

his party\* could exist as well as other inhabitants of the Polar regions, but we must not forget, that in addition to the natural resources, they would in their vessels possess more comfortable and substantial houses than any native inhabitants of the same regions.

NOTE.—The preceding remarks were hastily put together, for the purpose of being read before the Royal Geographical Society. The object of the author was not to give a long list of the animals killed or seen by the various expeditions, as has frequently been done before, but rather to demonstrate the causes of the very unequal distribution of animal life in the Arctic Regions generally. When the shores and waters of Wellington Channel were found to be "teeming with animal life", it was regarded as a wonderful fact, that more animals should be found in that part than in those to the south of it. But as the summer temperature in the region towards Melville Island is higher than in the latter,—and as the development of vegetable and animal life chiefly depends on the warmth of two or three, or even one summer month,—there is nothing wonderful or extraordinary about it. The mean temperature, in July, of Melville Island, and probably of the region east to Wellington Channel, is higher than that of Winter Island, Port Bowen, Igloodik, Boothia Felix, and even Godhaab, on the west coast of Greenland, in lat. 64° (corresponding with that of Drontheim in Norway), as will be seen in the following list:—

Melville Island	... ..	42°.5
Godhaab	... ..	41°.9
Boothia Felix	... ..	41°.3
Igloodik	... ..	39°.1
Port Bowen	... ..	36°.6
Winter Island	... ..	35°.4

Taking the mean of the three summer months, June, July, August, the stations east of Regent Inlet and Boothia Gulf are, as in July, the coldest:—

Melville Island	... ..	37°.1
Igloodik	... ..	35°.0
Port Bowen	... ..	34°.4
Winter Island	... ..	31°.8

In comparing these data with the observations made on the Asiatic and European sides of the Arctic Regions, it will be seen that Winter Island is the coldest of all. This place is consequently the pole of cold of the Northern Hemisphere during the summer; and Mr. B. Seemann, the naturalist of H.M.S. Herald, informs me that it is likewise the phytological North Pole, namely, that point which possesses the smallest number of genera and species of plants, and whence the number increases in every direction.

A line, therefore, drawn from Winter Island to Lancaster Sound, shows the line of lowest summer temperature; and vessels having crossed this line, and reached Melville Island or Wellington Channel, may be said to have passed—not the mathematical—but certainly the natural or Physical North Pole. Actual experience is so far corroborative of this Physical fact, that no other part of the Arctic Regions has offered greater difficulties to navigation, than the one here designated as the Physical North Pole.

It has been a too common error, in matters regarding the natural features of the Arctic Regions, to take into consideration the lines of latitude only, and to disregard the lines of temperature altogether; the equator and the poles are too frequently considered the centres of the greatest heat and the greatest cold. In no other regions are the inferences drawn from such views more mischievous than in the Arctic Regions, where the temperature corresponds less with latitude than in any other part of the globe, and where

\* See the means of sustenance found by the first navigators who were forced to winter in the Arctic Regions, Appendix p. 21.