

These men, alas, knew only of old Mrs. Ayles, who had been bed-ridden for three years, that could be called sick, among their neighbors; they had heard that a girl from Conception Bay had been sick in New-Harbor, and that her friends had come and got her home.

So, among them all, then, this down of fleeting, unsubstantial hope was blown from one to another, and seemed scarce worth the following. Vain chase!

If it could have been narrowed down to this spot, and the roads or paths that lead from it, there would have been some end toward which to work, and limits to their labor; but if there should be nothing to connect the missing one with this place, then the whole waste, a little way from them, or, rather, the whole world, was open again; and the world is wide.

The merchant offered, heartily, to go about with them and make inquiries; and so he did. They went about in vain. They stood on the ground of the little mist, that, at first, and afar, had something the look of substance. If there were any thing in it, at least they could not find it.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, after refreshment at the hospitable Mr. Oldhame's, they started to go home; and as they trode, again, the same road through the woods, toward the wide, weary Barrens, the way seemed wearier than before.

Mr. Wellon, who followed, was going thoughtfully up the side of the first "guleh," when he was suddenly overtaken and addressed by a man, whom, on turning round, he saw to be Ladford.

"Why! what brings you over here?" asked the Minister.

"Same that drives a good many away from home:—fear!" said the former smuggler. "It wouldn't do for