

To gratify their curiosity, and to allay the fears of the Norwegian seamen, the ship now stood towards the coast of Nova Zembla, to ascertain whether they had been merely steering up a bight in the ice. The result proved that, from their furthest, on the 1st September, to the coast of Nova Zembla, the sea was free from ice. They then appear, owing to the south-west winds, to have been forced back on the 6th September in a northerly direction to $78^{\circ}5'$ N. lat., and 56° E. long., where, it is worthy of remark, they met ice, in an east and west direction, with a heavy sea beating against it. The expedition now struggled homeward through heavy continual storms from the south-west, and anchored in Tromsø on the 4th October; and the Austrian navigators do not fail to remark that the increasing length of the nights and heavy snow-storms would have rendered the navigation highly perilous, had they had the misfortune to have fallen amongst ice. A contingency which was avoided by the heavy south-west gales, and consequent warm-water drift pressing the pack-ice away to the northward and westward, and northward and eastward.

Lieutenants Weyprecht and Payer, having been unable to trace this open water on the north shore of Nova Zembla to its furthest limit, appear to jump at the conclusion that they have discovered a key, to use their own words, "to the mystic Polynia, the open sea to the north of Siberia."

This may be so: the word Polynia means spaces of open water in a frozen ocean; and there may be many such spaces, if not a continuous channel of open water, late in the autumn, say October, extending from Nova Zembla, along the shores of Asia, to Behring Straits; and I do not deny that an exploration of this open water may yield most valuable results in a geographical and generally scientific point of view. But, with all kindness and sympathy for them, I appeal to their own Report, and the results obtained, whether in observations of ice, water, depths, and temperatures, in proof of the fact that, at their furthest north, they were merely approaching those lands which previous visitors to Spitzbergen have frequently reported were seen to the east and north-east, and generally known under the term "Gillies Land," or, more recently, King Charles's Land; and I only regret to learn from Sir Leopold McClintock that the gallant Austrians, who are again about to put forth on a voyage of discovery, do not intend to return there, and explore a region so likely to yield such interesting results in a geographical point of view; though I feel confident that the Polar basin will not be explored by any expedition in that direction.

To sum up, another seven years' labour only goes to confirm old