

*Pole*, and these investigations will be equally important from a scientific point of view whether the expedition passes over the polar point itself or at some distance from it."

In this lecture I had submitted the most important data on which my plan was founded; but in the following years I continued to study the conditions of the northern waters, and received ever fresh proofs that my surmise of a drift right across the Polar Sea was correct. In a lecture delivered before the Geographical Society in Christiania, on September 28th, 1892, I alluded to some of these enquiries.\* I laid stress on the fact that on considering the thickness and extent of the drift-ice in the seas on both sides of the Pole, one cannot but be struck by the fact that while the ice on the Asiatic side, north of the Siberian coast, is comparatively thin (the ice in which the *Jeannette* drifted was as a rule not more than from 7 to 10 feet thick) that on the other side, which comes drifting from the north in the sea between Greenland and Spitzbergen, is remarkably massive, and this, notwithstanding that the sea north of Siberia is one of the coldest tracts on the earth. This, I suggested, could be explained only on the assumption that the ice is constantly drifting from the Siberian coast, and that, while passing through the unknown and cold sea there is time for it to attain its enormous thickness partly by freezing, partly by the constant packing that takes place as the floes screw themselves together.

I further mentioned in the same lecture that the mud found on this drift-ice seemed to point to a Siberian origin. I did not at the time attach great importance to this fact, but on a further examination of the deposits I had collected during my Greenland Expedition, it appeared that it could scarcely come from anywhere else but Siberia. On investigating its mineralogical composition, Dr. Törnebohm, of Stockholm, came to the conclusion that the greater part of it must be

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\* See the *Society's Annual*, III, 1892, p. 91.