

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

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THE Challenger Expedition was organised by the British Government during the years 1871 and 1872 at the suggestion of the Royal Society. The ship was fitted out under the direction of Admiral G. H. Richards, at that time Hydrographer of the Admiralty, and she sailed from Sheerness in December 1872.

The special object of the Expedition was the scientific exploration of the physical, chemical, geological, and biological conditions of the great ocean basins. In addition to a full complement of specially selected Naval Officers, the Expedition comprised a scientific staff of six civilians, under the direction of Professor C. Wyville Thomson.

After circumnavigating the globe, and carrying on deep-sea and other investigations in many regions of the ocean, the Challenger returned to England in May 1876, and the crew was paid off after the ship had been in commission for over three years and seven months.

Numerous scientific observations were successfully recorded in all branches of oceanic research. Large zoological and other collections were sent home from various ports during the voyage, and were brought home in the ship. Soon after the return of the Expedition considerable correspondence took place between the authorities at the Admiralty, the Treasury, the British Museum, and the Royal Society, with reference to the disposal of the collections, the best way of discussing the observations and the method of publishing the scientific results of the Expedition. It was ultimately decided that the land and other incidental collections made by members of the Expedition during the voyage should be at once handed over to the British Museum for incorporation in the national collections. It was further determined that the records of the various observations and the marine collections should remain in the meantime in the hands of those who had taken part in the