

Sydney, December 2d, 1839.

SIR,—

The undersigned, naval officers and naturalists, attached to the Expedition under your command, are prompted by sincere zeal in the public service, and a most disinterested desire to promote the important objects of the cruise, to submit to your indulgent consideration the following proposition :

We are induced to think that an English brig lately arrived in this harbour, and, in our judgment, very well adapted for such a service, may be purchased at a reasonable rate ; and that, while the rest of the squadron proceeds on the southern tour, we may be advantageously employed in the survey and examination of many interesting and important islands. We, therefore, respectfully suggest the employment of this or a similar vessel, and volunteer our best endeavours to perform to the spirit such duties as you may conclude to assign to us during your absence in the south ; and we beg you to accept our assurance, that, in case of your consent, no exertion shall be spared to justify this proposal, and recommend our temporary service to your highest consideration. Very respectfully.

WM. M. WALKER,*

JAMES ALDEN,

Lieutenants.

J. C. PALMER,

Acting-Surgeon.

WM. REYNOLDS,

SIMON F. BLUNT,

Passed Midshipmen.

T. R. PEALE,

WM. RICH,

JAMES D. DANA,

H. HALE,

ALFRED T. AGATE,

Scientific Corps

NOTE.—No notice was taken of this letter : it being one of the official communications of the cruise, has caused me to insert it.

CHARLES WILKES.

U. S. Ship Vincennes,

December 2d, 1839.

IN declining to sign the accompanying paper I do not wish to have it understood that I disapprove of the proposition in the main. If the commander of the Expedition should find that it better suited his convenience to charter a vessel to convey us to a rendezvous, and for other purposes, I should not conceive that I had a voice in the matter ; but a direct proposition having already been made (with which I have

* Mr. Walker begs leave to disavow any thought of promotion on the projected service, and, in anticipation, begs respectfully, but most earnestly, to decline any acting appointment.