

SHIP " RATTLE SNAKE."

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 27 April 1853 :—for,

COPIES or EXTRACTS " of any MINUTES or other DOCUMENTS connected with the Selection by the late Board of Admiralty of the Ship ' Rattlesnake,' in preference to a Steamer, for the purpose of endeavouring to communicate with the ' Plover :' "

" And, COPIES of INSTRUCTIONS given by the Board of Admiralty to the Captain of the ' Rattlesnake.' "

Admiralty, }
3 May 1853. }

J. H. HAY,
Chief Clerk.

COPIES or EXTRACTS of any MINUTES or other DOCUMENTS connected with the Selection by the late Board of Admiralty of the Ship " Rattlesnake," in preference to a Steamer, for the purpose of endeavouring to communicate with the " Plover."

There are no such Papers.

COPIES of INSTRUCTIONS given by the Board of Admiralty to the Captain of the " Rattlesnake."

By the Commissioners for Executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

WHEREAS it is necessary to replenish Her Majesty's Sloop " Plover," now in position at Point Barrow, Bhering Strait, with stores and provisions, as well for the future supply of that vessel, as for the purpose of meeting the wants of the crews of the " Enterprise" and " Investigator," should those ships be driven back upon Bhering Strait, or should circumstances have rendered it imperatively necessary for the crews to abandon them, a course stated by Commander M'Clure (in a letter, dated 20 July 1850, to Captain Kellet), " he might be compelled to adopt after the winter of 1852, by proceeding in the spring of 1853 to quit his vessel with sledges and boats, and make the best of his way to Ponds Bay, Leopold Harbour, the Mackenzie River, or for whalers, according to circumstances.

With the view, therefore, of conveying assistance to the ships at Bhering Strait, we have appropriated the " Rattlesnake" for this service, and we have appointed you to the command of that ship, with a full reliance on your acquaintance with all that is necessary for carrying out the same, and on your personal knowledge of the coast on which you are to be employed. In furtherance of this object, you are hereby required and directed to put to sea so soon as the " Rattlesnake" shall be in all respects ready, and to use every exertion to be off Cape Lisburne, Bhering Strait, at as early a period of this year as possible. In order to aid in this purpose, a steamer will be directed to tow you clear of the Channel, and you will, after watering, if necessary, at Madeira, Teneriffe, or Cape de Verdes, proceed direct to Cape Virgins, on the eastern side of the Strait of Magellan, where a steamer will meet you from Rear Admiral Henderson's Squadron, and will tow you through the Straits, and as much further on your voyage as circumstances will admit. You will then proceed to Valparaiso and replenish with provisions and other stores, and from thence continue your voyage to Honolulu, in the Sandwich Islands; and, having taken on board whatever may be required, especially potatoes and other vegetables for your own ship, as well as the " Plover," you will, without any unnecessary delay at that port,

proceed direct for Clarence Harbour, in order to ascertain if any party, or later intelligence from the "Plover," shall have arrived there; and failing this, you will use your best endeavours to proceed with the "Rattlesnake" to Cape Lisburne, where you will probably meet with the officer and boat's crew of the "Plover," which Commander Maguire, in his letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty, No. 38, of the 20th August last, states will be at that point on the 15th July 1853.

15 February 1853.

You will deliver to this officer the accompanying despatch for Commander Maguire, and of which you have a copy, together with a copy of your own orders, and supplying him with what his boat can carry, and may most desire, making sure of your return with the "Rattlesnake" to Grantley Harbour, Port Clarence, before the season of 1853 is too far advanced.

Your ship is in all respects fitted and provided for the service upon which you are employed, and you are well acquainted with all that is necessary on such occasions for the health of those under your orders, and for the security of Her Majesty's ship. You will employ your people as far as is practicable in the winter months, in the preparations necessary for every operation in the spring, or so soon as the opening of the ice will admit of carrying supplies to Commander Maguire, or to other points, as circumstances may determine.

