

frightful sea of death and lapping flames. The screams of the perishing passengers, and the confused noises of the frightened crew, together with the involuntary workings of the struggling engines, made the entire scene one of unmitigated horror.

On the upward bound steamer, the Fitzgibbon family had taken passage the evening before, hoping to reach Cincinnati in time for the morning train East. At ten o'clock they retired to their state-rooms for their night's slumbers, and when the crash came they were, with the exception of Mrs. Fitzgibbon, all asleep. Of course she did not know what had happened, yet she knew it was something terrible, for she felt as if the boat was slipping from under her. She sprang to her feet and seized her little Nettie in her arms, and holding her as with a death-grip, she endeavored to arouse her husband and Robbie. Her father, old Mr. Rothfield, was in another state-room, and Mr. Fitzgibbon with Robbie went to look after him, which was the last Mrs. Fitzgibbon saw of her husband or son.

In the excitement of the wild and fearful moment she was seized by the arm by some one who fairly forced her to the stern of the boat, where she was told to jump to the deck of the other, which she did without a thought of consequences; yet, lighting fairly on her feet, she still held her child in her arms, and in a few moments more of frightful struggle she was across the boat and on the Kentucky shore, out of reach of the flames.

The sudden and terrible reality of so fearful a collision had seemingly deprived even the stoutest of their self possession, and many perished in the flames, or found a watery grave, who with the smallest guidance might have escaped.

What was the fate of her husband, son and father, Mrs. Fitzgibbon, in the dire confusion, could not learn a word, and frantic with grief, and almost dead with the horrible excitement of the hour, she was compelled to lie down on the bare ground in her night clothes, where she remained until she fainted away with the overwhelming and surging grief which consumed her spirit.

When she awoke she found she was on a steamer bound for Louisville, with only her little Nettie by her side. But before she reached the destination of the boat she was wild with a raging fever, and wholly unconscious of all her misfortunes. Fittil and spasmodic emotions of disturbed grief were her only manifestations. But diligent and affectionate, and wonderfully self-possessed far beyond her years, little Nettie sat fanning her mother, while the big tears which stood in her heavenly eyes told of her deep realization of the sweeping bereavement, until the boat reached the wharf at Louisville. In a very brief period a close carriage conveyed them to the Hospital, where for so many long weeks the door of the world seemed to be shut against them.

Yet, how true it is, that the silver lining of life and hope often skirts the darkest clouds which come over us. The weight of darkness is not, after all, so heavy as imaginary dreams often make them. The hand of Providence, indeed, is ever merciful, and it is only when we get out of that hand that misfortune overtakes us. Life itself is always a season of trial, of educational subordination, where the *true light* shows that we are always cared for, always watched over and dealt with, ultimately, according to our worth and merit. To trust in the Higher Power is, therefore, the duty of all men, in adversity as well as in prosperity.

"Your wife and daughter were both lost, you tell me, Mr. Fitzgibbon, in that terrible collision," remarked one of the merchants of Boston, to the deeply bereaved and afflicted husband.

"O yes, yes, both were snatched from me in a moment by the devouring flames," Mr. Fitzgibbon exclaimed, with a deep sigh, which seemed to come from the bottom of his heart.

"Why how was it? Where did you see your wife last?"

"I was sound asleep, Mr. Benton, when the collision occurred, and when I opened my eyes the first person I saw was my wife, with our little Nettie in her arms. I jumped out from my berth and seized my boy, who was lying at the foot of the berth, and we all left the state-room together, and entered the cabin, when I thought of my dear father-in-law, who had retired to a state-room by himself, in the gentleman's cabin. Still holding my little Robbie by the hand I went to look after him. I was gone but a moment, but that terrible moment snatched my dear wife and daughter from me forever, for when I got back to the spot where I had left them, with the old gentleman, Mr. Rothfield, they were gone, and the flames were bursting all around us. I looked, I searched, I cried for them, but they were gone, the maddening fires were consuming everything, and amidst screams and groans, and the direst confusion I ever saw, my dear father-in-law fell in the flames with suffocation, and in an instant was hid from my sight. I heard him cry 'O Lord! My God!' and I heard him no more. With my little boy in my arms I ran, I know not how, to the stern of the boat, from which I sprang directly into the river. Of course we both went under the water, but when we rose to the surface again I placed the little fellow on my back and