the circumstances, expressing my regret, but she came back at me with surprise that I was friendly with Jews.

That interest, once awakened, never left him. It was at his own request that Rabbi Rosenau of Baltimore was asked to participate in his funeral services. Ainslie took part in interfaith programs organized to acquaint Jews and Christians with the good in the religion of each. But he never joined in movements that had as their aim the conversion of Jews to Christianity. "I do not know," he wrote,

that I am interested in Jews becoming converts to our present-day Christianity, joining the Presbyterians, or Disciples, or Episcopalians, or Baptists, or Lutherans, or Catholics, or Methodists, or any other of the two hundred and more varieties of Christians. But I am profoundly interested in Jews and Christians working together until another type of Christianity emerges, so neither will absorb the other, but both will contribute such understanding of Jesus as will give him his rightful place in the thought of both Jews and gentiles, which he has not yet had of either, but which he some day will have of both, for the stock of David holds the key for a reconciled world. Christianity needs the Jews. Indeed, it will never reach its best until it is grafted into the Jewish stock. And the Jews no less need Christianity.

Ainslie's efforts in behalf of racial equality were but a part of the ministry of social justice he carried on constantly. He was not the man to follow the cheap and easy way of professing love for his fellows or criticizing an institution or a method, and then do nothing about it. Whatever person or cause enlisted his sympathy could count on his active support.

Early in his pastorate he established a "Working Girls' Home" in Baltimore. It was nonsectarian. The only limitations placed upon its membership were those relating to age and income. It was open only to girls between sixteen and thirty-five who were receiving five dollars or less a week. This experiment in attempting to lighten the burden of girls condemned to work for a pittance led Ainslie into some of the most interesting, as well as most acute, situations of his ministry. He was so ardent in his zeal for the success of this social adventure that he acted as its treasurer and his diaries contain pages listing detailed purchases and expenditures for its maintenance. More than eight hundred girls found a haven of refuge in the Home and were able to live respectably at a most moderate cost. Through the charitably inclined women whom Ainslie installed as leaders, he provided for them constant Christian oversight and companionship. But in his mind there was always a sense of the social injustice in a system that would compel a girl to work for five dollars a week when the business for which she worked was paying good dividends to its stockholders. On at least one occasion he took direct action in the matter:

One of the girls in the club got \$3.50 a week. With Ruskin as my background, I went to see the president of the corporation where she was employed, and told him the story.

"Well, if you don't want her to work here," he replied, "you

may be able to get her another job; and we can get another girl to fill her place at the same price we are paying her."

"Of course you can. Times are hard and there are a great many poor people who have to work for whatever they can get. But do you think it is fair to take advantage of the poverty of the poor in order to make money for the rich?"

He arose from his seat, and asked: "Did you come in here to tell me how to run my business?"

I answered: "I do not wish to offend you, nor did I come here to tell you how to run your business. You are my brother and this girl is my sister. I am assuming that you did not know that there was a girl in your establishment who was receiving \$3.50 a week. I came here to tell you that I know the girl who is receiving that amount and I believe your position in your city calls for the correction of this great wrong."

"Prices for labor are not so much governed by profits as by what we can get labor for. There are hundreds of girls in this city who are glad to get \$3.50 a week."

"But do you think it is right to make the labor of these girls pay your unreasonable dividends and unreasonable salaries?"

"I see nothing wrong in it. If it were not for people like yourself making these girls dissatisfied, they would continue to work for these wages," replied the employer.

To this I remarked with considerable warmth, "You are mistaken. I have never sought to make any girl dissatisfied with her wages. This girl does not know that I have come to see you. My job is to talk to the people who pay wages, not to the people who receive them. It is the dissatisfaction that I hear around me that has led me to be the spokesman for working girls. The poor are patient and numerous. Some day what they cannot get by reason they will get by force!"

"Are you making this as a threat?" hotly retorted the proprietor.

"No; I am talking facts. A corporation that pays unreasonable salaries to its officials and unreasonable dividends to its stockholders and low wages to its employees, laying them off without consideration, is practicing such an antisocial procedure that human reason will some day have its insurrection,

and rightly too. I fear that the cost will be much that is valuable in our civilization. I am pleading with you to help to save a situation in which you are one of the actors."

Happily Ainslie was able to record a slight sign of an awakening conscience in the corporation official:

On the following Saturday Ollie Benson was handed her pay envelope with an extra dollar and fifty cents. But even five dollars! What was that for a rich concern that ought to have been paying decent wages? What value was this small increase in one girl's wages in the face of the economic setup in America? Who was I — one individual — against this oppression of the poor? This president was said to be a Christian. Once men were tried for heresy in theology, and sometimes excommunicated; the time has now come when men must be helped to see the consequences of their antisocial practices, and spoken to in clear terms, whether as a result they leave the fellowship of Christians or not.

Back of all this lay Ainslie's genuine love for people, whether as individuals or in the mass — his Christian reverence for human personality. One of his friends tells how he often shared with him a six o'clock New York subway jam. At such times, he says, Ainslie would exult over the impulse to preach while hanging to a strap, crowded into capsule dimensions by the sheer pressure of people. Each of the atoms in that black hole of Calcutta had for him a peculiar appeal.

It would be impossible to estimate the influence he wielded for social justice. Here too he used direct methods and responded to every plea that came his way. But here too he kept both forest and trees in sight. He worked at the task from both ends, alleviating the lot of the individual whenever he could and raising his voice in protest against the world's wilderness of injustice.

11. Ainslie and the Disciples

WHILE Ainslie was an unreconstructed anti-denominationist, he recognized his obligations to the Disciples' movement. He never forgot the pit from which his people had been digged. While many of his fellow communionists had reduced the Plea to mean the steps in conversion — namely, faith, repentance, confession and baptism — he conceived it to be the appeal of Thomas Campbell in the “ Declaration and Address ” — the appeal for the unity of the church. Attempts to build a great religious body, to rank high in numbers and to build a wide organization found little favor with him. The more his people became a “ peculiar ” folk, the more numerous they grew and the more they became the custodians of a vast philanthropic investment both at home and abroad, the more they seemed to him to depart from their original purpose. Every step which involved them in insulation and denominational machinery was to him a resignation of the trust God had committed to them.

Although in his earlier ministry he had been, like St. Paul, more zealous than his fellow Disciples in making converts and in baptizing by immersion those who previously had accepted sprinkling, he did not hesitate later to acknowledge his mistaken zeal as partisan and partial and as destructive of the ultimate purpose of his people's mission. It was at this point in his ministry that he first became the object of extreme criticism, which followed hard on the inordinate adulation he had formerly received from his

own people. For so long as this gifted and charming and deservedly popular preacher followed in the traditional steps of the fathers he was widely acclaimed. Nothing was too good for so stout a champion. He was sought out for every program and desired in every home. So long as he could say "shibboleth," his people universally accorded him their homage and approval. They gave him the highest honor within their power, the presidency of the General Convention of the Disciples of Christ.

It will be remembered that Ainslie's forebears had taken part in the beginning of the Disciples' movement along with Thomas and Alexander Campbell. The latter instructed Peter Ainslie II in the principles of the "Reformation" and often heard him preach. The Ainslies were always courageous and creative and revealed forward-looking qualities. Each in his turn was a leader. Each in his generation made a marked contribution to the growth and character of this communion. It was but natural to expect, therefore, that Peter Ainslie III would have a deep interest in the course of Disciple history and would take pride in the brotherhood's growing place among other denominations and find joy in its progress. The esteem in which he found the Disciples to be regarded was his peculiar satisfaction; any disfavor in which they might anywhere be held was his pain.

His chief interest was in seeing them devoted to their earliest mission: the reunion of the church. When he found them chiefly concerned about their own tenets and growth and employing the appeal of unity to win denominational converts, he was keenly disappointed; it offended both his sense of reverence and his dream of their possibilities. When he found them anywhere descending to the position of becoming mere guardians of a noble conception,

of the proportions or magnitude of which they seemed to have little understanding, it meant acute distress to him.

This insight formed the theme of his presidential address at Topeka in 1910. That address was conceived in great affection for his denomination, but it was nevertheless one of strong rebuke. It was received by some in humility, by many as a prophet's word, but by the more conservative element as the words of a deserter. These gave voice to their disapproval in unmistakable fashion. As usual, when large audiences are deeply moved, reason abdicates and passion sweeps otherwise sane men into unguarded utterances. It was so at Topeka. Devout ministers and laymen vied with one another to be heard. Some got up on chairs and gesticulated wildly. Others walked down the aisle toward the platform denying Ainslie's accusation that the Disciples did not cooperate, affirming each for himself, "I do cooperate." To all such assertions Ainslie calmly replied, "I am glad, brother, that you do."

Through the outburst, he stood as chairman on the platform dumfounded by the commotion he had provoked, and seemed to hold the gavel impotently in his hand. A friend said to him on the way out, "Ainslie, what were you thinking about while you stood there?" "I was thinking," he replied, "are these my brethren?"

Nevertheless, as the audience dispersed, some of the delegates began to search their own experiences and many were heard to say, "After all, Ainslie was more than half-right in his condemnation of us." Hence, at the special session he called for the consideration of practical steps in line with his proposal, a different spirit prevailed. Here were the men and women who had long waited for a leader and a voice on this issue, and their enthusiasm matched the criticism which had made the morning session turbulent.

Those not in sympathy with Ainslie's ideas remained away, and an enthusiastic audience of the favorably inclined voted unanimously to set up an organization for which he had pleaded in his address. It was at first called the "Council on Christian Unity" but was later changed to the "Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity." A leading Disciple layman, Mr. Robert A. Long of Kansas City, Missouri, pledged twenty-five hundred dollars in printing services of the Christian Evangelist Publishing Company.

So began the crusade which he carried throughout his communion while at the same time holding Christian unity conferences throughout the whole church, both at home and abroad. Large numbers attended his meetings and great enthusiasm followed his earlier meetings. The response he received from other communions was highly gratifying. The Disciples generally gave both money and approval to the movement during its earlier years. It was only when Ainslie came to recognize members of other churches as Christians in the practice of open membership that he began to meet opposition.

From this time on Ainslie was the center of a long and sometimes bitter conflict. Many of the Disciples "walked no more with him." So strong was the opposition to his "heresies," as they were called, that some churches of the Disciples were closed to him; some even canceled meetings that had been announced. An important church which thus refused him admission was challenged by one of its prominent laymen to "lock the building and cease calling itself a church" if that continued to be its attitude toward "so noble a soul." The "Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity" became an object of acute opposition within the organized life of the communion. Some of their more vocal leaders assaulted it and Ainslie continually.

Ainslie was as always philosophical and sweet-tempered under the attack. As he said on one occasion:

I understand Brother —— is to begin a fight against the Association. It makes no difference so far as I am concerned, for my personal wish would have been to be free so I could work on independent lines. But for the sake of the Disciples I hope it is not done, for it would be most difficult to explain.

