

gate the offense or for a moment stay the judgment. On the contrary, if the killing takes place under the latter circumstance, the moral law denominates it justifiable or excusable.

Within the last few days, and while preparing this address, I have read in the newspapers three different accounts of loss of life from small boats on Sunday. The first a party of irreligious boys on a pleasure excursion ; second, a party of devout young people crossing a little bay to their village church for worship ; third, two persons, perhaps physicians, on an errand of mercy or necessity to the sick.

There are large numbers of people who will comment only on the first of these occurrences, and it will be regarded as if by special direction of the Great Author of moral obligation ; or if the other cases are pondered and remarked upon they will be characterized as mysterious dispensations, involving apparent anomalies in God's providence, but only apparent on account of our limited knowledge of His ways.

However involved the conditions as they may appear to us, and numerous as may be supposed the shades or degrees of moral quality in the intents and actions of the different sufferers in the general loss and without proposing anything whatever from a moral or religious point of view, I may say this as applicable to all of them, that the natural law has to notice but the single circumstance common to the parties, and that is their inextricable submersion in an unnatural element, and consequent inevitable death.

The foregoing involves truisms almost too obvious for statement. The principle implied holds true throughout the following supposed cases, which, though supposed, are actually true as to facts, and exist more or less open to observation all around us.

In a pleasant and luxurious home, such as some of you know, a case like this may be found : There is a young daughter of the house, a girl to whom you are warmly attached. She is 15 or 16 years old—at that period of maidenhood where, according to Longfellow, the brook and the river meet ; affectionate and the exemplar of all virtues, she is beloved by her father, as was fair Ellen of the Lake by the Douglas when he shed tears upon a duteous daughter's head that would not have stained an angel's cheek. The mother, a woman of feeble constitution, and some weakness by inheritance, died a year or two after the daughter's birth. The young woman is