

## 140 ADVENTURERS OF THE FAR NORTH

After the Greeley expedition the fight towards the Pole was carried on by a series of gallant explorers, none of whom, strange to narrate, were British. Commander R. E. Peary, of the United States Navy, came prominently before the world as an Arctic navigator in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In 1892 he crossed northern Greenland in the extreme latitude of  $81^{\circ} 37'$ , a feat of the highest order.

Still more striking was the work of Dr Fridtjof Nansen, which attracted the attention of the whole world. Nansen had devoted profound study to the question of the northern drift of the polar waters. It had often been observed that drift-wood and wreckage seemed, in many places, to float towards the Pole. Trees that fall in the Siberian forests and float down the great rivers to the northern sea are frequently found washed up on the shores of Greenland, having apparently passed over the Pole itself. A strong current flows northward through Bering Strait, and it is a matter of record that an American vessel, the *Jeanette*, which stuck fast in the ice near Wrangel Land in 1879, drifted slowly northward with the ice for two years, and made its way in this fashion some four hundred miles towards the