You will take every means of leaving proper records of your condition and intended proceedings, and of the positions where you may have deposited provisions; taking as your guide for the distinctive mark of such records, the instructions contained in par. 7 of our orders to Sir E. Belcher, and Sir E. Belcher's direction in his letter to the Lords of the Admiralty of 29th May 1852, in furtherance of these orders. And you will also convey every information to us by the whale ships which pass through the Strait on their return to the respective countries to which they belong; you are not to confine your communications to one ship alone, but by every opportunity to keep us informed of every circumstance connected with your own ship, and also the "Plover."

In the summer of 1854 a vessel will be despatched from the Pacific squadron to communicate with Clarence Harbour at as early a period as possible, and by that means you will receive instructions as to your future proceedings, which may depend on the information which may reach England from Sir Edward Belcher, or from the Western Coast; but should, from any unforeseen circumstance, no vessel be able to reach Clarence Harbour, it is our wish, that before the close of the season of 1854 you should deposit your spare provisions and stores, with a boat, at your winter quarters, and then proceed to Honolulu, and there wait our further orders; and in anticipation of such departure, it would appear to be necessary that, during the winter of 1853 and spring of 1854, you should construct a house at Clarence Harbour capable of containing about 70 persons, and made as complete as circumstances will admit, for the shelter of any of Captain Collinson's Expedition, should they have left their ships, either in boats or by land, and fall back upon that place.

It will be advisable, in the spring of 1854, to forward travelling parties towards the northern shore, for the purpose of inquiring whether anything can be traced of Captain Collinson's party, or of any men from the "Plover;" and as you will receive considerable assistance in this object from the Indians, whose settlements are in the vicinity of your winter quarters, you are to cultivate their good feelings by every means in your power, and to take care that no cause of offence be given to them; and for all supplies of provisions which their hunting parties may procure, you are always to pay in a liberal and proper manner.

You are supplied with all documents and papers connected with the various Polar Searches; and, in closing these orders, we have to express our confidence in your ability, and to leave you to act in such manner as will best fulfil our intentions.

Given under our hands this 9th February 1853.

(signed) *J. R. G. Graham.*
Hyde Parker.
M. F. F. Berkeley.

To Henry Trollope, Esq.
Commander of H. M. S. "Rattlesnake,"
at Portsmouth.

By Command of their Lordships,
W. A. B. Hamilton.

Sir,

Admiralty, 15 February 1853.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to signify their direction to you to use your own discretion as to quitting your present quarters after the receipt of this, and endeavouring to secure the "Plover" for the winter in Grantley Harbour; but should you deem it prudent to remain where you are for the ensuing winter, my Lords desire you will use your utmost endeavours, as soon as the season will permit in 1854, to reach the winter quarters of the "Rattlesnake" in Grantley Harbour, so as to effect a junction with that ship in time to make the necessary exchanges between the two crews, and receive the needful supplies, before the "Rattlesnake" shall have been compelled to quit Bhering Strait in the autumn of 1854, on her return to this country.

2. In the event of your remaining this winter in Moore Harbour, you are to employ yourself in depositing all the supplies you can spare for the relief of any party that might reach that neighbourhood from Captain Collinson's or Commander M'Clure's ship. You will also extend your parties right and left along the shore, and in such direction as may be advisable, as far as may be prudent, in order to deposit notices of your proceedings and intentions, and of the store of supplies left at Moore Harbour.

3. Before quitting Moore Harbour, you will erect such house or place of shelter for any arriving party as your means will permit; and even if you should be unable to move the "Plover" round to Grantley Harbour, you and your people are at all events to make good your retreat to the quarters to be provided in that Harbour by Commander Trollope.

4. For directions as to the course to be adopted in depositing notices of your intentions, and of the supplies left in Moore Harbour, their Lordships refer you to their instructions to Sir Edward Belcher, and to the further remarks on that subject contained in Sir Edward Belcher's letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty, of the 29th May last, from Whale Fish Islands.

I am, &c.

(signed) *W. A. B. Hamilton.*

Commander Maguire,
H. M. Discovery Ship, "Plover,"
Moore Harbour, Point Barrow,
or to any Officers of the "Plover," at Cape Lisburne.

SHIP "RATTLESNAKE."

COPIES of INSTRUCTIONS given by the Board of
Admiralty to the Captain of the "Rattlesnake."

(Mr. Vernon.)

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
4 May 1853.*
