



#### FIGHTING CROCODILES.

Perhaps there is no living creature about which more falsehoods have been written than the crocodile. Even the home of the crocodile is in most cases wrongly described. It does not now make its habitat in Egypt, as so often stated, but is found in the upper East Soudan and in the slow running rivers of inner Africa.

During the day the crocodile passes most of the time sleeping or lazily resting on the sandbanks near the shores of the great rivers. It very seldom goes more than one hundred feet inland from the water, and if then disturbed by any noise it will quickly return to the water. The impression is general that the crocodile travels very slowly on land. This is a mistake. A crocodile can run so fast that a good rider on horseback cannot overtake it. After sunset these creatures leave their places of rest and move into the water without any noise, and begin their night's hunt, which they continue through the early morning, in search of fish. Rowing or propelling themselves with their powerful tails, they move very rapidly and catch many fishes.

But crocodiles relish other food as well as fish. They mark well the places where

land animals come to the river for water. As soon as they discover a victim near the river, they will swim under water and then, quick as lightning, jump on it, taking it into the river, where they will eat it. Among the victims are antelopes, horses, sheep, dogs, mules, camels, and sometimes human beings who go to the river for water. Very often they will catch little birds that come to the river to wash themselves, flying to the low trees, the branches of which hang down close to the water.

Among themselves the crocodiles are very friendly, and not of a fighting disposition; but sometimes it happens that two males will fight about a female, and then the duel is a fearful one, as our picture shows. The female crocodile lays its eggs in the sand, covers them well and watches them until it will hear a kind of noise, then it will break the shell and the young ones will creep out. There is no value whatever in the crocodile for any people except the inhabitants of the country where it lives. They eat the flesh of the crocodile, and also make use of its fat. The Africans kill the crocodile mostly by spears, but the gun is better, as a bullet will never fail to penetrate its skin, and the prevalent idea that a bullet will rebound from a crocodile is entirely incorrect.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

#### SUSIE BLAKE, THE POOR SISTER.

BY MRS. H. F. LANE.

Susie Blake sat by the door in the Grantely meeting-house; a seat adapted to her means. It troubled her, because in her prosperous days she had sat in the very best pew in the church in her native town. Those days were over, she was alone in the world, making a scanty living among strangers. Her Sunday face was not a happy one, therefore not pleasant to look at; every muscle and nerve was adjusted to the consciousness that she was being considered poor by the rich Christian sisters—Mrs. Conrad Gordon in particular. When she came in contact with this sister she gave her a frozen stare of utter indifference. Mr. Gordon kept the leading retail store in the town.

Susie was a Christian, but the pressure of poverty and depression of loneliness had unhinged her from her old faith and love, and she had sought the Lethan influence of silent contempt to still her pain of heart. No one spoke to her as she went in and out of the church, so she often said in bitterness, in the solitude of her room. There were reasons for this neglect in the fact of her haste to get away from people, and, as a rule, one does not wish to know people who look disagreeable any more than to taste uninviting food.

As the days went on and Susie's life was still lonely, she grew more and more sad, brooding the live-long day over the neglect of yesterday, and the neglect that would come to-morrow, and crying at the veriest trifle. A new trouble came in time. Mrs. Conrad Gordon took pains to stare at her and give her a timid half-bow of recognition, which Susie returned with a look which said: "When people's feelings have got a deadly wound, they can't be cured with favors."

When Mrs. Gordon's carriage came in sight, Susie looked over toward the distant hills; when her path lay by the Gordon mansion, she looked away to daisy-whitened meadows, as if ignoring the existence of the stately mansion would blot it from the earth.

Mrs. Conrad Gordon (the rich) was a humble disciple of Jesus, and yet she was in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. She was by nature fitted to do good work for God, but circumstances had put her into such calm ports that she had grown weak through luxury and inaction. If she attempted to lend a helping-hand to the less-favored, unseen elements frustrated her wisest calculations, until she gave up the attempt, saying to herself: "I am not worthy." Her home-life was not happy, her splendor of attire represented "a golden sorrow." What this envied Christian woman needed was the influence of a loving human soul on her own, the kind not "calculable by algebra, not deducible by logic," but mysterious and hidden, a presence and a power. All this had been hers when her crippled sister Letty lived. Since the going out of that life no one had come near this lonely, envied woman.

Going from church one day she saw Susie Blake walking down the dusty highway. The droop of her shoulders, the limp in her gait, brought the dead Letty to mind. These personal defects drew her to her. Could she not have her for a friend? In her luxurious room she fell to wondering where Miss Blake called it home, and if she could not do something to bring sunshine into her life, for Letty's sake. At once she made timid offers of friendship to meet with nothing but indifference and cruel contempt.

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Grantely was low-lying and marshy; just the place to invite disease. When sickness came Susie Blake's work in the cap factory stopped, the business closing up at the death of the owner. Then she knew pinching want. She ate her meagre meals by a scanty fire, in loneliness and fear. The day came when there was no fire and no food to cook. Still Susie kept her pride and suffered on. In her cheerless room at twilight she half died in weakness and hunger. Bitterly she thought of the abundance in the great house on the hill, and in her heart hated her favored sister. God was against her; God was partial; she was not of his favorites, so she murmured. Poor Miss Blake had the fever. All were afraid of it. No one would go to her assistance. The poor-house must be her home. These words the sick woman heard, and then came a time of forgetfulness, when all was blank.

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A shaded room, pleasant warmth, pictures and a luxurious bed was what greeted Susie's eyes when she awoke to consciousness. Some one sat in a low chair by the fire, with an open Bible on her lap. Susie had seen the face often in her long illness, as she thought in her dreams. A movement of hers causes the lady to turn her face toward the bed. It was Mrs. Gordon.

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After years of loving companionship, Susie Blake went to God from the home of the rich Christian woman, and these were among her life-lessons:

A tender, loving heart, may beat under a silken robe.

The rich have heart-needs as well as the poor.

God made the rich as well as the poor; to despise one of the rich is to throw contempt on his work.

Each individual heart goes on brightening with its own hopes, burning with its own desires, grieving with its own pain, and will until time shall be no more.

No one is too poor, none too rich but they can help weary feet in the life-march.—*Standard.*