Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, January 19th, 1868.

LUKE i. 57—80: Birth of John the Baptist—Juttah.
Recite—Gen. xxii, 15—18.

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Sunday, January 26th, 1868.

MATTHEW i. 18—25: An angel appears to Joseph—Nazareth. The birth of Jesus.—Bethlehem.
Recite—JAMES ix. 6—7.

The Young Irishman.

BY REV. DR. SPENCER OF NEW YORK.

The following very interesting sketch will perhaps be found a little beyond the more youthful portion of our readers, but it is so good and well written that we think they with some aid, will read it with pleasure. It has the additional recommendation that it is true. Scepticism and Infidelity belong to human nature, and appear in the untaught as well as the highly educated. They can only be destroyed by a reception of the truth as it is in Jesus. The force of truth is finely illustrated in the case of this young lawyer:

On a very hot day in July, a boy called at my house with a gentleman's card, saying that a lady had sent him to request me to visit a young man, who was sick. Both the lady and the young man were strangers to me. I had never heard of either of them. They resided more than three miles from me, in another city; and, as I understood, the lady was an attendant upon the ministry of another clergyman, who was absent from home. I could not learn from the boy why she should have sent for *me*. I was very much occupied, the day was intensely hot, the place was distant, many other clergymen were more convenient to it; and I felt disposed, for these reasons, to excuse myself from going. As I was considering the matter, the boy, as if reading my thoughts, spoke out earnestly, 'She said you *must* come.'

I went, though I felt it to be a hardship. Finding the street and the number of the house, by the card which was sent to me, I rang the bell, and inquired for the young man, whose name was on the card. I was shown to his room. He was seated in an easy-chair, with a book in his hand, and appeared somewhat pale and feeble, but not very sick. He rose to receive me. I told him who I was, and that the boy who brought me his card said he was sick, and would be glad to see me. He made no reply, except to offer me his hand and ask me to be seated. We had some general conversation, in which he took the lead. But he said nothing about his sending for me. Aside from his paleness and an occasional cough, I saw nothing in him to indicate the presence of any disease. He told me something of his history. He was a young Irishman, about twenty-six years of age; had been educated in one of the European colleges; had studied law in Ireland; and, designing to enter the legal profession in this country, had been engaged in its studies here about two years. He was a man of dignified appearance, of very handsome address, fluent in conversation, perfectly easy in his manners, and evidently of a vivid mind. He had seen much of the world, and told me he was fond of society. But for the last six months, since his health began to decline, he had been very much secluded, according to the advice of his physician. Said he, 'I have been obliged to exchange the society of living men for the society of dead men, and was just amusing myself with reading Tacitus's 'De Moribus Germanorum' when you came in.' He manifested no disposition to advert to the subject of my visit. On the contrary, he seemed to avoid it. He so often changed the subject of conversation, when I attempted to introduce it, that I was compelled to ask him plainly if he desired to see me for any particular reason. He was silent for a moment, apparently lost in thought, and then replied,—

'It would certainly *seem* very unpolite in me to say I did *not* wish to see you, since you have taken pains to come so far through the dust and heat; but I think it would be *really* unpolite in me, not to tell you exactly the truth. I have an old aunt, who is a very religious woman; and she has been urging me to send for you, almost ever since I have been secluded here. She thinks I am not to live long, and has talked to me often on the subject of religion. But as she and I could not think alike, she insisted that I ought to converse with some minister of the gospel, and finally became so urgent, that I reluctantly consented. But you will allow me to say, that I should have had no reluctance at all, if I had supposed she was going to lead me to form so agreeable an acquaintance.'

'I am happy to know you,' said I, 'and am glad it was in my power to obey your call.'

'It was *she* that *called*,' said he. 'When I consented to see a clergyman, I left the selection and all the preliminaries entirely to her, and she selected yourself. I told her the selection lay in her line, as she was religious and I was not; and that I should judge of religion very much by the specimen of a minister she sent to me.'

I answered, 'I must take care, then, how I demean myself, if you are going to rest your opinion of religion on that ground. And I suppose, in equity, you will allow *me* to judge of the science of law in the same manner.'

'Ah!' said he, 'I shall be obliged to fling in a demurrer on that point. I should be sorry to have you form your opinion of the law by such a specimen of the legal profession as myself.'

'Your demurrer certainly cannot avail anything in your favour,' said I. 'If it can come in at all, it will be easy to turn it against you. For, since religion is a much higher matter than law, it is not to be demanded that a *man* should be as good a representative of it, as a man should be of law; and if you demur at my forming an opinion of law by the impression I have about one of its disciples, *much more* may I demur at your forming an opinion of religion on that ground.'