It will be remembered that presently Ainslie withdrew from the Association. He summed up the reasons for this withdrawal:

I served as chairman of my denominational Christian unity board for fifteen years. After such uncertain headway, I did not stand for reelection at the General Convention. Perhaps I could have won a majority vote; perhaps not. Anyway, I had worried the brethren of my denomination too much by my constant and unchecked contacts with those of other denominations and they received, in the convention, the announcement of my retirement with general applause. I am nothing, but the cause for which I am contending is vital. I do not know that any other denomination would have acted differently if their traditional practices had been so persistently corrected. All denominations, as organized denominations, are more or less backward. We must be patient with each other. It is so hard for us Christians to be gentlemen like Jesus.

His own patience must have been taxed severely at times, though he never complained of personal insults and slights. He particularly regretted the attitude of the Canadian Disciples when the United Church of Canada was being formed. The United Church, he felt, was at least a partial realization of the hope for which his people had come into being; whether or not the program included everything they might have wished, that was a relatively unimportant matter as compared with the privilege of fellowship in the spirit of Jesus and of the "Declaration and Address" of

which Thomas Campbell was author. No one knew better than Ainslie that the Disciples never had been uniform in thought or even in practice. Their entire history had been one of supreme individualism and in large degree every man had done that which was right in his own eyes. If, then, the Disciples had been able to hold together as one body with such varied and diverse opinions among themselves, why, he argued, should they not grant the same liberty of opinion to other bodies of Christians? Yet to his regret he saw the Disciples holding aloof from this embryonic union movement not only in Canada but elsewhere. It grieved him especially that they did not share the unity movement on the foreign fields, where divisions are doubly mischievous and hurtful.

On the other hand, no one rejoiced more than he to find them accepting places of fellowship in the cooperative movements of federation, whether local or national. He hailed with enthusiasm their growing cooperation with the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, from the date of its organization. He also followed with deep interest the participation of the Disciples in local movements of churches for practical ends. He often said that the Disciples' general attitude toward practical cooperation was of such high order that it was in sharp and strange contrast with their reluctance to participate in movements which actually merged into union organizations. He never spared them in public address because of this strange aloofness wherever practicable union was at stake.

Peter Ainslie never had an easy time with his "brethren," as he affectionately called them. That he was an irritant among them no one could doubt who knew him and his objectives. Indeed he often said, in his quaint and half-humorous fashion, "I love to give the brethren a prod." If the Disciples continued to manifest so largely

the spirit of self-satisfaction, he often declared, he despaired of their making any large contribution to Christian unity. But though he despaired at times of his people he never gave up hope, for he felt that a group which had already accomplished so much would not rest on its laurels. He summed up his convictions in the matter:

I desired the attitude of my denomination changed toward other Christians as I desired the attitude of all Christians to be friendly and appreciative of others. I knew my denomination as thoroughly as any man in it and I knew that, as a denomination, it did not stand for Christian unity except by absorption, which is the position of most denominations. Of course, this is not unity at all; nevertheless, there was a small minority with an outlook toward real Christian unity, and among the members of my denomination in general there was a traditional memory, although not much was said about unity in those days. My denomination was genuinely Protestant. It had pushed its way beyond Protestant creeds and systems of theology and had taken the New Testament as its sole rule of faith and practice. Too much cannot be said for this achievement, which I believe has merit as a contribution to unity.

The point of greatest irritation between Peter Ainslie and his own communion was open membership. This question, as he explained, "was not involved in my policy until a year or two before my retirement [from the Association], when I openly advocated it." The very nature of his activities and interests led him into intimate contact with Christians outside his denomination. His attitude reminds one of Charles Lamb's reply to the interrogation, "Don't you hate that man?" — "How can I? I know him." Both Ainslie's acquaintance with other Christians and the logic of the Disciples' plea for the unity of all Christians brought him to see and to say that there was no reason for making an appeal for Christians to unite if there

were not other Christians with whom to unite. But, as he wrote, "the more I go with persons of other denominations, the more suspicious becomes my denomination of me. This is not peculiar to my denomination. This is a distinctive peculiarity, more or less, of all denominations — jealousy."

On June 4, 1924, in a sermon entitled "A Highway Through Protestant Christendom," he publicly announced his stand for open membership. He said:

There are several hundred parties in the church. Sometimes they are called sects or denominations or communions, but whatever they may be called each one is a party with its party colleges, party journals and party conventions. The Christian Temple belongs to the party called Disciples of Christ, whose traditional policy has been to receive into membership only those Christians who have been baptized by immersion. All the other parties, likewise, have their traditions and distinctive peculiarities. But are these traditional party practices infallible, and, therefore, unchangeable? If that be true, then the Protestant Episcopal Church must forever keep their pulpits closed lest they offend their traditions, and, likewise, the Southern Baptist churches must continue to practice close communion lest they offend their past. These have just as good arguments for the closed pulpits and close communion as the Disciples have for closed membership. All three practices, however, are long out of date, and, therefore, may be abolished.

No power among Protestant Episcopalians, Southern Baptists or Disciples can suppress this reaching out for a larger, mutual fellowship. It is a fundamental principle of spiritual religion, whose awakening and development is of God as truly as the budding of trees and the growing of flowers are of him.

There are many barriers to unity, but there are three ritualistic barriers to full fellowship in Protestant Christianity. These are the closed pulpit, close communion, and closed membership. Barton W. Stone was the prophet of the open pulpit, and, consequently, had to leave the Presbyterian Church of Kentucky, where the closed pulpit was practiced a hundred years ago. Thomas Campbell was the prophet of open com-

munion, and, consequently, had to leave the Seceder Presbyterian Church, which practiced close communion. These two movements formed a partial union and became the Disciples of Christ. Therefore, historically and morally, the Disciples are committed to the removal of the third ritualistic barrier, which is closed membership, else the prophetic services of Barton W. Stone and Thomas Campbell are not only incomplete, but discounted by the present-day Disciples.

If it be said that the practice of open membership among the Disciples would cause division, and, therefore, ought not to be done, then again Barton W. Stone was wrong when, by practicing the open pulpit, he caused division among the Kentucky Presbyterians, and Thomas Campbell was wrong when, by practicing open communion, he caused division among the Seceder Presbyterians, and so was John Wesley, for he caused division among Episcopalians, and so was Martin Luther, for he caused division among Roman Catholics. For myself, I do not for a moment believe that any one of these men was wrong on the general principles for which he contended, but, instead, the wrong was on the side of those whose protests to spiritual progress necessitated division. I will not believe that the Disciples, heirs of the trust of Christian unity, with their growing freedom and catholicity of spirit, have so far abandoned their task as to condemn the action of Stone and Campbell and refuse to carry to completion what these men left us to do, thereby being the heralds of a highway through every Protestant communion with the cry for the open pulpit, open communion and open membership. If this is not true, then it is true that the Disciples, after a hundred years, are, in their attitude toward open membership, just where the Seceder Presbyterians were a hundred years ago toward open communion! Christians can make little progress in unity until we stand in each other's eyes as equally Christian.

The Disciples are committed to apostolic practices relative to the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper and baptism by immersion, and I see no reason why we should not stand everlastingly loyal to these. Open membership need not be any more of a compromise with regard to the scriptural form of baptism than open communion is with regard to the scriptural observance of the Lord's Supper.

The Disciples are a free people. No district, state, national

or international convention can rule on these matters without trespassing on our hard-won liberties. Open membership is unquestionably in the realm of Christian liberty. Already the Disciples who are exercising this liberty are multiplying. We are beginning to discover that neither names nor ordinances are the signs of discipleship. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, says Christ, "if ye have love one to another." But a love that bars the door by forms and ceremonies is not the love that Christ released for all mankind; neither can an unbelieving world see in the barred door any evidence of the sign of Christian discipleship. Christian liberty must function throughout Protestantism until all barriers are removed and there is a highway of equality through every Protestant communion, based upon faith in Jesus Christ and loyalty to him, making for the unity of the Protestant household and its spiritual power for the betterment of the world. For myself, I do not want to face Christ, either in prayer now, or in eternity then, with any less fellowship than that of the whole Church of God.

There were no immediate repercussions. "I find," Ainslie wrote, "that my sermon has not created any sensation anywhere, which is very gratifying, for it indicates either that it is what my brethren generally thought I held, or that open membership is becoming a part of our thinking." But he was yet to hear from his people. Opposition gathered slowly, and then burst in a storm of recrimination. The Disciples had no quarrel with the open pulpit. Traditionally their ministers had spoken in the pulpits of other communions and had welcomed ministers from other religious bodies into theirs. Neither did they make any protest against open communion. Every Sunday throughout their entire history and throughout their fellowship, wherever they existed, they had made it clear that everyone who loved the Lord Jesus was welcome to the table of the Lord, since it was his table, not theirs. But when it came to open membership, the rank and file of the Disciples rose in protest. The publication of the "Pact

of Reconciliation " added fuel to the flame. Indeed there was a period when, in many sections, condemnation of Ainslie was the standard by which a man's loyalty to the communion was measured. So great was the hostility to Ainslie that one of the Disciples' denominational papers undertook a campaign to rout him from the Christian Temple. But Ainslie, as he wrote, " knew his congregation." The Temple board met during his absence and voted to make open membership the accepted policy of the Temple, and the attempt against their pastor ended abruptly.

When the Disciples General Convention met in Oklahoma City in 1925, Mr. Robert A. Long introduced the following resolution:

In accord with the practice of our people and the teaching of the New Testament as understood by us for more than a hundred years, we are conducting our work everywhere on the principle of receiving into membership of our churches only those who are immersed believers.

This resolution was directed at the officers of the United Missionary Society of the Disciples, of which Dr. Frederick W. Burnham was then president. But it affected also the churches and ministers within the communion then practicing open membership, and here Peter Ainslie was among the chief sinners. Although it was an action that meant polite dismissal from the fold, this did not provoke him to despair. His reply was: " There are no denominations without their prophets. The only hope of my denomination is with this prophetic minority. Every year I observe it increasing."

Throughout these attacks Ainslie kept his sense of perspective. " We are having a lively time down here," he wrote to a friend in 1928,

over a stir I kicked up last Sunday night on the occasion of preaching in Immanuel Protestant Episcopal Church, stating

that the Christian Temple was practicing open membership and that St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond had decided to receive into its membership persons of other churches without the rite of confirmation. There are a lot of preachers wanting to keep up the bars, but over against them there are other groups wanting to take them down. I am glad to be among the latter group.

There were other elements in the opposition to Ainslie among the Disciples. There were not many centers of influence within the communion which had not been displeased by his undenominational attitude. The denominational colleges and papers were particularly offended. These, Ainslie felt, made for the perpetuation of sectarianism, and more than any other agencies were preventing Christian unity. In his opinion, young men training for the ministry should be made familiar with many points of view and be taught to think of the various Christian bodies as allies and friends rather than as opponents. But such an attitude could hardly be inculcated in a denominational college. Ainslie had written concerning his own education at the College of the Bible: "There was no course in the doctrines of my denomination taught in the college where I attended, but there was a denominational atmosphere in it. Unconsciously I yielded little by little until in my third year I was a thorough denominationalist. I did not recover for the next fifteen or twenty years." "A young man from any Christian family in America," he added, "might enter any one of the hundreds of denominational colleges and come out a papist or a Baptist — contingent on the atmosphere to which he submitted himself."

