

of the Straits of Belle Isle, but in the low temperature of the water, both at the surface and at the bottom, as far up the northerly side of the River St. Lawrence as at least Murray Bay, seventy miles below Quebec, the general effect of this low temperature on the vegetation of the immediate coasts being seen in the limited distribution of forest trees and the presence of high northern or semi-Arctic plants. That icebergs were not found farther into the Gulf was not an argument against the existence of a branch current, as the milder atmosphere and warmer surface waters of the land-locked gulf during summer, would, naturally, tell rapidly on the masses of ice, however large, once they were carried well into and beyond the Straits of Belle Isle.

Mr. W. Bell Dawson, who has been commissioned by the Dominion Government to make a survey of the tides and currents of the River and Gulf of St. Lawrence, has, in his report for 1894, raised the question whether there is an uniformly inward current at the Straits of Belle Isle, and whether the currents there are not, in reality, fundamentally tidal, though affected considerably by the direction of the wind in the Straits, and by barometric pressure in the Gulf as well as outside.

Apart from the great scientific interest which attaches to it, the proper settlement of this question is important on account of its bearing on the navigation of the Straits where several large steamships have in recent years been lost. Enveloped in fog as these Straits so frequently are, and their surface dotted at certain seasons with icebergs, it is essential that their currents should be carefully examined and thoroughly understood. Whilst, however, Mr. Dawson's investigations into the direction and force of the current have very great value attached to them, are not the tests made too few in number and carried over too limited an area, to, as yet, enable definite conclusions to be drawn? The nearest point in the Straits to the