

mankind towards the north. In two cases only have ice-bound vessels drifted in a northerly direction—in the case of the *Tegethoff* and the *Jeannette*—while most of the others have been carried away from their goal by masses of ice drifting southward.

On reading the history of Arctic explorations, it early occurred to me that it would be very difficult to wrest the secrets from these unknown regions of ice by adopting the routes and the methods hitherto employed. But where did the proper route lie?

It was in the autumn of 1884 that I happened to see an article by Professor Mohn in the Norwegian *Morgenblad*, in which it was stated that sundry articles which must have come from the *Jeannette* had been found on the southwest coast of Greenland. He conjectured that they must have drifted on a floe right across the Polar Sea. It immediately occurred to me that here lay the route ready to hand. If a floe could drift right across the unknown region, that drift might also be enlisted in the service of exploration—and my plan was laid. Some years, however, elapsed before, in February, 1890, after my return from my Greenland expedition, I at last propounded the idea in an address before the Christiania Geographical Society. As this address plays an important part in the history of the expedition, I shall reproduce its principal features, as printed in the March number of *Naturen*, 1891.

After giving a brief sketch of the different polar