In the same fashion, Ainslie contended, denominational papers worked against Christian unity. They were dependent on subscriptions from denominationalists and the editors determined their policies with a bias. Many of them

felt that any proposal which hinted at the equality of all Christians by so much took away from denominational zeal and lessened the support given denominational papers. The object of the denominational paper, Ainslie declared, is "largely to keep up denominational fences," looking out for the denominational traditions and resenting attacks from dissenting denominations.

Such plain speaking concerning institutions as sacred as one's college and one's family religious paper must inevitably offend. And it did. Nothing but the winsome personality and unquestioned sincerity of the man himself saved him from being disavowed by a large part of his communion, even though the recognized freedom of belief among the Disciples could never have led to a heresy trial. "I am as loosely tied to my denomination," he affirmed,

as it is possible to be, but as strongly bound to Jesus as I know how and, therefore, bound to every follower of Jesus as I know how, irrespective of class or race or creed. Some day the Spirit of Jesus will find its outlet in the world through a real brotherhood among his followers. I can help a little toward it, as can every one of his disciples, by being unafraid to make experiments in love of the brethren and I propose to work at it as long as I live.

When he was most opposed he said, "I intend to remain a Disciple as long as I live." He was offered the presidency of the Federal Council of Churches, but refused it because he felt he could not have the support of his own communion. Dr. William H. Roberts, then stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., proposed to elect him a Presbyterian but he said he would not desert his people.

He kept his confidence in his denomination and still bore his witness. "They are mine and I love them, but how they do bungle things up," he once wrote. He re-

jected the taunt that he loved to pose as a martyr: "I have hosts of friends among other communions, so that martyrdom does not appear anywhere in sight. The Disciples as an organized body cannot touch me."

When he gave his Yale addresses on "The Message of the Disciples of Christ for Union of the Church" he did not claim to be speaking on behalf of his communion or even as an interpreter of their doctrines. "If it be asked whether the interpretation I am now giving is universally believed and practiced by more than a million members I do not hesitate to say that I regret my answer has to be in the negative," he frankly declared. He also stated on that occasion that the "tendency to legalism has often stolen the spirit of catholicity from the message of the Disciples and made it ungenerous."

Ainslie had his hour of embarrassment for the Disciples when the World Conference on Faith and Order met at Lausanne in 1927. The annual convention of the Disciples had appointed its quota of delegates to represent them, but left Ainslie out! He was not to be so easily dismissed, however, for he was a member of the Continuation Committee and private subscriptions from friends enabled him to attend. It was the judgment of the Disciples' official delegates that they should acquaint the conference with the movement and mission of their denomination. To this end they had reprinted copies of Thomas Campbell's "Declaration and Address" and carried them to Lausanne with the expectation of distributing them. In effect these amounted to propaganda material. Ainslie, having attended previous conferences on Faith and Order, knew that there was a tacit understanding that no single group should seek to indoctrinate other groups or in any way attempt to convert them to other positions. It was against his protest that the literature was taken to Lausanne. He

apologized to Bishop Brent, the general chairman, on behalf of his people, for such possible lowering of the lofty plane on which the conferences had been conducted hitherto, and offered to resign his place on the Continuation Committee and give the delegation from the Disciples the total representation in order to forestall the complaint that his communion had no official recognition. But better judgment prevailed and the literature was not distributed. Nor would Bishop Brent allow Ainslie to resign. One can but smile at Ainslie's graphic, if inelegant, phrase: "The Disciples have the cramps, but they will get over them after a while."

It may be that the group which resented Ainslie's leadership among the Disciples was more contentious than numerous and it is also possible that Ainslie was more disturbed by it than he should have been. It is true also that the majority of cooperating Disciples were in hearty accord with the spirit he revealed and the direction he was taking. At any rate, the Disciples could not permanently dissociate themselves from one who so thoroughly incarnated their history and traditions and convictions.

Peter Ainslie's passing was followed by a great change in the mood of the Disciples. It is the familiar story of building tombs to slain prophets. World-wide economic depression at the time of his death also helped to wash out the religious pride and denominational bigotry of which he had complained. All this combined to work appeasement in the hostile mood which long had assailed his liberal position. Many who during his lifetime had joined in criticism of his too generous overtures to other communions, joined after his death in praising one whom they were now proud to acclaim as an honored Disciple interpreter. As in all spiritual contributions, he could exalt his own only by dying. The Disciples will not be the same again. Their

eyes have been taken off themselves and put upon the whole Church of Christ.

There are other Disciples among his contemporaries who rendered incalculable service to their communion in other fields of thought and effort, but none would deny to Ainslie the meed of honor due him. He changed the mind of his people toward other communions more completely than any other man in his generation. In a most real fashion "he turned the heart of the fathers to the children." He was to his fellowship Thomas Campbell risen from the dead.

The first affirmation of the Disciples was that they constituted a movement, not another denomination; that they had no intention or desire to add to the already too numerous divisions in the Church of Christ. Later in their history, when they yielded to the allurements of prestige and with satisfaction published widely the statement that they were the only communion having its origin wholly on American soil and among American democratic traditions, they needed another voice in the wilderness to call them back to their earliest appeal. It was Peter Ainslie who, more than any other person, brought them back to their original message: "The Church of Christ is and ought to be essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one."

The most important contribution, then, of Ainslie to the Disciples was that of changing their emphasis in his generation from that of a mechanism to a mission. His second important contribution was that he won for them wider recognition of their place and presence in the religious world. He became their first recognized plenipotentiary to Christian unity conferences. Nor did he always become so by appointment from his own people. His innate interest in the whole church and his initiative in inaugurating world conferences made him a logical represent-

ative. He won a large measure of his place of recognized leadership in wider circles, not by the prestige of his background nor through the intercession of the denomination from which he came, but by his passionate determination to seek contacts for the "one body" of the "One Lord." He carried his own credentials in his inclusive soul, and these won him recognition among all communions and throughout all lands. He was known and cordially received in the inner circles of the Church of England and by the Lutheran leaders of Sweden and of Germany. Most naturally he was known to them as a Disciple. Through that contact the Disciples' communion came to be known to the whole religious world as never before.

Ainslie's feeling about the Disciples was twofold: (1) They were his spiritual forebears and consequently he had a peculiar affection for them; he took great joy in the good they did and in the reflection of the measure of the Spirit of Jesus they reproduced. (2) His letters reveal the sorrow with which he lamented their shortcomings and feared that they had missed their chance. Like a member of a well knit family, he felt he had a right to criticize the faults of his own people in the hope of correcting them. He cherished the hope that his people might fulfill the dream of the early fathers of the movement in pioneering the way to a united church.

12. His Evolving Mind

THERE are plants that draw their sustenance from the earth, others that draw it from the air, some from the water. There are people who get their intellectual stimulation chiefly from books, others from experience, while some grow chiefly by meditation and reflection. Peter Ainslie drew his mental nourishment equally from many sources. On the one hand he was an omnivorous reader. He once said: "I have never hesitated to read anything I thought would help me in my understanding of God and of my fellow men. I have tried to get all angles from which men view truth."

That was true from the first. For instance, on entering his ministry, Ainslie wrote to a number of the leading churchmen of the time for a list of the books they considered most vital to them. He noted in his diary that "to know what books a man has read and which have helped him most is to know what has made him what he is," but added wisely, "The only learning is to know the will of God and do it." On receiving the lists of books he proceeded to buy as many as he could afford, without regard to the denominational source.

Ainslie's library was evidence of a wide range of literary and religious interests. His books were not mere ornamentation. He marked them vigorously, revealing a thoughtful reading. He left a record of his reaction to the subject matter of his reading in no uncertain fashion. Even in his devotions, his pencil was always ready to de-

scend with emphasis upon any outburst of imprecatory expression with which he disagreed. He wrestled with strong men's ideas and grew strong thereby.

But he also kept a finger on the pulse of his own passing experiences. With impartial care he recorded his failures and successes. Trial and error were to him the law of growth. The book of life was his absorbing study. Nothing that went into it was unimportant. He was forever writing diaries, many of which were never completed. But a habit of noting the little incidents of each day was strong upon him. The diaries reveal what seems the strange incongruity of a mind now absorbed in mystic meditation on the deep things of God, now reflecting on infinitesimal items of expense in connection with a holiday trip. Yet this capacity for giving attention alike to great things and to apparently trivial ones was a striking characteristic of his nature. He might be preaching on the peace of God, but he did not miss the change of expression in an auditor's face. To him cause and effect were not merely metaphysical laws to be pondered upon in the abstract; they were processes going on in each least reaction of human relations. This book of knowledge he never closed.

Here is a concrete illustration of this attitude and capacity of his. As has already been mentioned, Peter Ainslie was for many years a premillenarian. In his earlier ministry he rarely left this subject out of any series of sermons. He was accustomed to preach on it in his own church twice each year, launching enthusiastically into an extended argument for a catastrophic ending of the world and a spectacular establishment of the Kingdom of God. Then gradually the idea was eclipsed in his mind. Years passed during which little or nothing was heard from him of this gospel of the second coming.

One day when motoring in Baltimore he was asked by a

friend what had happened to his much beloved theme, whether he still preached it. As if he could not deliver himself on that subject and drive at the same time, Ainslie drew up to the curbing and turned off the ignition. Before he could proceed, his friend explained that his interest was in the process of his mind: Did he believe that doctrine still or did he no longer believe it? If he did not, how had he come to his disbelief? Did he read himself out of it or did he reason himself out of it? Ainslie's answer was typical and revelatory of his whole mental make-up. He said: "I do not know that I have ever wholly discarded the idea of the second coming of our Lord. But, as I come to think of it, I do remember that I have not preached on it as I used to do. Whatever change of mind I have had on that subject has not been caused by my reading. Nor do I recall having reasoned myself out of it. I suppose it came about like this: I came to have many invitations to speak on the subject from groups who had heard of my devotion to this theme. Figuratively speaking, when I arrived at the place and looked around at the people who were drawn together through devotion to this conception I said to myself, 'If believing this idea makes me look like that, it must not be so.'"

Ainslie early fell under the spell of Henry Drummond, who first opened his mind to the law of evolution at work in the universe; this, joined to the writings of Alexander Campbell and to the spirit of John Robinson, who said, "New truth is yet to be revealed from God's Word," emancipated his mind. Often as he was destined thereafter to fall into the morass of literalism, he now had the key and could unlock the doors of larger kingdoms of knowledge as he came to them.

