

had been stormy and unsettled, moderated toward the evening of the fifth day of their detention ; and the wind chopping suddenly into the east, both vessels loosed from their moorings, and, as a rather gloomy day was passing into a still gloomier night, they bore out to sea. The breeze soon freshened into a gale ; the gale swelled into a hurricane, accompanied by a thick snow-storm ; and when, early next morning, the smack opened the Frith, she was staggering under her storm-jib, and a main-sail reefed to the cross. Whatever wind may blow, there is always shelter within the Sutors ; and she was soon riding at anchor within the roadstead ; but she had entered the bay alone ; and when day broke, and for a brief interval the driving snow-rack cleared up toward the east, no second sail appeared in the offing. "Poor Miller !" exclaimed the master of the smack ; "if he does not enter the Frith ere an hour, he will never enter it at all. Good sound vessel, and better sailor never stepped between stem and stern ; but last night has, I fear, been too much for him. He should have been here long ere now." The hour passed ; the day itself wore heavily away in gloom and tempest ; and as not only the master, but also all the crew of the sloop, were natives of the place, groupes of the town's folks might be seen, so long as the daylight lasted, looking out into the storm from the salient points of the old coast-line that, rising immediately behind the houses, commands the Frith. But the sloop came not, and before they had retired to their homes, a second night had fallen, dark and tempestuous as the first.

Ere morning the weather moderated ; a keen frost bound up the wind in its icy fetters ; and during the following day, though a heavy swell continued to roll shorewards between the Sutors, and to send up its white foam high against the cliffs, the surface of the sea had become glassy and smooth. But the day wore on and evening again fell ; and even the most sanguine relinquished all hope of ever again seeing the sloop or her crew. There was grief in the master's dwelling, —grief in no degree the less poignant from the circumstance