

lice; many of which they could not easily master and devour, after they have seized them with their forceps, without the aid of their tail and its sting;* this they can turn over their head, and, moving it in any direction, immediately kill their prey, however strong and active, by the fatal venom it instils.

Our Saviour alludes to the scorpion as one of the symbols of the evil spirit: and as a zodiacal sign with the Egyptians, it represented Typhon, which seems to prove that our Saviour's application of it was in conformity with a current opinion.

The other Pedipalps,† though one of them has a jointed tail like the scorpions,‡ are not armed with a sting. Probably the animals that they feed upon offer less resistance than the prey of the latter.

With regard to the Arachnidans in general, the object of their creation appears to have been to assist in keeping within due bounds the insect population of the globe. The members of this great and interesting Class are so given to multiply beyond all bounds, that were it not for the various animals that are directed by the law of their Creator to make them their food, the whole Creation, at least the organized members of it, would suffer great injury, if not total destruction, from the myriad forms that would invest the face of universal nature with a living veil of animal and plant devourers. To prevent this sad catastrophe, it was given in charge to the spiders, to set traps everywhere, and to weave their pensile toils, from branch to branch and from tree to tree, and even to dive under the waters. And, more particularly, to them we are mainly indebted for our deliverance from a plague of *flies* of every description, which, if the spiders were removed, of which they form

* See above, p. 171.

† Phrynus, &c.

‡ Thelyphonus.