The early records of Ainslie's mind and attitude seem forbidding and hopeless as advance indications that their

holder was later to become so potent an instrument of the conception of a universal society or of the universal church. Many of his private and published writings of those earlier years seem wrapped in impenetrable husks of isolation. His sermons had to do with distinctive tenets of the Disciples or dwelt upon the need of "conversion" on the part of all other Christians, and in general stressed the necessity of building future Christianity on the concepts Alexander Campbell had formulated in 1830. Darker still, the shadow of premillennialism seemed to hold his mind locked in Stygian gloom. Even as late as his fortieth year he considered it his appointed mission to declare the end of the world and the attending cataclysm. It is therefore all the more amazing that at middle life he should have got the key to fuller truth together with the courage to use it. Like all men of strength he had many conflicting elements in his nature. One could never say of him that he was this or that, for usually he was both.

But Ainslie was forever ready to evaluate experience and extract the truth from error. Where most men prematurely close their minds or become victims of hardened mental arteries, he became more daring as he grew older. His earlier conservatism was an inheritance, an attitude absorbed from his environment, while his later liberalism was the result of observation and experience. Reversing the usual tendency, he was a conservative in his earlier years and a liberal, if not a radical, in his later. As a young minister he was an ardent contender for the beliefs of the Disciples and loved to make converts from the "sects"; as a mature man he traveled thousands of miles to hold conferences on Christian unity, to preach the gospel of recognition of one another's Christianity and to urge the need of reconciliation. As a young preacher he laid great emphasis on peculiar doctrines; as a man of ripe experience

he repudiated all peculiarities as perversions of the expression of divine grace. As a young southern gentleman he held strongly to the social prerogatives of culture and race and possession; as a mature student of human relationships he became a flaming advocate of the social gospel and of ideals which recognized neither race nor class.

This evolution of mind in Ainslie was the most surprising development of his many-sided nature. In his ideas he did not belong to his generation; he was always in advance of it, anticipating the future with singular clarity. And he had courage to match his insights. It took a brave man to champion ideas that would make obsolete the cherished labor and service of the entire lifetime of his contemporaries. For example, as noted elsewhere, he came to a strong conviction that denominational colleges and denominational journals were a hindrance to Christian unity and were the refuge of tradition and sectarianism. Yet what institutions have so engrossed the labor and won the gifts of so many devout Christians as these? Those who gave to them believed they were doing God service in fortifying these agencies for generations to come. It was like flying in the face of providence to challenge such apparent loyalty. But he did challenge it, unmistakably, and as so often in his life his friends began to fall away and "walked no more with him." This opposition naturally wounded him; he was conscious of having hurt devoted men and women by contending against denominational "holy things." But he knew that these "holy things" were stumbling-blocks to the unity of the church, and felt bound to cast away these historic treasures and the esteem of many good men for the sake of a cause that was still more precious.

By that exercise of courage in following his vision, his mind continuously unfolded. In one of those rare mo-

ments when he opened the window on his early life he closed it by saying, "Out of my home training (which was a university within itself) I learned to be open-minded." It was this habit of keeping an open mind which continually let in new truth and made him the despair of consistent people, who expected to find him always holding to the views of former years. Following the principle of truth at any price led him to take positions at painful variance with those of former friends. Of one trying instance he said: "I was searching for truth and intended to find it, if in so doing it separated me from all theological ideas I had ever held."

His method of finding truth, or reaching conclusions, was unique — indeed would have been fatal for almost any other man. Here too, as William Adams Brown once trenchantly said of him, "he had a preference for direct methods." For example, he had what is properly called a critical mind with respect to the Bible. One is reminded of Benjamin Franklin who, though calling himself "a seasoned old sinner," contracted the Psalms by leaving out all the repetitions (of which he said, "I found more than I could have imagined!"), and all imprecations which appeared "not to suit well the Christian doctrine of forgiveness of injuries and doing good to enemies." This latter mood fitted Peter Ainslie's mind precisely. For he would read with personal appropriation all the penitential Psalms, but would strike out a revengeful paragraph as unchristian.

It was his custom, in his morning devotions, to read some portion of the Psalms in connection with whatever other Scripture he read. But before he began reading, or even before he selected the passage, he got out his pencil and sharpened it. He knew he would find imprecatory Psalms that would do despite to the gentleness of his own nature and much more to the nature of Christ. It did not offend

him that those who lived remote from the influence of Jesus should have had vengeance and hatred in their hearts. He accepted whatever good they expressed, but he rejected their barbarity. "Happy shall be he that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against a rock," some psalmist had written. Down would come Peter Ainslie's poised pencil, striking out the passage with criss-cross emphasis. Or perhaps another psalmist, filled with rage against his enemies, had cried out to Jehovah, "Let them be blotted out of the book of life and not be written with the righteous," "Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow, let his children be vagabonds and beg, let there be none to extend kindness unto him, neither let there be any to have pity on his fatherless children." Once more the pencil would come down as a perched eagle flings itself upon its prey, utterly obliterating that section from any future obtrusion upon his devotions. Thus Ainslie used the reason with which God had endowed him. He refused to be a blind disciple of "holy" books and "holy" traditions. What no longer functioned serviceably became obsolete to him. What violated the mind of Jesus was anathema to him. He kept his own scrap-heap and added to it daily, however shocking it seemed to the unthinkingly devout that he should so disregard the "precious" inheritances of religious custom.

So did he grow. Consistency, as such, for him held no appeal, nor did he hesitate to go contrary to the views and postulates of his yesterdays. The criterion of his course at any given moment was its likeness to the mind of Christ as he conceived it. Hence he rarely apologized for his past conceptions. These had been arrived at in the light which he then had, and if now he saw them as partial or even false, he found no occasion to apologize, since all one can do is live according to the best light he now has, clearly perceiving that present wisdom has emerged out of previous dark-

ness. He never fought back at his former views, any more than a man fights the molds in which his childhood impressions were cast. He regarded all outmoded conceptions as but stepping stones by which he had come to where he now stood. Tomorrow even this might pass as truer concepts appeared. He adopted the law of growth which Jesus announced and confessed, and by which he lived each day: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." If he became the unsolved problem, or indeed the crown of sorrows, to those who never doubted his sincerity or goodness but could not understand his seeming inconsistency, it was because they failed to see his real constancy in the midst of his changing attitudes. He was like Ursa Major, which, while forever shifting in its relation to all the other stars and constellations, is forever fixed in its relation to the polestar.

Some have contended that Peter Ainslie was a lonely man because of his theological opinions, which were regarded as heretical by his conservative contemporaries. He was lonely in the sense, and to the degree, that every growing and greater spirit is so. But to say that he was in the slightest degree a sad man is to misinterpret the facts. Like all similar men of large conceptions, he lived much among people without being a part of them. He could listen with seeming absorption to long but unimportant conversations, yet remain spiritually detached from their trivialities. Otherwise a nature so sensitive as his would have been crushed by the multitude of eager people who felt they had found in him a comprehending and sympathetic friend. The necessity for self-preservation erected in him a barrier against petty things, which some mistook for loneliness.

Again, there are many comfortable, conservative folk nestling snugly within traditional conceptions who never could conceive that a man who had escaped from that

refuge was anything but lonely. So, hearing and reading unfamiliar ideas from Peter Ainslie's lips and pen, they concluded that he must be a solitary soul. But on the contrary, he lived consciously among a host of congenial spirits who ministered to his mind and were always accessible. All solicitude for his loneliness was highly unnecessary, pathetically amusing. He had meat to eat of which they knew not! He found understanding friends beyond his own communion, beyond Protestantism, beyond Christianity even. He sought the comradeship of open minds and of an inclusive spirit wherever they existed. The only loneliness Peter Ainslie felt arose from the attitude of others toward him, not through his withdrawal from them.

In his personal manners and habits Ainslie was in many respects an unpredictable quantity even to his close associates. For example, he was, on occasion, quite formal beyond the habits of his fellow ministers. He would wear a robe and make much of academic atmosphere. What with cap and gown and procession in his morning service, an informal business suit at the evening service, and a give-and-take informality with his audience, the striking contrasts in his nature were peculiarly revealed. He could be all things to all men to a most extraordinary degree. Services of strict conformity alternated with services which he led with evangelistic freedom, selecting his hymns and talking to his audience much with the informality of a Salvation Army leader. Thus he made the most ill clad man feel at home in his fellowship.

During his earlier life Ainslie was the soul of punctiliousness in the pulpit. Wearing a double-breasted Prince Albert coat, with a pince-nez dangling from a long black cord, he looked a mid-Victorian clergyman. Apparel, voice, manner and posture belonged to the most formal school of early nineteenth century pulpit manners. In

later years he became, for the most part, quite informal in his public appearance. Dressed in a business suit, he felt and acted the part of a democrat in the evening services at which he officiated.

This contrast appeared also in the perpetual conflict between his inheritance of aristocratic tradition and outlook and his essentially democratic nature. Ainslie was always a typical Virginian. Fully six feet tall, with shoulders erect, walking with gallant step, carrying a cane, he would have graced the most fashionable occasion of colonial days. He loved Atlantic City, enjoyed good hotels, loved to travel in dignity and style. What he had he wanted to be of the best. When he went to the conference at Geneva, Switzerland, he took along a full-dress suit in case it should be needed!

Over against this instinctive aristocracy in him was a disciplined democracy. This was the work Christ had done upon an otherwise proud spirit. Like St. Paul, he had to fight an inner battle against pride of birth. But his humility of spirit led him into association with people of all classes and conditions and conquered his pride. "I will allow no man by word or conduct toward me to take from me my sense of brotherhood with every man and woman and child in the world," he once said. No man could share a humble environment with greater ease when circumstances required it. Ainslie could light up the most modest cottage with a grace of happy conversation that made his host and hostess swell with pardonable pride.

Again one is struck by the contrast between his modesty and his daring. In social relations, Ainslie was self-effacing. "In honor preferring one another" expressed his demeanor in all his social contacts. He put forward other men for important situations when he himself could have presented the cause better. He praised the efforts of

less gifted men in the sincere language of self-forgetfulness. He delighted in the advocacy of good causes by men less capable than he, bestowing on them unfeigned praise and generous approbation. He seemed devoid of jealousy. When his denomination became discontented over the degree of tolerance he expressed in his Christian unity conferences, which were being held under the auspices of the very agency he had inaugurated, and voted to supplant him by other leadership, he carried away no least sense of ill feeling or wounded pride. He would sit unwearied through monotonous sessions of religious conventions in which he had neither part nor recognition, pouring out commendation upon those who spoke ever so haltingly in favor of causes he longed to see promoted. He found joy in the furtherance of good will in the world by whomsoever advocated. He buried his own self-esteem in the greater issue of human reconciliation. He was never a participant in physical sports, but he had learned the best lesson these have to teach: that it is not the glory of the individual, but that of the team, which is all-important. He could efface himself if only the ends for which he lived were being championed. He could withdraw himself from public attention with consummate grace and with utter and unconscious modesty.

