

MEN OF THE DAY. No. 532.

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CANON ALFRED AINGER, LL.D.

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ALTHOUGH he has but this week completed his fifty-fifth year, those who know him in no other way than by sight have supposed that he did so quite a dozen years ago; for he has the great advantage of being able to grow older without seeming to do so, and his thick silvern hair has long been known in the Temple Church. He is a man of much education; King's College, London, and Trinity Hall, Cambridge, being among the places responsible for his learning. Whether Nature intended him for the Law or for the Church is unknown; but family authority having destined him for the Bar, he had no sooner taken the degree of LL.B. and begun to think for himself than he turned aside into more holy ways as a Staffordshire curate. Presently he became a master in the Collegiate School at Sheffield; but yet a little while and he compromised matters between his first and his second loves by becoming Reader in the Temple: an office to which he was elected six-and-twenty years ago. He has since succeeded in devoting the best part of himself for the greater part of his working life to the Temple Church, which he greatly loves; so that he is become quite an institution in the Temple, where his discourse may be heard on most Sunday afternoons.

He was made Canon Residentiary of Bristol five years ago; and he is an impressive, conscientious preacher, whose words command respect. He has written the "Life" of Charles Lamb, whose works also he has edited with the appreciation and good taste of one whose labour is a labour of love; for the work was but a happy incident in the career of one who has devoted his abilities to quite other tasks and topics. Yet he is a man of culture and of literary style; whose friends are all who know him.

He is a modest Reader in a place where the vice of modesty is not common.