



DUEL BETWEEN LIZARD AND SCORPION.

SOMETHING ABOUT LIZARDS.

BY REV. EDWARD A. BARD.

Oh, the kingdom of the lizards!—brown, black, olive-green, leaf-tailed, broad-tailed, turnip-tailed, banded, crested, speckled, but every one a lizard.

In the above statement, I did not exhaust the list of colours in the lizard kingdom. We find tints of blue, red, chestnut and yellow. Other features we will notice as together we look at this large, widely-scattered family.

When the spring sun shines on the green lizard, its color is brightest. That master-painter, the sun, when he passes his brush over the earth, does not forget the members of this family. In return, this creature loves the sun. It is just a lazy loafer, seemingly, in localities bathed in sunshine. If one thrust his hand forward as if to seize it, the loafer is gone; he has darted into some safe retreat. Patience and kindness will tame him, and he will come at last and breakfast on gathered flies in one's hand.

There is a lizard called the official skink, which might be loosely translated as the medicinal skink. Once it was highly valued by the doctors. They dried it; they pounded it, and gave it to their patients. "Lizard" was reputed to be a wonderful healer. It is said that the doctors would sometimes prove their belief in this panacea by taking a dose themselves. This was only fair. They did not hesitate to swallow some of their other remedies, such as "the grated flesh of a mummy," also, "the burnt liver of a hyena," and "the moss from a dead man's skull" was not a dose too difficult for them. Do you laugh! Coming generations may smile and wonder at some of our remedies.

And here is the broad-headed plestiodon, but I will ticket him with an easier name by which he is known—the scorpion lizard. He is a native of our continent; and if he can find the forsaken home of a woodpecker, say, thirty or forty feet above the ground, he is pleased. Without asking who the landlord is, and what the rent may be a month, he drops in at once and is happy. He is called venomous, and can indeed put so much strength into his bite that people will have occasion to remember him at least an hour or two. So that very popular visitor, the mosquito, has enough virulence in his stinger to make us wish him at the bottom of the Atlantic, and yet neither scorpion, lizard nor mosquito is a dreadful creature. This lizard is fond of a home in a tree, lunches on insects, and likes to sip the dew sparkling on the leaves. Another North American lizard is the five-lined plestiodon, or, as common folks would say, the blue-tail.

And who is this eyeing us out of circular eyelids? This is a house gecko, the fan-foot, common in Egypt. He is an agile traveller, running over the floor or a wall, and is nimble in picking up a bug as he goes along. While common, he is not popular. In Cairo, they nickname him *abou-burs*, or, "father of the leprosy." The common gecko, or ringed gecko, is very much at home in India. By day it bides, and here it differs from the lizard that loves the sunshine; for at night the common gecko darts out of his retreat, and is such a soft-footed traveller that ignorant people in India give him a place among supernatural beings. When cold weather sets in, he retires to winter barracks, and is believed to be nourished by means of "two fatty masses" on its body.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, AND HEBEKEL.

B.C. 701.] LESSON II. [JAN. 10.

A SONG OF SALVATION.

Isa. 26. 1-10. Memory verses, 1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.—Isa. 26. 4.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God's goodness and justice call for the fullest expressions of gratitude.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

In that day—The day of the final triumph of the kingdom of God—the millenium. *In the land of Judah*—Then the home of God's people, and the type of God's kingdom. *We have a strong city*—The new Jerusalem described in Revelation 21. *Salvation*—Freedom, safety, assured by God's promises and power to keep them. *For walls and bulwarks*—For a defence against all enemies of every kind. *Open ye the gates*—In welcome. Rev. 21. 12, 13, describes the city as having twelve gates, three on each side, so that everybody could come in, from every direction, from every race and nation. *Righteous nation*—Only such can enter, for it is a state of holiness as well as a place. *Perfect peace*—Peace with God, with nature; peace in his own soul. *Whose mind is stayed on thee*—On God, who is able and willing to defend from all evils, and make all things work together for good. *The lofty city*—Such as Nineveh or Babylon. All the enemies of God; every stronghold of sin. *The poor and . . . needy*—The weakest of God's people; those now oppressed. *Thou . . . dost weigh*—Ponder, direct. *In the way of thy judgments*—In their path, to see them come. The judgments on the wicked, that vindicate God's people. *Thy name*—Expresses the whole character, and all the attributes of God. *The remembrance*—Or memorial. God's character expressed in all that he has done; the memory of his past acts. *In the night*—Of affliction, sorrow, persecution, poverty. *Seek thee early*—Earnestly. *The majesty of the Lord*—His greatness, his goodness.

Find in this lesson—

1. A picture of the kingdom of God.
2. Who may enter.
3. The blessings of those who live there.
4. The different effects of God's providence on different people.

REVIEW EXERCISE.

1. What city did Isaiah see in his vision? "The city of God—the new Jerusalem."
2. Who can enter the city? "Those who become righteous by believing in Jesus."
3. What blessings will they have? "Safety, peace, God's presence, and care."
4. What will become of God's enemies? "They must be destroyed."
5. What is the object of God's discipline? "To make men good."

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

3. But are all mankind, being born in sin, born without hope? No; for a Saviour was provided from the beginning, and all that come into the world receive of his grace, and his Spirit. Gen. 3. 15; John 1. 9, 10; Romans 8. 18; 1 Peter 1. 20; Rev. 13. 8.
4. By what means were our first parents led to commit so great a sin against God? By the subtlety of the devil, who made use of the serpent to beguile Eve. Gen. 3. 13; 2 Cor. 11. 3.

A CONFIRMED old bachelor was out at a social gathering the other evening, where he was so unfortunate as to become seated behind a party of vivacious young ladies. Conversation turned upon athletic subjects, when one pert young miss inquired: "Mr. Brown, what is your favourite exercise?" "Oh! I have no preference; but just at present I should prefer dumb bells," was his rather curt reply.

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