On the other hand, he could on occasion be a most successful self-advertiser. He understood that great causes are usually embodied in strong personalities. Like Anthony Comstock, who took for his motto, "Where there is no man be thou the man," Ainslie was not unwilling to be that man through whom attention might be drawn to important issues. Sometimes it was with studied design that he did and said things which seemed rash, if not shocking, to conservative people. After the fashion of a Jeremiah, digging under the walls of Jerusalem like a wild animal to

call attention to the impending calamity of his beloved city, so the normally staid and precise Ainslie could become a man beside himself for the sake of some issue which seemed to him of utmost importance. He knew how to dramatize a cause at the psychological moment. Illustrations are abundant — for instance, the occasion when, after many days of talk at Lausanne, he challenged the delegates to demonstrate their unity by celebrating the Lord's Supper together. The fact that they were not willing to do it dramatized the hesitant mood of the church at a moment when it was highly important that the hesitancy should be recognized. This same psychological aptitude led him to choose what he considered the most pertinent moment to make a public attack on the chaplaincy in the army.

For all these striking and unusual utterances and actions, Ainslie was severely criticized by many. His method of stabbing the public wide awake was regarded as "spectacular" by some who saw only this trait in his nature. For pious and zealous churchmen it was shocking to pick up a book by a Christian minister entitled *The Scandal of Christianity*. Yet that was his way of directing attention to the sore spots of organized religion.

The same contrast was noticeable in the extremes of courtesy and of conviction that met in him. On one side no man could exceed him in graciousness. He could sit all day and listen to the most inane views of sincerely mistaken souls who invariably felt that for the first time in their lives they were getting a fair hearing and were making a most welcome convert. Little did they suspect from his outward appearance that for all their persuasive arguments nothing within him had changed. Throughout his life there was little change effected in his fundamental convictions by argument. He was sure of his ground in basic matters. His changes of view came chiefly by experience.

Ainslie was capable equally of inducing a mood of conciliation and of provoking extreme irritation. He was an unwearied moderator between divergent points of view. He never seemed so calm as when others were most fanatical. Like one detached from, or lifted above, the low level of partisan debate, he looked down upon the small perturbations of ardent propagandists with timeless patience and impartial fairness. As a presiding officer, he was at once the wonder and the despair of others. His deliberate willingness to hear a man through to the last word of some petty statement seemed to busy men a loss of precious time belonging to bigger issues. But to Peter Ainslie there was nothing bigger than generosity toward the individual who happened for the moment to claim his attention. It was this quality of patient listening which made him an acceptable mediator in acute situations.

Notwithstanding all this, there were times when Ainslie did stir up extreme irritation. Once he got a conviction that a thing should be done, either it had to be done at once or his opponents had to exercise a prolonged defense against its perpetual resurgence. There was no waving him off with placatory words of kindly commendation.

For Peter Ainslie was an intrepid fighter when he was convinced of the justice of his cause. Few men were as tender as he in their human relationships. It would not be irreverent to apply to him the words of the prophet — “a bruised reed he would not break.” Children loved him, even clung to him. The brokenhearted and the unfortunate were drawn to him as to an understanding friend who would patiently bear with them. He was like a mother to those who had missed the way. Some measure of this gentleness he carried over into the public arena, for he never fought against *men*, but only against ideas and institutions that he was convinced were wrong. The basis

of his attack was always ethical. While he held firmly to the arguments of the case, yet he knew how to strike out at opposite points of view with almost reckless thrusts.

Ainslie was invited by the federation of churches in Washington, D. C., to deliver the Holy Week sermons at the First Congregational Church in that city during the Lenten season in 1925. He began by preaching a sermon on this subject: "Has Christianity Accepted Christ?" There were many chaplains present, as there were officers of the United States army, including a general.

For days he had been brooding on what he regarded as the inconsistency of a minister of the gospel of the Galilean, becoming a paid officer of the army — an institution committed to the methods and morale of war. His environment was quite enough to have caused him to soft-pedal any strong language he might have thought suitable or necessary to point out the inconsistency of such a dual position. Rather it inflamed him all the more.

He said of the sermon: "I necessarily touched on the support which the church had given to war. I said: 'Churches ought to recall their chaplains, for with the outlawry of war, there is no more place for chaplains in the army than there is in a speakeasy.'"

He had long been an opponent of the idea that the church become an ally of the war system. For a minister to go with the authority of the church into the panoply and pay of the army was anathema to him. If a minister wanted to go at his own expense or at the expense of the church as a ministering servant of the army, and so remain a free man to condemn war and to refuse to be a supporter of its point of view, that was commendable. But for such a man to wear the military uniform and to take orders from colonels and majors, rather than from his own conscience before his Lord, was another thing. In such an hour the

fighter flashed in his words, "There is no more reason for a chaplain in an army than there is in a speakeasy." The place and statement became an occasion of irritation on the one side and of stout defense on the other. Whether one justifies his words or not, there can be no doubt about the bravery it revealed to utter them.

That sermon was telegraphed to the daily papers all over the country and cabled across the ocean. Many individuals, including soldiers and even ex-chaplains, endorsed what he had said. The *New York Herald Tribune*, however, asserted that the statement was "blatantly outrageous" and called it preposterous and insulting, while the *Chicago Tribune* said: "The author of such a statement is unfit for the pulpit, lacking either mental or moral discrimination."

Whether posterity will regard Peter Ainslie as wise and prudent for what he said on that occasion or will reckon him an irresponsible mountebank is not the issue here. What the episode does illustrate is a dauntless courage that was unafraid to say what he felt, whatever his audience might think about him. For Peter Ainslie's courage was rooted in his selflessness, and that in turn was rooted in his Christian humility, which asked only to serve his Master.

13. *His Literary Contribution*

AINSLIE had a flaming urge for expression that consumed him. That urge rose not from ambition or egotism. It was always an ulterior end that he had in view. His earlier volumes, *My Brother and I*, *God and Me*, *Religion and Daily Doings* and *The Unfinished Task of the Reformation*, grew out of his own pastoral experience. They dealt with personal devotions and with human relationships. They were written to help Christian men and women in their attempts to reproduce the life and spirit of Jesus. Ainslie had before him the average layman, who lived in a discordant society where unneighborly attitudes ate out the heart of peace-loving and piously inclined men and women.

In his later volumes he was concerned about the broken body of Christ, the divided church and the equally divided race of men. Consequently all his writing seems of a piece. Whatever the subject, it always came back to the same great motif. Ainslie saw all causes and questions in the frame of the "one great fraternity." All evils were sins against brotherliness. All good was that which made for unity within the church and humanity. He wrote, as he spoke, as if some unseen preceptor brooded over his shoulder whispering, "Remember, my people are divided." Like all the prophets of all times, he was impelled by a "burden."

Judgment of his writings must therefore be made in the light of their total impact on the one problem he attacked.

Being a busy man, he cared less for the manner than the matter of his writing. While he had the gift of felicitous phrasing, he was driven both from within and from without to hurried expression. He saw the need and the duty of bearing witness straightway. Consequently he wrote without painstaking care. It may be that his eagerness to give immediate help cost him a permanent place in Christian literature. Possibly he would have been the first to admit his defects in style. It was scarcely consistent with the true bent of his mind to be deeply concerned for literary immortality. The important thing was that the rifts in human relationships should be healed, no matter by whom or how. Other considerations were secondary.

This accounts for the "preaching" element that runs through his writings. Every fact of current experience lent itself as a text for a homily. He could not treat a theme objectively on account of the human causes which looked out at him from behind all the varied fragments of the social order to divert him. This was not because his mind scattered but because it could not wander from the main issue, the broken family of mankind. He could not think of the church without remembering how its fragmentary corporate life leads to war or to the social tragedy reflected in the racial inhospitality of men. When he wrote about prayer the human sorrows of the world called out to him so loudly that he could not write historically or systematically even on a subject that was so dear to his own habit of mind. The voices of neglected minorities whose prayers mingled with his were always in his ears. Thus in his volume on *The Fellowship of Prayer* he says:

Christ said more in prayer about the unity of his followers than he ever said in public discourse. So long as we keep the order reversed there will be uncertain progress in the unity of Christendom. Corporate prayer is the method of understand-

ing and friendship. When four or five persons, each representing a different communion, have got together in prayer, taking with them in their prayer the fact that Christ is in their midst, as he said he would be, it is likely that they will go away much closer together than if they had spent the time discussing their differences or their agreements. Corporate prayer is the path to permanent fellowship — not necessarily the only path, but the path of abundant hope. It establishes comradeship between personalities, making for oneness in will, faith and purpose. If, however, one discovers aversion toward, or feels unfree in, praying with Christians of other scriptural interpretation than his own, he is, to say the least, self-condemned, if not involved in moral insecurity, which Jesus frequently and severely condemned in the ecclesiastics of his time.

One reads Ainslie's books with a sense of being driven out of pettiness and bigotry and unfraternal attitudes as by some scourge of God. There is but one message in them all, ambushing the soul at every turn of the page: denominationalism, racialism, nationalism, militarism must be destroyed.

It is amazing to discover how much Ainslie wrote in view of the amount of traveling he did and the exacting labors of a busy pastorate. Of books alone he wrote fifteen:

Religion in Daily Doings — 1903

Studies in the Old Testament — 1907

Among the Gospels and the Acts — 1908

God and Me — 1908

The Unfinished Task of the Reformation — 1910

Introduction to the Study of the Bible — 1910

My Brother and I — 1911

*The Message of the Disciples for the Union
of the Church* (Yale Lectures) — 1913

Christ or Napoleon — Which? — 1915

Working with God — 1917

If Not a United Church — What? — 1920

Christian Worship (with H. C. Armstrong) — 1923

The Way of Prayer — 1924

The Scandal of Christianity — 1929

Some Experiments in Living — 1933

Christ or Napoleon — Which?, written in 1915 when the World War was shattering Europe, is Ainslie's affirmation of the enduring elements of Christian faith which comes back from every contact with the horror and misery of life in unflinching confidence that the way of Christ will triumph over the philosophy of might. The book is not a consistent or logical treatise. Its value lies in the warmth of its attack and defense, in the reader's awareness that the author feels deeply and cares greatly and will never relent in his attitude toward unbrotherliness. He is concerned to show that the root of all evil — the evil that breaks out in war between nations, in divisions within the body of Christ, in barriers between classes — is at last in the human heart. Therefore he declares that nothing but a new creation, a reborn man, a race that has become Christ-centered, can ever bring healing to these sore spots of the world. "The two greatest influences in the world at this time," he wrote, are those expressed by the principles of Jesus Christ and Napoleon Bonaparte, the former representing the power of overcoming evil with good and the latter representing the power of overcoming evil with evil. One stands for love, humility and self-denial as expressed in the life of yoke-fellowship with himself. The other stands for hate, pride and avarice as expressed in the militarism of these times. The two forces have perhaps never been in such severe conflict since the earthly life of our Lord. Now they appear in shocking contrast.

And again he returns to the divided church:

Not only has the policy of the nations in maintaining great armaments as guarantees of peace collapsed into disastrous fail-

ure, but the policy of the divided church has fallen into an equally disastrous collapse. The church was designed to be the one peace society of the world. After all these years of what should have been accumulated moral force, the church should be the one strong and confident voice against war. Had it even attempted to live up to the principles of its charter, the European war would have been impossible; whereas it appears to have no voice on the subject of peace at all, save here and there in individual utterances.

