

Christendom is going on apace. Careful investigation readily demonstrates that a large proportion of people in the professed Christian nations are becoming more grossly heathen than those in the pagan countries now are, notwithstanding the advanced civilization the former enjoy. Although the dwellers in pagan lands bow down to idols, yet in that worship there is a recognition of a superior power which is not noticed in the irreligious tendencies, the deeper heathenism, of multitudes in Christian countries who engage in no form of worship, who acknowledge no superior power to that of man, and in whom the religious sentiment appears to be almost entirely obliterated.

Some suggestions upon this subject come from Archbishop Manning, who, from his intimate knowledge of conditions in the world's metropolis, should be a competent authority. Here is what he said in a recent discourse:

London is a desolation beyond that of any city in the Christian world. Four millions of human beings, of whom two millions have never set their foot in any place of Christian worship; and among these two millions God only knows how few have been baptized, how few have been born again of water and the Holy Ghost. London is a wilderness. It is like Rome of old—a pool into which all the nations of the world streamed together, and all the sins of all the nations of the world were continually flowing. Such is London at this day.

Half the inhabitants of the great city who are not worshippers in any form; millions who are so irreligious that they make no acknowledgment of Deity—and that, too, in a land which has been professedly Christian for centuries—surely is not an inspiring picture for Christian progress upon the lines operated in today. It is doubtful if even China, regarded from the standpoint of religious instruction thereof given, can present a scene of comparatively deeper degradation, greater religious hopelessness, or more pronounced heathenism than this. And what Dr. Manning says of London is recognized to a marked extent in other great cities both in Europe and America, and in the smaller cities and towns as well.

It has been said that Christendom has given up the poor of its great cities to the devil. This may be true to some extent; the poor, the hungry, and the ill-clad may have been neglected by religious teachers and missionary workers of various denominations. But they have not been altogether deserted, for very, very many earnest laborers for good, as sincere and energetic as those who toil as Christians in heathen lands, have not held back in their efforts among the poor of crowded cities, to keep them from crime and lead them to the better life. And the spectacle presented in worshipping congregations of different sects is evidence that the poor are fairly well represented among the worshippers. The ranks of the non-worshippers are found to contain the rick, the educated, and the prosperous, in fully as great proportion to their numbers, as they do of the poor working class, or even the beggars. All ranks of life furnish their quota of the irreligious element, which includes a specially large proportion of the younger generation just merging into

adult life. Dark as is the picture painted by Archbishop Manning, the future promises to make it darker still, unless a great change shall be wrought. As matters are proceeding of late years, the heathen nations which are feeling the influence of efforts to Christianize them will not have long to wait before they can consistently send missionaries to convert heathen Christendom to the Christian vital principle—the acknowledgment of the Creator.

HIS POSITION UNTENABLE.

Now that Dr. Heber Newton, of All Souls' church, New York, has got through with his dispute with the New York papers as to what he actually did say in his sermon on the resurrection, preached on April 21, it may be proper to give some consideration to his utterances as revised and reiterated by himself. As to the disagreements between the newspaper report and what Dr. Newton says he said, it may be remarked that he makes a distinction without a difference. Here is what his revision of the subject claims he stated, and as he wished to be understood, as given in the latest issue of the *Literary Digest*:

Let me, in the first place, make clear what I understand by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Without doubt, the general belief is that there was a physical resurrection—a rising from the tomb of the very body of flesh and bones which was laid away there after the crucifixion. This, doubtless, has been the belief of the Church through its history. This unquestionably was the belief of the early disciples themselves. Notwithstanding this, I do not believe in this interpretation of the resurrection of Jesus. That the disciples believed it goes without saying. We know assuredly now, from our fuller knowledge of the thought of that age, that those disciples believed not only in immortality, but in an actual physical resurrection. They expected the very bodies laid away in the tomb to rise again. If, therefore, there was any appearance of Jesus from the spirit world, it would in their minds necessarily have taken this form of the resurrection of the physical body.

It is unfortunate for Dr. Newton that he has fallen into the common error of those who antagonize plain scriptural doctrines. This is to assume for Bible personages a position which they did not occupy. He does this with regard to the disciples. He alleges that if there was any appearance of Jesus from the spirit world it would in their minds necessarily have taken the form of the resurrection of the physical body. That this assumption is untrue is shown conclusively in the record made by John (chap. xxiv), when the Lord appeared to the eleven, after they had been informed that He was risen: "But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." This is historic proof that they did not "necessarily" expect His physical resurrection; and He had to argue with them, urging that they handle Him, and thus have knowledge that it was a physical and not a spiritual appearance.

Of course Dr. Newton has a right to believe as he pleases, but he has no right to misrepresent the disciples. They believed the physical resurrection

to be a principle which would be brought into effect upon those who died; they also knew that the appearance of spirits as angels, heavenly messengers, was historically established as a fact, and as such was believed in by them. But up to the crucifixion of the Lord, no resurrected being of this earth had appeared. That was the understanding of the disciples; they looked for a resurrection which should take place at the last day. It was quite natural, therefore, that the appearance of the Lord to them on the occasion named "necessarily" partook, in their minds, of the form of a spiritual appearance. Dr. Newton to the contrary notwithstanding. The minds of the disciples were disabused of the spirit idea by the evidence that the mortal body had been removed from the tomb, had risen, and stood, revived, in their presence. The alleged "fuller knowledge" that assumes to change the views which the disciples themselves bear witness that they held, is nothing short of misrepresentation.

Since the premise on which Dr. Newton bases his interpretation of the disciples' belief is shown by the record to be incorrect, his argument thereon must fail. The disciples knew—it was more than belief—that in Jesus the anticipated physical resurrection was instituted; that His body, the identical tabernacle of flesh and bones which suffered on the cross, was restored to its rightful owner, Jesus of Nazareth, who in His death wrought out the atonement which restores to all men the bodies of which they are deprived through the fall. If those bodies were not to be restored or resurrected, then death would not be overcome and the grave would retain its victory.

The reverend gentleman further bases his argument against a physical resurrection on the Apostle Paul's statement that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But Paul did not say flesh and bones should not obtain that inheritance. He says (Phil. iii) that the Lord "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." That is not throwing the body away; it is changing it. What is the change? That which is represented by the resurrection of the Lord. The flesh, blood and bones were not combined in the risen body; the blood had returned to earth, whence it came. The flesh and bones, filled in every vein and channel by the living, immortal spirit, represented the change which had been wrought, and of which the Lord Himself bears witness. Paul's statement, therefore, is not a denial of the physical resurrection, but is in accord with it, as suggesting at least an important part of the process by which it is effected.

The two supports upon which Dr. Newton bases his objection to the physical resurrection being shown to be non-existent so far as scripture history or statement are concerned, it follows that any attempt to erect a logical edifice thereon must be a failure. The doctor says he cannot comprehend how a physical body may be invisible; but his lack of comprehension on that point does not affect the fact one way or the other. He admits that a spiritual being can appear and disappear at will—a process which he also is unable to comprehend. He is