

began to make itself increasingly felt; the progress of physical science, the rapid advance in the knowledge of electricity and magnetism, and the rise of the science of biology were profoundly altering the whole outlook of the existing generation towards the globe that they inhabited. The sea itself, like everything else, became an object of scientific study. Its currents and its temperature, its relation to the land masses which surrounded it, acquired a new importance in the light of geological and physical research. The polar waters offered a fruitful field for the new investigations. In place of the adventurous explorers of Frobisher's day, searching for fabled empires and golden cities, there appeared in the seas of the north the inquisitive man of science, eagerly examining the phenomena of sea and sky, to add to the stock of human knowledge. Very naturally there grew up under such conditions an increasing desire to reach the Pole itself, and to test whether the theoretical conclusions of the astronomer were borne out by the actual observations of one standing upon the apex of the spinning earth. The attempt to reach the Pole became henceforth the great pre-occupation of Arctic discovery. From this time on the story of what has been done in