Not that the church has directly produced this war, but in discarding the unworldly policy of love, humility and self-denial, as expressed by Christ, for the worldly policy of controversial bitterness, intrigue and force, as expressed by Napoleon, it has given tremendous strength to the common worldly position as manifested in present-day politics and economics, leaving its great influences impotent in behalf of that religion that came down from heaven.

Working with God is a much larger volume having to do with his own life and his efforts in the field of religion. The very title he gave it confirms and illustrates Dr. George W. Richards' remark about him, that "he believed he was on God's side." The book is rich in personal narratives of epochal chapters in his life and ministry. It presents the philosophy which motivated him in the various causes he espoused and in the reforms he championed, and, perhaps more than any other of his books, betrays the secret of his personal influence, which he once described in words most suited to his own nature: "Nothing is so salutary upon the souls of others as for one to move amid the busy, hustling and clashing world and maintain that inward unity and peace, undisturbed by the outward conditions."

If Not a United Church — What? and *The Scandal of Christianity* are quite similar, save that the latter contains Ainslie's arraignment of Protestant division while the former sets forth his conviction that a divided church can

take no permanent or effective place in human society. His last book, *Some Experiments in Living*, was written to record his efforts in the realm of social Christianity — the experiments he had shared in social justice, marriage and the home, interracial bridge-building, church cooperation, etc.

Many of his books overlap one another in scope if not in matter. Each succeeding volume, rather than embodying a new contribution to the thought of the world, strikes once more at the forces hostile to human brotherhood. Each says once again, “Unbrotherliness must be destroyed.”

But though Ainslie seemed a man of one passion, his thought never grew stale or monotonous. While he had but one all-pervading interest, he had many secondary interests which replenished the inner flame. He had, for instance, a great love of art. A soul so sensitive as his to beauty could not but respond to the high manifestations of beauty in Christian painting and sculpture. Hence it is not surprising that he should have planned a book on Christian art — had indeed gathered practically all the material for it.

He possessed reproductions of all the great masterpieces of Christian art. Rarely did he return from London or Paris without bringing home some new sketch. A copy of some famous masterpiece was the gift he best loved to give. He knew the biographies of the great painters and the history of painting. His illustrations for sermons and addresses were constantly reflecting this interest. In his earlier years he had written much on the great paintings which celebrate the central facts of Christian history. Thus in *Working with God* he said:

I would not want to be an art critic but I am somewhat a student of art. In the spring of 1912 I delivered a course of lectures at the University of Illinois on Christian art, and at

other times I have spoken on this delightful subject, having made it one of my occasional studies in the latter half of my twenty-five years' ministry in Baltimore. Art is, indeed, a matter of common concern, said Canon Farrar, and every man of ordinary education has a right to an opinion, if not upon its technical qualities, yet at least upon the thoughts which it conveys and the influence which it exercises over his mind. Next to the human face there is nothing more attractive to the eye than a picture, irrespective of the age, the education or the social condition of the beholder. Aristotle insisted that art should have a moral influence upon the people and later Schasler affirmed that the aim of art is moral perfection. Michelangelo said, "True painting is only an image of God's perfection, a shadow of the pencil with which he paints, a melody, a striving after harmony." Like music, pictures speak a universal language and teach more people than any other single means of learning. The pictures upon which we daily look should be selected with more care than the food we eat. It is no longer a question of expense, for the best pictures are among the cheapest and a frame is an inexpensive decoration. The purpose of knowledge is to find truth — the soul's anchor; according to Schiller and Kant, the purpose of art is to find beauty — the soul's peace.

In Christian art and literature Ainslie saw many nations and peoples of different periods moving toward a common end. That end was the unity of the human race. He saw the artists and poets converging toward one Man. Or, to change the figure, he found here the bridge over which the race could pass into brotherhood. He had not time to complete the book which would have stated this philosophy clearly, but the experience of collecting the material enabled him to see in sharper perspective all those countless streams flowing down from the highlands of inspiration to water the lowlands where fratricidal conflict had been waged since Cain slew his brother. He saw the artist of each separate race or nation depicting Christ in the lineaments of his own people, as an Italian or Russian or

Dutch child, and the fact that Jesus was claimed by peoples who were immemorial enemies constituted for him the "one hope of our poor wayward race" that had promise of peace and fellowship. Much as Ainslie came to love art and to enjoy great masterpieces, he never found it more than a means to an end. That end was the witness it bore to the unifying principle in the world: the place and power of the Galilean in bringing the divided peoples of the world into one harmonious whole.

But Ainslie's literary labors were by no means confined to books. The *Christian Union Quarterly*, which he edited for twenty years, was the heaviest of his literary responsibilities. Peter Ainslie came nearest to living literature in a magazine he began to publish forty years ago. It was at first a small publication, issued in the interest of good will between the churches. In 1910 it grew into the *Christian Union Quarterly*. Mr. W. H. Hoover of North Canton, Ohio, established it on a foundation of what then amounted to fifty thousand dollars.

While Ainslie solicited articles for the *Quarterly* from exponents of every shade of religious thought, he wrote all the editorials and knit the various contributions of others into one harmonious whole by the interpretative articles he added to each issue. At Ainslie's death the *Quarterly* was discontinued, but his idea was immediately taken up and enlarged upon by Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison in *Christendom*. Through Dr. Morrison's generosity *Christendom* has since become the organ of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. In this journal Peter Ainslie continues to live and speak.

A collection of all the writings of Ainslie would fill many volumes. His multiplied labors entailed a prodigious amount of writing, both in extensive correspondence and in an editorial capacity. He made voluminous contribu-

tions to religious newspapers and journals on the causes that were dear to him. He was projecting still more books when he was stricken down. Besides the book on art, he was working on a "New Testament for Youth." This was to have been a synthetic compilation derived from the Synoptic Gospels and based on what he regarded as the most acceptable renderings of three recent translators — Moffatt, Weymouth and Goodspeed. In the midst of physical pain so great that his heart finally snapped under it, he sat propped up in his bed, with various translations lying all about him, and with pen and pad he wove together a composite translation which he hoped would be truer to the original text and more appealing to youth.

In all his writings he saw the whole of life harried by unbrotherliness. Is it a broken home where children are at disadvantage because of the quarrels or the divorce in it? That is like the impoverishment Christians suffer because of the broken household of God which dwarfs and stunts the Christian experience. Is it prayer which is universal and innate? But how can they be said to be praying when what they seek is partisan or national or denominational? In all of Ainslie's volumes, the train of the reader's thought is perpetually preyed upon by the imminent cry that runs through the world — the sorrows of Rachel "weeping for her children."

14. His Inner Qualities

IT WOULD have been distasteful to Peter Ainslie to hear that people anywhere were making of him an ideal. He could say the things he said and do the things he did because those things became him. Such a man is not meant to be imitated. He would have been the despair of more methodical people. And the measure of his achievements would also have been their despair. He was not the obvious sum of two plus two, nor of any number of given or known elements. If one were to catalogue all the deeds and services and ministrations of Peter Ainslie there would remain a plus which could never be put into a formula. It was not in what he said or wrote or did, but in what he was. Without reason, some personalities strike us as unlovely, as in Thomas Brown's famous lines:

I do not love thee, Dr. Fell;
The reason why I cannot tell.

Just so, one could not tell why Peter Ainslie's personality drew and held men to him. Such a man can best be described in the language of Jesus concerning the new birth: "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." This is not to say that he was lawless; rather that he followed laws not easily discernible by less spiritual minds. Like John Knox, "so feared he God that he feared not any man." He had no doubts about his methods or about the final issue of the causes he

championed; they could not fail. Believing that he was "on God's side" amounted to believing that God was on his side. He identified himself so thoroughly with what he felt God wanted him to do that it became natural for him to feel that God was working with and for him. He absorbed from this conviction a courage which gave him the strength of ten. He had what has been called "the awful power of those who are on the side of the angels."

Ainslie was always a Puritan with a Puritan's courage and conviction that he was on God's side. Yet that conviction was mingled with a tenderness and gentleness the Puritans scarcely knew or exhibited. Like Martin Luther, when he took a position he did it because he "could do no other."

There was in him too that "inward unity" about which he so often spoke and wrote. This made him the composed soul he was. Whatever outward excitement surrounded him, he wore an air of at-homeness, of imperturbability. When he spoke at public gatherings his own inner serenity put his audience at ease. The most captivating quality of the man was his complete tranquillity.

The foundations for that tranquillity were laid early, when Ainslie learned the need of conserving his physical strength. One of the remarkable facts about Peter Ainslie was his victory over the ill-health that halted his steps as a child and as a young man. While he was never rugged, he did live to a good age and performed a prodigious amount of work. His travels were very considerable both on the North American continent and in Europe. Because he would give himself to the least of human needs his pastoral duties were beyond the average in their demand upon his vitality, while his public services and addresses took their toll of his strength. Though he had to take one day out of the week for total withdrawal and rest, yet no

sooner was this retreat observed than he was off again to still further labors. He had gathered a momentum that impelled him even while he was presumably resting.

The qualities of daring and determination in Peter Ainslie worked out for good in the great issue of his life. But who will not agree that these very qualities have their peril? Daring is always in danger of making advances that are unwise or difficult to maintain. Determination is always under the temptation to go on its chosen way, conscious or unconscious of the pain it may cause less forceful personalities. It is not necessary in any strong man's biography to point out where and when and how his strength expressed itself untowardly. It is enough to know that the plow cannot turn the furrow without much uprooting that seems ruthless and hard. We make our estimate of any forceful life by the degree in which this inevitable temptation has been held in leash.

Ainslie touched many realms of life but always with the same intent. He had St. Paul's "this one thing I do" spirit, or what psychologists call a "single-track mind." He played his part in many enterprises, but always because they had a common purpose: the value they held for human fellowship under the influence of Jesus.

The same single-mindedness showed itself in his conversations. A man of wide travel and of most unusual opportunities to make notable contacts with the leading religious spirits of his generation, he could have held social gatherings in the spell of his narratives of personal experience. But anyone who knew him well or was often in his company would bear witness to the uncanny way he had of routing any conversation to his chosen theme. No matter where the talk began or what its fascination, the strong wind of his deepest desire soon blew him into the subject of peace and human accord. Once there, he had his audience, whether an individual or a thousand, at his will. He knew

the weapons that were most effective in that battle of wits. He also knew the value of such occasions for making new friends for the common cause. Like another Cato with his perpetual "*Carthago delenda est*," he kept his own battle-cry forever dinning in men's ears.

Ordinarily a man who is dominated by one idea is a man to be shunned. But when that idea burns into white heat and becomes a consuming flame, a new center of human attractiveness is set up. A man who is "lifted up" for a cause or an idea draws all men unto him. Ainslie's enthusiasm for the welfare of all men became contagious. Jesus preached one of his best remembered sermons to a lone woman at a wayside well. Ainslie loved to quote the experience of a Robert Moffatt making but one convert in an appeal, but that convert a David Livingstone.

