

will be more likely to drift her towards the west than towards the east. With an ice-encumbered sea north of her, and more open water or newly made ice to the southward, the chances are small for a northerly drift, at all events, at first, and afterwards I know of no natural forces that will carry the vessel in any reasonable time much farther from the Siberian coast than the *Jeannette* was carried, and during the whole of this time, unless protected by newly discovered lands, she will be to all intents and purposes immovably sealed up in the pack, and exposed to its well-known dangers. There is no doubt that there is an ocean connection across the area proposed to be explored."

In one point, however, Nares was able to declare himself in agreement with me. It was the idea "that the principal aim of all such voyages is to explore the unknown polar regions, not to reach exactly that mathematical point in which the axis of our globe has its northern termination."\*

Sir Allen Young says, among other things: "Dr. Nansen assumes the blank space around the axis of the earth to be a pool of water or ice; I think the great danger to contend with will be the land in nearly every direction near the Pole. Most previous navigators seem

\* After our return home, Admiral Nares, in the most chivalrous fashion, sent me a letter of congratulation, in which he said that the *Fram's* remarkable voyage over the Polar Sea proved that my theory was correct and his scepticism unfounded.