'Well, indeed,' said he, 'I cannot respond to that. You have floored me the first onset. But are *you* not a lawyer? Your pleading indicates as much.'

'Not at all. I am only a very ordinary minister. But since your aunt has done me the honour to send for me, I should be happy to form her acquaintance. Does she reside here?'

'No. She lives a little distance off. I must tell you, she is very retiring, and lives very much secluded, though she spends much of her time with me; and I doubt whether she will allow you to see her at all. She is not so young as she used to be. She has been a beautiful woman—an elegant woman; and I tell her that her *pride* keeps her away from society now, because she is not so handsome as she was once. But she seems to think that idea a reflection upon her religion; and wonders that I can think of such a thing, and cannot have sense and sobriety enough to rise above such trifling thoughts.'

'Wherein do she and you differ on the subject of religion?'

'Really, sir, I can scarcely answer that question. We *never* differ, only in a friendly way. But though she is a woman of very fine mind, in my opinion, yet her notions are too rigid for me.'

'Perhaps she has examined the subject of religion more than you have.'

'I have no doubt,' said he, 'that she has spent more *time* over it. But *my* mind is not so formed as to take things upon *trust*. I want *knowledge*. I am not prepared to yield to assumption and dogmatism.'

'I am very glad to hear you say that,' said I; 'but perhaps you and I should not agree, in respect to your aunt's yielding to assumption and dogmatism. We are not accustomed to do that in religion. I venture to affirm that your aunt is not guilty of it. And I do this, because *I know*, that we who espouse the cause of religion are not credulous, assuming, or dogmatic; and on the contrary, the rejecters of religion are themselves the *most* credulous, assuming, and dogmatic people amongst us.'

'Well, indeed,' said he; 'you have fairly flung down the gauntlet to me.'

'Not at all. *You* flung it down at the name of your aunt; and I, as her champion, take it up. I am prepared for the contest, the very moment you will name any definite matter of disagreement betwixt yourself and her.'

'I must give you the credit for no small gallantry,' said he. 'Your chivalry is of high bearing indeed, if you will so readily espouse the part of a lady entirely a stranger to you, and are prepared to defend her opinion, when you do not even know them.'

'I risk nothing, however,' said I. 'And I am prepared to contest the point you named, or any other point. You mentioned her taking things upon trust—her yielding to dogmatism and assumption.'

'Yes, I did. But I did not mean her in particular. I meant religionists in general.'

'So I supposed. And I now ask you what it is that we take upon trust, or assume, or wherein we dogmatize, any more than you lawyers dogmatize.'

'Well, to tell you the truth, I had reference to what my aunt is constantly saying about God. She seems to me to assume his existence, and character, and government over us. I tell her that *I want knowledge*.'

'Very well,' said I; 'that is a definite point. Let us get it fixed clearly in mind, and then bring it before the bar of our reason. The question is this: Is the existence, is the character, is the government of God *known* to us? are these things matters of *knowledge*? I affirm, in your aunt's behalf, they are. You deny it.'

'Right,' said he. 'That is the question. And as you are the plaintiff you must open the case. Yours is the affirmative. Bring on your witnesses. I have only to deny, and to show that your proofs are insufficient.'

'Very well,' said I; 'we are agreed so far. I commence the argument. The matter before us regards *knowledge*. I have, therefore, a preliminary question to settle first; and I think it may be settled amicably betwixt us, without any debate. I now put the question to you, *What is knowledge?*'

'You have taken me by surprise,' said he, a little confused and hesitating.

'Certainly,' said I, 'the question is a fair one; and it belongs to *you* to answer it. It is *you* who complain of your aunt, that she has not *knowledge* on a particular subject, to which she urges you to attend. We are to examine the question; and, therefore, we ought to know what we are talking about, so as to understand one another. You say you 'want knowledge;' and I ask, what do you mean by knowledge? I only give you a fair opportunity to explain your own word.'

'Why, sir,' said he with a forced smile, 'I venture to say, that you and I employ that very common word in the same sense.'

'I beg pardon,' said I. 'In our profession we do not allow any *assumptions;* we take nothing *upon trust*; we never *dogmatize*.'

He laughed quite heartily at this; and replied, 'I believe I have been away from court too long. My wit is not keen enough for this contest just now. You have floored me again.'

'Oh,' said I, 'your wit is not at fault, but your *assumption*, your taking things *upon trust*, your *dogmatism*.'