One may well inquire for the secret of the man. What he did was prodigious enough. But it was the man within that most appealed to those who knew him best. He had that quality of soul which constant discipline had fashioned. He was not an ascetic or a hermit, but despite his accessibility he lived very much unto himself and within himself. He had the power of detachment by which he could withdraw himself from absorbing and exhausting surroundings and be in them but not of them.

Ainslie was in fact a practical mystic. Many streams of mystic influence emptied themselves into his nature. His mother's place in his life was decidedly one of these. Her continued ill-health and his own contributed what pain and suffering so often bring: time for meditation and the brooding spirit. "Affliction does color life, doesn't it?" a would-be comforter once said to a longtime sufferer. "Yes," answered the sufferer, "but I choose the color." Ainslie chose his colors. "One must find out," he wrote, that which suits his own soul and not try to make himself that which he is not, but rather develop himself in that which he is.

I followed the mystical mind of Paul, Augustine, Thomas à Kempis, John Woolman, Jeremy Taylor, John Wesley and others; and later Baron von Hügel, Dean W. R. Inge and Rufus M. Jones. These lighted up the way and helped me toward a larger appreciation of Jesus.

As a result prayer took a large place in his life. In Winifred Kirkland's *The Portrait of a Carpenter* these lines are found:

Jesus in manhood reveals such a capacity for prayer as could only have come from long-continued custom. Jesus of Nazareth learned how to pray greatly, precisely as every other man who has ever prayed greatly, has learned. Jesus advanced as other men advance, and in him as in all of us the supernatural existed not as a gift from without but as a development from within.

This aptly describes Peter Ainslie's manner of praying. Prayer was a normal part of all he did and was. It came naturally into his daily routine. One who was much with him spoke of his custom of turning suddenly from whatever interest claimed him to God in a colloquial "aside." Ainslie invited guests and callers to kneel for prayer as casually as others might throw open a window for fresh air. There was never any strain or awkwardness about it. He acted as if prayer were the familiar habit of all men. There was no consciousness of readjusting the stage or of shifting physical or mental attitudes. His own words describe his view of prayer:

We must go to our prayer-time with expectancy of renewal and revival. We will not get as much out of it if we go to it from a sense of duty as if we go to it from a sense of desire. We must always remember that God is very sensitive — more sensitive than the most sensitive human being — and we must keep to the front courtesy, sincerity and fidelity. Be sure that we do not do all the talking — wait. Place and time are in-

consequential, but the engagement must be positive, gladly and leisurely kept.

He once expressed regret that he had "preached so much and prayed so little." "Sometimes when I go through my church on the pulpit platform where I have stood, I find myself asking: Oh that I had a space so marked by my knees in prayer for my people as I have worn this place in preaching to them."

When he carried on his widespread work for Christian unity he dwelt much on the power of small groups organized for prayer. Fellowship in prayer, he felt, gave most promise of religious understanding and held most hope for the reunion of the divided church. He conceived prayer as an integrating force, leading to the discovery of a common kinship in Christ.

He once took an entire year's leave from his pulpit to visit schools and colleges. The deepest impression he brought back from his conferences with thousands of students was that of their need of spiritual guidance. It was with this need in mind that he prepared his volume *The Way of Prayer*. In this book he reflected upon the necessity of communal prayer:

There can be no such thing as Catholic or Protestant prayers with prejudice in favor of or against the other. Prayer can never become a large factor in Christianity until Christians become a united brotherhood around Jesus as Lord and Savior. We are under obligations to establish in our minds those attitudes that are not satisfied with anything less than the fellowship of the whole Church of God.

Both in the private practice of prayer and in public discussion of it, he stressed the sense of friendship which underlies true prayer. He dwelt much upon Abram's relation to God — that of "a friend of God." The attitude of mere obedience in prayer, he declared, was pagan and

led to unreality. Its secret was utter surrender of the will to the love of God, an attitude which leads to the relation of friendship between a man and his Creator. "Prayer is not a ritual; it is an experience. In its practice we become a part of the great circle of God and human souls, both in the past and in the present."

It was in the crucible of mutual experiences which others shared with Ainslie that they found out the soul of the man. On this account, those who differed widely from his theological conceptions still regarded him as a warm personal friend. While they were fearful of the consequences of his ideas, they were at the same time thoroughly confident of his sincerity. There were many who distrusted his orthodoxy and viewed his liberal attitudes as inimical to the true faith, but rose up to call him blessed when he died. What they were unable to comprehend in him they called heresy; what they could understand of his nature was to them the true gospel. But the known and the mysterious in him were one in warp and woof. The experimenter is always a cause of concern to the fixed mind. It is conceivable that some timid folk felt uncomfortable so long as he lived, though adoring the rich quality of soul they could not but respect. But for those who had "compared with him" in the deeper experiences of life he became what Lincoln was to Franklin K. Lane, who asserted, "I know I could understand him."

It was a customary remark of Ainslie's close friends that "the angels took care of him." He seemed to be oblivious of many of the ordinary necessities of life which common mortals neglect at their peril. Thus, although he had driven an automobile thousands of miles, he once replied to a friend who inquired whether the spark plugs were not dirty: "What are spark plugs?" Again, his failure to put water in the radiator caused his car to stop suddenly at a busy intersection in the heart of Baltimore. A blustering

policeman bade him move on and get the car out of the traffic. Unembarrassed by his predicament, Ainslie asked the policeman to tell him what was the matter with his car!

There was charm about his unaffected simplicity. His frank artlessness made one want to help him. Because he obviously had no ulterior motives, there were no barriers to be hurdled to get at him. His quiet humor and love of beauty and naïveté and mysticism combined to make him at once captivating and strong. So patiently did he deal with thousands, so kindly did he meet the needs of others, so gently did he move among the fierce and furious antagonisms of his generation that the response of appreciation was both deep and wide. But those who knew him best loved him most.

His humor was as quaint as his rural childhood surroundings. It was never sharp or wounding but always carried a moral. For example, one of his parishioners left his church to join a "Holiness" congregation. When Ainslie next met him he said: "John, I am so glad you have joined the Holiness church, for now I know you will treat your mother better." Instantly John waxed hot with anger, but before he could say much Ainslie interrupted: "I see you are just like you were in my church."

The Hudson river, as it enters the sea, is subject to a multitude of surface influences that set ripples going in many directions. A passing boat, a gust of wind, a projecting pier may cause wavelets that conflict in their testimony as to the direction the river is taking. But deep down, there is always the strong current that prevails and gives the stream its real direction. Just so, Peter Ainslie "drew from great depths of being" and, undeterred by a thousand influences that beat upon him, kept his one direction.

15. Marriage and Home Life

AFTER fifty-six years of life as a bachelor, Peter Ainslie decided to get married. For many years of his earlier ministry his mother was the hostess of the manse. She guarded his health and his energies and was his counselor in the problems that a busy pastor daily brings to his home and fireside. Even during her long illness she kept a most eager interest in the affairs of the Christian Temple. At the same time a cherished sister lived with him. She filled the needful function of becoming the ear of the pastor's home and patiently mediated the delicate concerns of the parish, to his grateful satisfaction. She too passed away within a week of their mother's death. Thereafter a favored aunt of his made her home with him, but she had died some years before his marriage. When all these tender ministrations to mother and sister and aunt had been fulfilled, a longing for a home came upon him all the more acutely.

It is not easy to reshape a nature once its habits are fixed. Sylvester Horne said of St. Paul's assistant, Timothy, that "it is always a perilous thing for a boy to be the idol of two good women, his mother and his grandmother." But Peter Ainslie had been the idol of three good women, his mother, his sister and his aunt. For fifty-six years he discharged toward them every possible duty that love imposed. Now he determined to find a new center for his affections. It was a decision that brought him deep joy.

He said one day to a friend, "I am going to get mar-



MRS. PETER AINSLIE

ried.” “To whom?” asked his astonished listener. “I do not know; I only know that I am going to get married.” Like the scientist who sets out in search of a cause for a known effect, he began his quest with a determination and a methodical temper not usual in this period of a man’s life. Some time later he told the same friend with enthusiasm, “I have found her. Her name is Mary Weisel.”

It was singularly apt that he should have “found her” at a conference — indeed one which he himself had called to discuss an acute issue between the whites and Negroes in Baltimore. Miss Mary Weisel was dean of a Presbyterian girls’ seminary in Baltimore, and a deep student of religious education. She brought to this conference such clear and concise suggestions and such evident zeal that she quite won the mind and heart of the moderator. Their minds met on the social and human problems of a disturbed city; their hearts followed hard after. Their common concern for interracial understanding and international peace made an easy trellis for their emotions to twine about.

It was their desire to be married at an altar that might symbolize the wider conceptions of his ministry. They appealed to Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, president of Union Theological Seminary, and he graciously offered them St. James Chapel. Here they were married by the author, surrounded by an intimate group of distinguished friends, on June 30, 1925. They received the congratulations of the entire company on the green quadrangle of this “Oxford in America” under a smiling sky. That very day they sailed away for Sweden on their honeymoon — but of course to attend a conference! This was the conference held by the Life and Work section of what has now come to be an integral part of the World Council of Churches.

Such is the story of a unique courtship that gave Peter Ainslie and his wife nine and one-half years of happy fam-

ily life. The Ainslies built a home in Ten Hills, Baltimore. It was fitting that when the house was finished they dedicated it as one would dedicate a church. It was fitting too that the house contained a "prayer room," a quiet nook with an altar and a Bible.

Mary and Peter Ainslie spoke the same language, the language of reconciliation. Married life therefore did not mean a conversion to new or different interests for either of them. They merely joined forces in behalf of the causes which had first introduced them to each other, and in the continuance of these major interests they multiplied their deepest satisfactions. Home opened a larger door to Peter Ainslie's love for collective discussion. Here again he was the typical Virginian in the best sense. Hospitality was his delight. His home sheltered every traveling evangelist or clerical emissary who came that way. Many guests found hospitable welcome under its roof and none ever departed without carrying away the benediction of memories which had firm rootage in the experiences of the family altar. Groups and individual guests alike came within its sacred enclosure, to be caught up in the glow of discussion. Young people shared its hospitality in conference manner. The atmosphere of the home was an invitation to contribute whatever of light or wisdom each life had gained. The manse became a laboratory for the church and for humanitarian causes within the city.

Two children were born of this marriage — Mary Elizabeth, born April 20, 1927, and Peter IV, born July 6, 1929. With the advent of the children life for Peter Ainslie took on a new impulse. The large yard of the home, with its brook and spreading trees and outdoor fireplace, became a center for the young life of the congregation and community into which he poured his rich personality with fresh inspiration and joy. His last years were busy as usual.



DR. AND MRS. AINSLIE AND MARY ELIZABETH

But they were made easier and more joyful because of the sympathetic companion with whom he could discuss his prolific ideas about every kind of cooperative movement that looked toward the building of a safe and stable society and the coming of peace and good will to the divided church.

In this exemplary family circle, where growth and purpose were the law and family prayers were as natural as nursery games, the casual visitor seemed to come upon new horizons, and when he departed felt that something from "beyond the flaming ramparts of the world" had touched him.

