

“ To the Secretary of the Admiralty.

“ THE ROYAL SOCIETY, BURLINGTON HOUSE,
“ December 8th, 1871.

“ SIR,—I am directed by the President and Council of the Royal Society to request that you will represent to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the experience of the recent scientific investigations of the deep sea, carried on in European waters by the Admiralty at the instance of the Royal Society (Reports of which will be found in their ‘Proceedings’ herewith enclosed), has led them to the conviction that advantages of great importance to Science and to Navigation would accrue from the extension of such investigations to the great oceanic regions of the Globe. The President and Council therefore venture to submit to their Lordships’ favourable consideration a proposal for fitting out an Expedition commensurate to the objects in view; which objects are briefly as follows:—

“ (1) The Physical conditions of the deep sea throughout all the great Ocean-basins.

“ (2) The chemical constitution of the water at various depths from the surface to the bottom.

“ (3) The physical and chemical characters of the deposits.

“ (4) The distribution of organic life throughout the areas explored.

“ For effectively carrying out these researches there would, in the opinion of the President and Council, be required—

“ (1) A ship of sufficient size to afford accommodation and storage-room for sea-voyages of considerable length and for a probable absence of four years.

“ (2) A staff of scientific men qualified to take charge of the several branches of investigation.

“ (3) A supply of everything necessary for the collection of the objects of research, for the prosecution of the physical and chemical investigations, and for the study and preservation of the specimens of organic life.

“ The President and Council hope that, in the event of their recommendation being adopted, it may be possible for the Expedition to leave England some time in the year 1872; and they would suggest that as its organization will require much time and labour, no time should be lost in the commencement of preparations.

“ The President and Council desire to take this opportunity of expressing their readiness to render every assistance in their power to such an undertaking; to advise upon (1) the route which might be followed by the Expedition, (2) the scientific equipment, (3) the composition of the scientific staff, (4) the instructions for that staff; as well as upon any matter connected with the Expedition upon which their Lordships might desire their opinion.

“ The President and Council have abstained from any allusion to geographical discovery or hydrographical investigations, for which the proposed Expedition will doubtless afford abundant opportunity, because their Lordships will doubtless be better judges of what may be conveniently undertaken in these respects, without departing materially from the primary objects of the voyage; and they would only add their hope that in accordance with the precedents followed by this and other countries under somewhat similar circumstances, a full account of the voyage and its scientific results may be published under the auspices of the Government as soon after its return as convenient, the necessary expense being defrayed by a grant from the Treasury.

“ The President and Council desire, in conclusion, to express their willingness to assist in the preparation for such publication of the scientific results.

“ I remain, &c.”¹

It is unnecessary to describe the cruises of the United States ship “Tuscarora,” of the German ship “Gazelle,” or the yearly expeditions of the Norwegian Government in the North Atlantic, for these belong to the same period as that of the Challenger. Nor is it necessary to do more than refer to the still more recent cruises of the “Knight

¹ For continuation of this correspondence, see Appendix A. to Chapter I.