

from Labrador to Florida, and envelop the eastern part of the British Possessions, which are fully exposed to its chilling influence, with fog and mist. The principal body of the current passes southward around Newfoundland, but a branch goes westward between this Island and Labrador, through the Straits of Belleisle, and courses around the Gulf of St. Lawrence, as has been already stated.

It is the transporting power of this current as a whole, and of this branch, in particular, which has more directly influenced the vegetation of our country.

Three of the largest rivers in the Old World, and an equal number of those in the New, help to freshen the waters of this great oceanic stream. The Spring floods of the great Siberian water-courses sweep down into it vast quantities of drift-wood and *débris* filled with the seeds of plants. Many of these are carried onward in the floe-ice toward the American coast, where they receive accessions from the McKenzie River, and in the course of years work their way through the group of islands between North America and Greenland. The Saskatchewan River also contributes its quota of organic relics to the burden borne on the bosom of the Polar current from the Arctic regions of the three continents. The peculiarity of all these great water-courses is, that their sources are in temperate latitudes, while their embouchures are in Arctic or sub-Arctic regions, and thus the waste of vegetation which they bear downward toward the sea, when they are swollen by melting snows, is cast upon the ice about their mouths. The seeds of plants flourishing in the regions from which these rivers flow might thus very readily be transported in the course of time, upon floe ice and drift-wood, to the north-eastern parts of America.

Accordingly we find little difficulty in tracing back the course of the Boreal and Arctic types north-westward across the Continent of America, toward Asia. Labrador and Newfoundland are bleak, inhospitable countries, whose flora is but imperfectly known; yet of the three score species in the list of Boreal plants, more than one-half have been gathered there. In the St. Lawrence Valley, chiefly in that part of it below the Ottawa River and around Lakes Huron and Superior, more than two-thirds of the list of Boreal species occur; many of these being only known in the far western parts of the Valley about Lakes Superior and Huron, or in the mountain tops of New England and New York. The presence of