

New Siberian Islands* as early in the summer as the ice would permit.

“Arrived at the New Siberian Islands, it will be advisable to employ the time to the best advantage in examining the conditions of currents and ice, and to wait for the most opportune moment to advance as far as possible in ice-free water, which, judging by the accounts of the ice conditions north of Bering Strait given by American whalers, will probably be in August or the beginning of September.

“When the right time has arrived, then we shall plough our way in amongst the ice as far as we can. We may venture to conclude from the experience of the *Jeannette* expedition that we should thus be able to reach a point north of the most northerly of the New Siberian Islands. De Long notes in his journal that while the expedition was drifting in the ice north of Bennett Island they saw all around them a dark ‘water-sky’—that is to say, a sky which gives a dark reflection of open water—indicating such a sea as would be, at all events, to some extent navigable by a strong ice-ship. Next, it must be borne in mind that the whole *Jeannette* expedition travelled in boats, partly in open water, from Bennett Island to the Siberian coast, where, as we know, the

* I first thought of choosing the route through Bering Strait, because I imagined that I could reach the New Siberian Islands safer and earlier in the year from that side. On further investigation I found that this was doubtful, and I decided on the shorter route through the Kara Sea and north of Cape Cheliuskin.