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THE SHIPWRECKED COASTER.

“Who can stand before his cold?”

PSALM, cxlvii. 17.

THERE are few classes of men more exposed to hardship and disaster, than those employed in the coasting trade of New England, particularly in the winter season. So great are their risks of property and life, at that time of the year, that it is the custom of many to dismantle their vessels and relinquish their employment till the spring; although they can poorly afford this period of secession from labour, and consequent loss of income.—Among those engaged in conveying fuel from the forests of Plymouth and Sandwich to the Boston market, there are some who continue their business through the winter. But they incur great hazard, and sometimes meet with disastrous issues. One of these events it is my present purpose to relate. The particulars I have ascertained from an eye witness of a part of the same; and from one who was a personal partaker of the whole.

In the winter of 1826-7 the weather was uncommonly severe for some weeks, during which the land was covered with snow, and the shores were covered in ice. It was a boisterous, cold and gloomy season. From my dwelling there was a plain view of the little harbour of Sandwich, in which the few vessels employed in the business before named, shelter themselves, and receive their lading of wood to be conveyed to Boston.—Some of these were already dismantled for the winter; others were laden, and had been waiting a relaxation of the weather, in order to effect a passage. In that region, a period of severe cold is commonly succeeded by rain. The north west wind which brings the cold out of the north, gives place to a wind from a southerly point, which comes loaded with a copious vapor, and pours it down like a deluge. It so took place on the occasion to which I refer. Rain from the south-east, had continued for two or three days, accompanied with tempestuous wind and occasional thunder and lightning. It had dissolved much of the snow, but had filled the roads and low and level places with water. The ground being half frozen, retained the water on its surface, and this, with the remaining snow half dissolved, rendered the aspect of nature cheerless, and the moving from place to place uncomfortable. About noon, on the sixteenth of January, the rain ceased, and, the weather being comparatively warmer than it had been, gave some prospect of a few days in which business might be done.