

In the afternoon of that day, perceiving that there were some dry places on which the foot might be safely set, I embraced the opportunity to walk forth: glad to inhale the fresh air and meet the faces of men, after having been so long confined by the weather. The wind was comparatively soft, but gusty: the air was loaded with vapours, and in the higher regions, clouds of all shape, and varying densities, were seen rolling over each other in different directions, as if obeying no guidance of the wind, but pursuing each an inward impulse of its own. While doubting, for a moment, which way to walk, I beheld, on an eminence, not far distant, a solitary individual, with his face towards the harbour, seemingly to be deeply intent on something then taking place. An impulse of curiosity moved me to approach him, when I discovered him to be an old experienced master in the coasting trade.

I accosted him in the customary style of salutation, but he answered me not a word. His eye was intently following the motions of a small schooner, loaded with wood, which was slowly moving towards the mouth of the harbour. My own eye pursued the motion of his, till the *Almira*, (the schooner's name,) had rounded the point, forming the west side of the harbour, and hoisting her sails, stood towards the north. As soon as he saw this, he lifted his hands and exclaimed, "He has gone out of this harbour, and he will never come into it again!" I remarked that the wind was southerly, and of course fair. But he paid no attention to the remark. He again lifted up his hands, repeated his exclamation, and, with a sorrowful countenance, departed.

I stood awhile observing the progress of the schooner. It was not very rapid. The wind was vascillating, and shifting round about her, as if uncertain in what direction to establish itself.—And the vessel seemed as if conscious of the uncertainty of the wind, and therefore, undecided as to the position of her sails and rudder.

The master of the *Almira* was Josiah Ellis, a man of between fifty and sixty years of age. He was one whose gigantic frame seemed to abide the fiercest 'pelting of the pitiless storm.' He had so often encountered the violence of the elements, and had so often conquered them by the simple energy of a vigorous constitution, that he took little care to guard himself against them. Reckless of what was to come, if he were sufficiently clad and armed for the present state of winds and seas, he thought not of what might be their condition, or his necessities for meeting them to-morrow.—When, therefore, he felt a southerly wind and a favouring tide, he launched out for his voyage, with no crew but himself, his son Josiah, and Josiah Smith, a seaman; little regardful that winter was still in its depth, and that an hour might produce the most perilous changes.

Thus prepared and manned, the *Almira* held on her way with a slow progress for several hours. The wind was changeful, but continued to blow from the southerly quarter, till they had passed Monument point, a jutting headland about twelve miles from Sandwich harbour, which makes out from the south-easterly side of Plymouth some miles into the sea. It is a high rocky promontory, dangerous to approach; and interferes so much with the passage of vessels from Sandwich to Boston, that while compelled to avoid