

“ It is, indeed, quite remarkable that the diatomous flora on the ice-floes off Bering Strait and on the east coast of Greenland should so completely resemble each other, and should be so utterly unlike all others; it points to an open connection between the seas east of Greenland and north of Asia.” “ Through this open connection,” I continued in my address, “ drift-ice is, therefore, yearly transported across the unknown Polar Sea. *On this same drift-ice, and by the same route, it must be no less possible to transport an expedition.*”

When this plan was propounded it certainly met with approval in various quarters, especially here at home. Thus it was vigorously supported by Professor Mohn, who, indeed, by his explanation of the drift of the *Jeannette* relics, had given the original impulse to it. But as might be expected, it met with opposition in the main, especially from abroad, while most of the polar travellers and Arctic authorities declared, more or less openly, that it was sheer madness. The year before we set out, in November, 1892, I laid it before the Geographical Society in London in a lecture at which the principal Arctic travellers of England were present. After the lecture a discussion took place,* which plainly showed how greatly I was at variance with the generally accepted opinions as to the conditions in the interior of the Polar Sea, the principles of ice navigation, and the

* Both my lecture and the discussion are printed in *The Geographical Journal*, London, 1893, Vol. I., pp. 1-32.