This story therefore closes as it began, with a picture of the manse. In the home of the former Count and Countess Braha of Sweden is an ancient volume of European heraldry which lists the Ainslies as among the first families of Europe, dating back to the twelfth century. A more enduring book of heraldry is being written in America, where the names of the brave and gallant spirits of the western continent are being inscribed. Those who look in it will find the Ainslies appearing again in the twentieth century.

16. *"Now the Laborer's Task is O'er"*

AT THE age of sixty-six, Peter Ainslie had accomplished more than most men, even the physically strong. For one who had known perpetually depleted strength he had achieved incalculably. None of his self-imposed tasks ever grew irksome, for he felt that they were making for a happier and better world. He always worked with the full consciousness of his definite physical limitations, which it would be fatal for him to transgress. But he seemed to draw from invisible springs a vitality sufficient for ever greater labors. He was disciplined to work without fret or strain. One rarely saw him driven. He gave the impression that what he could do, he would, and that must suffice.

Unlike many whose activities are conditioned by a frail body, he never became a defeatist or allowed the edge of his cheerfulness to be dulled. Nor was he a Pollyanna, pumping up his spirit with the air of an unsubstantial optimism. He did not call attention to his pain or seek sympathy because of what trouble he had borne to "get where he had arrived." His life was lived as a victory of the spirit over the flesh, and without pride in its accomplishments.

The will which he made in 1926, eight years before his death, lays bare the compelling motives for which he lived and gives full expression to a mood that conceived life as a totality, "whether in the flesh or out of it." The press gave this account of the will:



PETER AINSLIE III AND IV

The will of the Rev. Dr. Peter Ainslie, pastor of Christian Temple, who died February 24, 1934, was filed in Orphan Court. The will was written in pen and ink on July 26, 1926. It was witnessed by James C. Lumpkin, F. M. Lumpkin and E. W. Billings. Text of will, which reads:

“ I, Peter Ainslie, desire that this document shall contain my last will and testament relative to my material holdings. I am glad to have lived in the flesh as long as I have, but this material world cannot satisfy me. I have enjoyed it as a beginning-place, but I am sure that I shall like the other world better, because I am God’s child and he takes us from good to the best.

“ The consciousness of my deep need of God, which grows on me with the years, is my abiding hope, and I have found great satisfaction in following Jesus Christ, my Lord, whose I am and whom I serve.

“ I have not tried to make money. I have avoided it, giving my time to other things regardless of money. I have declined large salaries with ease, because I wanted to prove to my own heart and Christ, my Savior, that I am willing to preach the gospel without money consideration, lest some should say I am preaching for money.

“ Nevertheless, the holdings I have are reminders to me that [I should] be cared for in sickness and in old age.

“ I wish the Baltimore Trust Company to be advisers, particularly my friend, Waldo Newcomer, to my wife, Mary Elizabeth Ainslie, to whom I leave all my material things for her use and the use of our child or children. I wish him to serve without bond. I wish also the trustees of the Christian Temple to be consulted, I trust their advice, for they have served well with me. If the conditions justify it, I would like a sum to be given to the Disciples Divinity House of Chicago University and also my books that my wife may desire to give.

“ My friends who are God’s gift to me I shall remember forever, especially those who have made possible my ministry in the Christian Temple and elsewhere. My love to the whole church, divided into Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican, Protestant, and others of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he purchased, and to him the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

This was no late profession of his faith and hope written in the face of death. It was the epitome of all he had pro-

fessed. It reveals the spirit of the man and, to those who knew him best, fairly and sincerely incorporates his ruling beliefs. Having been acquainted with physical weakness all his life, he was yet the triumphant victor over self-pity. Knowing that he had in him the seeds of death, he knew more surely that he had captured the seeds of immortality, that the current of all good living is unbroken by the experience of death.

Possibly nothing so became Peter Ainslie as his taking off. His manner of going and his conception of immortality were one. He had carried on his labors far beyond his years of expectancy. But at last "the wheel was broken at the cistern." He was taken to Johns Hopkins Hospital, where an operation revealed that he had an incurable disease and must fortify himself for the inevitable end. It was then that his qualities shone out in their full, clear light. He took an all but stoic attitude toward his pain, while the Christian character of his spirit came more perfectly to flower. When he went out at the end of his day, he went out working.

When at length "the golden bowl was broken," the city joined with his family and congregation in expressions of deep affection. The proof of city-wide esteem was nobly expressed in the following editorial. One of his last requests had been that his obsequies be simple, lest ostentation draw attention to his achievements. The very atmosphere of the funeral, he said, should partake of the qualities of life. Commemorative addresses were to be impersonal, having to do with flesh-and-blood causes that call for action and solution. His wish for his church and his family was that they should carry on with normal joy and courage and give no hint of sorrow in a world that had sorrows enough.

The funeral service was conducted in the Christian Tem-

ple. Notwithstanding a severe snowstorm which congested traffic, the audience filled every available space in and about the building. According to Ainslie’s wish, those who shared in the funeral service were Mrs. A. Morris Carey, minister of Homewood Friends Meeting House; Charles Walter Lane, elder of the Christian Temple; Rabbi Rosenau of Eutaw Place Temple; Dr. Albert Day of Mount Vernon Methodist Episcopal Church; Levi B. Miller of Unity Christian, and the author. At the grave his beloved friend and fellow minister, Dr. Arthur Kinsolving, rector of St. Paul’s Protestant Episcopal Church in Baltimore, read the committal service from the Prayer Book. Those who witnessed it will never forget the scene — this beloved friend and minister half-kneeling in the deep snow and repeating in gentle cadences those exquisite lines:

We give him back to Thee, dear Lord, who gavest him to us. Yet as Thou didst not lose him in giving, so we have not lost him by his return.

Not as the world giveth, givest Thou, O Lover of souls. What Thou gavest, Thou takest not away; for what is Thine, is ours always, if we are Thine. And life is eternal and love is immortal, and death is only an horizon, and an horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.

Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see farther. Cleanse our eyes that we may see more clearly. Draw us closer to Thyself that we may know ourselves nearer to our beloved who are with Thee. And while Thou dost prepare a place for us, prepare us for that happy place that where they are and Thou art, we too may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The church he served so faithfully and so long erected a simple but substantial monument over his grave in Loudon Park Cemetery, but it will crumble to dust sooner than his gracious influence will cease to be felt in his beloved city and far beyond.

No tribute from religious circles could equal, in demonstration of the general esteem in which Peter Ainslie was held, the following editorial encomium which appeared in the *Baltimore Sun* at the time of his death, February 24, 1934. It was the unsolicited expression of a first-class metropolitan journal, revealing the public appreciation of the character and services of the man whose steps we have been following across the nation and about the world. Much as he was honored abroad, this significant tribute by his fellow citizens is his best. As we leave his dust in the soil of the city he loved, and wherein he performed most of his work, we now leave his best appraisal to the impartial language of his distinguished public collaborator:

DR. AINSLIE

The Rev. Dr. Peter Ainslie will be sadly missed in Baltimore and in the larger national and international fields in which he had come to exercise an influence.

But it cannot be said that he died before he had fought the good fight and finished the course that had been appointed for him to run. He had been active for forty years in the pulpit and in the social service to which he attached so much importance. He had achieved a local and then a national reputation as a champion of good but often unpopular causes. He had helped to make his congregation, his community, his state and even his nation more acutely conscious of social responsibilities. He had poured out his energy without stint in behalf of the meek and the lowly and the oppressed. Few ministers anywhere could look back on such a record of achievement.

With it all, Dr. Ainslie was one of the most modest of men. He was what we call today a liberal, but he had none of the pride of opinion with which the name is so often associated. He was an unfailing advocate of the downtrodden and yet he easily avoided the sometimes unfortunate attributes of professional agitators. Perhaps it was this quality, more than anything else, which enabled him to win and hold the admiration of such numbers of men and women of widely diverse minds. It may have been the same quality which caused him to spend

practically his entire career in the service of the same congregation, and to have that congregation wish always to retain him.

This is not to say that Dr. Ainslie fought for what he believed with kid gloves. He had the power of challenging, provocative utterance, and he did not hesitate to use it. And he carried his principles to their logical conclusion without fear of the consequences, as witness his declaration that to be chaplain in the army or navy involved a contradiction in thought and terms. Not everyone could agree with such absolute logic, but all who knew him could and did accept the logician while he lived, and all will honor his memory now that he is gone.

“ NOW THE LABORER’S TASK IS O’ER ”

Read by Dr. Arthur Kinsolving at the grave

Now the laborer’s task is o’er;
Now the battle day is past;
Now upon the farther shore
Lands the voyager at last.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

There the tears of earth are dried;
There its hidden things are clear;
There the work of life is tried
By a juster Judge than here.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

Now we lift our tear-dimmed eyes
To the smiling skies above,
And we know our dear one lies
In the bosom of Thy love.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

Appreciations

AMONG all the tributes paid Peter Ainslie at his death, the following few represent the appreciation in which he was held among various religious communions in America:

There may be an abler, nobler, more enlightened man in the American ministry but if so we do not know who he is. Peter Ainslie had a way of coming clean on the outstanding and most dangerous issues of the hour. — JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

He promoted many activities, helped advance many causes, labored with all his might to forward church unity, but greater than anything he said or wrote was the life behind it all. — RUFUS JONES.

Rarely are the qualities that make a saintly and beneficent life so combined as they were in the character of Peter Ainslie. — HERBERT L. WILLETT.

Where shall we find a like-minded unwearied spirit to continue Dr. Ainslie's work? — BISHOP BOYD VINCENT of Ohio.

To speak of Christian unity anywhere in the United States was to think of Peter Ainslie, for in him to an extent rare in these days of lip service to great causes, the ideal had become incarnate. — WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN.

In Dr. Ainslie, I felt that I faced a man with the personality of extraordinary charm, with the enthusiasm of a prophet, the restraint of a scholar, and the bearing of a gentleman. He felt himself to be on the side of God and was upheld by the conviction that what God wants and man needs will ultimately prevail. — GEORGE W. RICHARDS.

He has brought Christians together; he has broken down prejudices; he has compelled thinking. — BISHOP EDWARD L. PARSONS of California.

I think he was constitutionally of the stuff that would have made a gritty denominational fighter if there had been anything to fight about, but to him in our day the only thing in denominationalism worth fighting about was denominationalism itself. The essence of his life was the freshness of his spiritual vitality, the keenness of his moral discernment, the passion of his love for Christ. — BISHOP FRANCIS J. McCONNELL of New York.

He might be outwitted but never uprooted. He never gave half his mind to any discussion or half his energy to any action. He could not be satisfied with less than the ideal. — WILLIAM PIERSON MERRILL, Brick Church, New York City.

Peter Ainslie was a great prophet and a contagious inspirer in every phase of the movement and of all the movements. — CHARLES S. MACFARLAND, former General Secretary of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

The spirit of fellowship was the precious heirloom of his bestowal which made all men kin irrespective of their religious affiliations. — RABBI ROSENAU of Baltimore.

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