

of the *Fram* or during our sledge expedition to the north, that would point to the proximity of any considerable expanse of land; the ice seemed to drift unimpeded, particularly in a northerly direction. The way in which the drift set straight to the north as soon as there was a southerly wind was most striking. It was with the greatest difficulty that the wind could head the drift back towards the southeast. Had there been any considerable expanse of land within reasonable distance to the north of us, it would have blocked the free movement of the ice in that direction. Besides, the large quantity of drift-ice, which drifts southward with great rapidity along the east coast of Greenland' all the way down to Cape Farewell and beyond it, seems to point in the same direction. Such extensive ice-fields must have a still larger breadth of sea to come from than that through which we drifted. Had the *Fram* continued her drift instead of breaking loose to the north of Spitzbergen, she would certainly have come down along the coast of Greenland; but probably she would not have got close in to that coast, but would have had a certain quantity of ice between her and it; and that ice must come from a sea lying north of our route. On the other hand, it is quite probable that land may exist to a considerable extent on the other side of the Pole between the Pole and the North American archipelago. It appears to me only reasonable to assume that this multitude of islands must extend farther towards the north.

As a result of our expedition, I think we can now form a fairly clear idea of the way in which the drift-ice is continually moving from one side of the polar basin north of Bering Strait and the coast of Siberia, and across the regions around the Pole, and out towards the Atlantic Ocean. Where geographers at one time were disposed to locate a solid, immovable, and massive ice-mantle, covering the northern extremity of our globe, we now find a continually breaking and shifting expanse of drift-ice. The evidence which even before our expedition had induced me to believe most strongly in this theory is supplied by the Siberian drift-wood that is continually being carried to Greenland, as well as the mud found on the ice, as it