



GECKO AND SCORPION.

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The animals represented in our illustration are by no means as attractive looking as many others with which the great Creator has seen good to people the fields and woods of our various climates. Though placed together—probably because they are found in the same hot regions, they do not belong to the same class of animal life. Perhaps the one which of the two would prove the least unwelcome visitor in the house, is the brightly-spotted creature we see on the wall, and which at once proclaims itself a member of the lizard tribe. This particular variety is called a Gecko (one of the nocturnal lizards), and since its mode of life leads it to approach human habitations, it is comforting to know that it is perfectly harmless and molests nothing but the insects on which it lives.

The lizard's apparent enemy in the picture is by no means a desirable companion under any circumstances. It is a scorpion, and the sting of a scorpion is proverbially bad; the poison which it ejects from the last joint of the tail being very virulent indeed. It belongs to the family of spiders, and is furnished with as many as six or eight eyes and an exceedingly delicate sense of touch. Scorpions are also provided with very formidable mandibles, with which they

hold their prey while, with their tail, they sting it to death, and then proceed to suck its blood. Nevertheless, as students of natural history well know, both the lizard and the scorpion play an important part in the marvellously intricate economy of nature, which we see everywhere around us, and form part of that grand whole which, when God had made it, he beheld, and lo, "it was very good."

THE LADY OF THE UGLY HOUSE.

BY J. B. COLEMAN.

A sweet lady once lived in an ugly house. Her house was once as pretty as any, but one day the cruel flame enveloped it, and when they put it out the house was scarred and seamed. To strangers it looked forbidding, but to those who had learned to love the sweet lady who abode there it was not so. They would look in at the windows and see her sad, sweet eyes, or listen at the door, when it opened, to hear her gentle voice, and they knew that she was both beautiful and good. All the little boys and girls knew and loved her well, for she loved them and was ever their friend in time of need; and many a tale was told of her loving intercession with teacher and stern parent, and of her peace-making, when they called her "blessed." The man of God, too, loved the sweet lady,

for she loved God and read much in his Word, and sometimes she told the minister things which he had not read in books.

Now, 'tis strange, but true, that nobody ever saw the sweet lady outside of her ugly house. But one day she told the minister that she was going to move. And he asked, "Whither?" And she said, "I go to live in a mansion." And the man of God said, "It is well." And the sweet lady said, "It is best." And the day she moved out the ugly house fell in ruins, and all the little boys and girls came to see the ruins and wept over them, for they remembered the sweet lady who abode there.

Now, can any little boy or girl tell truly what was the house the sweet lady lived in, what were the windows, what was the door, what really happened to make it look so ugly, why the house fell in ruins when the sweet lady went out at last, and where is the mansion she went to live in?

WHAT THE TOYS SAID.

The Hobbyhorse said,
As he shook his head:
"It's a long, long way to go,
O'er the white snow's foam,
To the Little Boy's home:
But I hear the tin horns blow,
And must race away till I'm out o' breath
To the Little Boy who will ride me to
death!"

And the Toy Drum said:
"I've a hardened head,
And away on my sticks I'll go
From this icy dome
To the Little Boy's home:
I can beat my way through the snow,
Away! away! till I'm out o' breath,
To the Little Boy who will beat me to
death!"

And the Toy Doll said,
As her gold-crowned head
Shone over the wintry snow:
"To the Little Girls
Of the golden curls
In a fairy coach I'll go:
Far, far away, till I'm out o' breath,
To the Little Girl who will kiss me to
death."

But the Elephant said:
"If that way I'm led,
And they treat you all so bad,
I tell you now
That there'll be a row,
And they'll wish they never had;
For I'll pack them all in my trunk, you
see,
And lock it, and throw away the key!"

—Atlanta Constitution.