'Well,' said he, 'since I own upon this point, you will do me the favour to answer the question yourself. I will assent to the answer, if I can without injuring my cause.

'Most willingly,' said I. 'But this is a serious and momentous subject. It is the *most* momentous of anything on this side of death. Let us, then, deal with it in a careful and candid manner.'

'I will,' said he, 'most certainly.'

Said I, 'Knowledge is founded on certainty. Something must be certain, or it cannot be known. Knowledge is the cognizance which the mind has of realities, of facts, of some certainty or truth. It exists in the mind. The realities may exist outside of the mind, or inside of it. But they exist *first;* and when the mind makes an ascertainment of them, it gains *knowledge*. That ascertainment is made by what we call proofs or evidences. And these evidences will vary as the subjects of knowledge or the certainties vary. There is one sort of proofs for mathematical knowledge, and another sort for legal knowledge, and another for historic knowledge; but each is good in its place, and sufficient. You would not expect me to prove a truth in morals or history by mathematical demonstration; or a truth about the soul by the evidences of eyes which cannot see it; or a truth about the invisible God by the authority of a law-book, such as Blackstone, or Starkie, or Vattel. But whatever evidences or proofs do, fitly, justly, convince a reasonable understanding, furnish that understanding with knowledge; because they enable it to ascertain a reality, a certainty, so that the conviction of the mind accords with the fact. That is what I call knowledge. Do you assent to the explanation?'

He replied, 'I have no fault to find with it. And if the whole of religion were as clear and certain as that, I should not reject it.'

'The whole of it *is* as clear and certain as that, whatever you may think about it.'

'But,' said he, 'how do you apply your explanation to the existence of God? What are the evidences of his existence?'

'There are numerous evidences, sir, and fit ones. Your own existence is one of them, and not a minor one. You are an effect. There is a cause somewhere, adequate to the production of such an effect. That cause, whatever it be, is God. You did not make yourself. Your parents, your ancestors, however far back you trace them, were not self-created. Your own mind assigns a cause somewhere, an original cause, and that cause is God. And you are just as certain that there is such a God, as you are that you are yourself an effect. You *know* it just as well,—not in the same way, but yet just as certainly. And you know you are an effect of an intelligent cause. Your common sense will not allow you to believe that you and all your ancestors sprang from accident, from chance. You do not find chance operating in such a way. You do not fling dust in the air and find it come down a man or a monkey. If you should find anywhere a machine, a living or dead one, which had in it a tenth part as many manifestations of intention, and power, and skill, as your own mortal body, you could not avoid believing that some mind had contrived it, and some power beyond itself had brought it into existence. You would know it as well as you know anything. The perfect proof is before you. And your own living body and thinking mind are perfect proofs of the existence, power, and wisdom of God. There is no assumption or dogmatism in this. It is only cool and certain reasoning, which conducts to an inevitable conclusion, and that conclusion is knowledge.

'On the same principle, the whole universe and its living inhabitants, rational and irrational,—its suns and comets, its whales and butterflies, its motes and mountains,—are proofs of the existence and power of God. And every change, every motion in the universe is an evidence which speaks for him. Our reason tells us they are not uncaused. The cause is God.'

To all this the young man listened with the most fixed attention. He seemed to drink in every word. I thought his attention had fatigued him; but he said, Not at all, he loved to think. 'But,' said he, 'you have led me into a new world of thinking. Your positions are very bold; and before I come to any conclusion, I must review the matter in my own mind.'

'Shall I call on you to-morrow?' said I.

He answered, 'I can scarcely ask it or expect it of you; but if it is not too much trouble, I should like to see you again. You need not be afraid of wearying me. I can study or talk all day.'

(To be Continued.)

Agriculture, &c.

Cooking food For Animals.

What is the effect of cooking food? Starch, as found in the cells of vegetables, consists of globules or grains, contained in a kind of sac, and in order to burst these grains it must be subjected to heat. Payen, on examination with the microscope, found that when starch was mixed with water and heated to 140°, some of the smaller grains absorbed water and burst, but many still remained unaffected, and only burst between 162° and 212° of heat. This shows, conclusively, that the heat of the animal stomach is not sufficient to utilize starchy food; and when we reflect that about sixty per cent. of the cereal grains consist of starch, we see the great loss which must occur from the want of cooking. And if the cereal grains require cooking, how much more must the dry fibre of hay, straw and corn fodder require it! The woody fibre of hay, straw, &c., consists, chemically, of the same elements as starch. Starch may be turned into gum and sugar; so may woody fibre, after being dried and ground, and by the same means—heat and dilute sulphuric acid.

All woody fibre will yield to steam pressure, and when thus reduced to a pulpy mass, most of it is digestible, and can be assimilated by the animal stomach. Grass, the natural food of domestic animals, in its succulent state is soluble, and needs but the natural heat and acid of the stomach to convert it into nutriment. Hay, straw, &c., by thorough steaming are reconverted into grass, and thus the animal may be furnished with its natural food through the winter.

We can say, after eleven years experience in cooking the winter food of our animals, that the advantages are all that theory would indicate. Steaming renders mouldy hay, straw and cornstalks sweet and palatable, thus restoring their value; renders peas and beans agreeable food for horses, as well as other stock, and thus enables the feeder to combine more nitrogenous food in the diet of his animals.

We have found half hay and half straw mixed and steamed more than equal to hay unsteamed. Pea straw, when cooked, is readily eaten, and if cut early, is nearly as nutritious as hay. Bean straw, which, when dry, is generally left untouched by cattle, will be all eaten if steamed with hay, and as analysis shows, is more than equal in flesh-forming matter to hay. Corn-stalks, when cut short and steamed, will be eaten clean by cattle, horses and sheep. By cutting and cooking, all the straw and coarse fodder raised on the farm may be turned into milk, flesh and wool, besides adding largely to the manure heap.

In cities, where cows are kept to supply milk, and are milked through the winter, cooking their food will greatly increase the yield of milk, improve the condition of the cow, and reduce the expense of keeping at least one-third. The saving in food for each cow in milk will be, at least eight dollars per season. This item may be worth looking after by city feeders. The mixture of oil and pea meal and bran, as we have indicated, makes an excellent food to produce milk and keep up the condition of the cow. One and a half pounds each of oil and pea meal and three pounds of bran, mixed with ten pounds of hay and steamed, per day, for each cow weighing eight hundred pounds, will generally be sufficient. This may be thought a small quantity from which a cow of that size, at her best season, could produce four gallons of milk and keep up her condition, but it must be remembered that four gallons of milk contain only about four pounds of dry matter, which will leave a supply for the thrift of the cows. Yet it is always the best economy to give a cow in milk all she will eat with a good appetite; for it takes a certain quantity to keep the cow in condition without gaining any milk, and what she will eat above this should be added to the milk. Thirty-three to forty per cent. would require to be added if uncooked. But with the estimate given, it will be seen what a splendid margin there is in producing milk in cities at ten cents per quart!

This combination of food recommended for milk cows is well adapted to growing the young animal, as it contains a full supply of bone and muscle nutriment. For fattening, let the pea meal be replaced with six pounds of corn meal. Corn-meal may also be used, in small quantities, for milk where butter is to be made.

EFFECT OF COOKED FOOD UPON ANIMALLS.

It has sometimes been urged that although the animal eats less and for a time thrives better upon cooked food, yet its tendency is to weaken the stamina of the system and produce premature decay. We have been able to test this theory fairly, and can now show as the result, cows and horses which have been fed every winter upon cooked food for eleven years, and so far from showing any ill effects of this way of feeding, the cows have never been sick, and, are now in fine condition and heart, and the horses able to do good work, although sixteen and seventeen years old. We have raised many colts from weaning age to five years, and never saw any want of stamina. The effect of cooked food upon horses with a cough or a sudden cold is very remarkable, almost uniformly producing a cure in a few days. It will cure incipient heaves, correct costiveness, and materially improve a founder. In fact, our animals have been more uniformly healthy since feeding them upon cooked food. But it is true that sheep and other animals fattened rapidly upon steamed food will be softer in flesh than if fattened more slowly upon uncooked food. Yet this would naturally be expected. Grass grown rapidly upon very rich land is not so solid as that grown slowly upon poorer land; but who would prefer the poorer land in consequence? Just before animals are ready for the butchers it is well to feed them a few days upon dry, uncooked food, which will correct this softness of flesh.

PREPARING FOOD FOR STEAMING.

The cut hay, straw and hay, or other cut feed, is moistened with a large watering pot (if done by hand,) at the rate, of at least, two gallons of water to five bushels of feed, while it is being stirred up with a fork, then if bran meal or other feed is used with it, it should be sifted on and mixed evenly. Two quarts of bran to the bushel of straw will render wheat, barley, oat and pea straw equal to good timothy hay. A little salt should be added, which will be perfectly diffused through the mass. The feed must always be moistened before steaming, for steam will not cook dry hay or straw, but only dry it more. Moisture is required to absorb the steam.—*E. W. S., in Rural New Yorker.*