

The Oregon Statesman.

THE KEARSE AND THE ALABAMA.

An American Account of the Fight.

(Correspondence of the New York Herald.)
CHEROKEE, June 21.—A little after ten o'clock on this beautiful, bright morning, Sabbath morning, the Kearsage, then lying about four miles off the port, the Alabama was discovered steaming towards her, through what is known as the "Eastern Passage." The men were in high spirits, and to quarters, and every man sprang to his place, eager for the commencement of the fray.

In order to put beyond the shadow of a doubt any question about a violation of neutral territory, Captain Winslow, immediately upon discovering the Alabama, headed his vessel out to sea, and steamed away from the port until he had reached a distance of about seven miles. The Alabama following in her wake, at a distance of about a mile and a half, the rebel flag, as soon as it struck, flaunting saucily in the breeze of morning.

After reaching an offing of about seven miles the Kearsage slackened speed and turned her port side toward the Alabama slowly, allowing the latter to approach her. While bringing her port side to bear upon the Alabama, for the purpose of fighting the battle on that side, the Kearsage, reserving her fire, and a deathlike silence prevailing on board, permitted the Alabama to approach within a distance of twelve hundred yards. The Kearsage had five guns with which she fought the battle, mounted on the port side, her crew not being sufficiently large to work the whole seven guns on one side.

When the Alabama had arrived within the distance above mentioned, she opened the combat with a broadside fired at the Kearsage.—The Alabama fought seven of her guns—two more than were used by the Kearsage, and she was not struck on the Alabama side. She struck the Kearsage, one or two passing over the top of the latter, and the other two striking the Kearsage, and the wicked, whizzing sound which the shot made in passing through the air, however, excited the men, who were anxious to return shot for shot. Captain Winslow, however, deemed it wise to allow his antagonist, evidently flushed with the hope of a speedy and an easy victory, to approach still nearer. The Alabama, still approaching slowly, fired a second and a third broadside, none of the shots however, taking effect, before the Kearsage returned a shot.

When the proper distance seemed to be obtained, Captain Winslow opened his batteries upon the rebel, and poured broadside after broadside into her as rapidly as the guns could load and fire. A lively scene was now exhibited. The moment it was known that the Alabama was leaving port, the people of the town, who for some days had been on the beach, began to flock toward the entrance to the port and before the first gun was fired hundreds were gazing from the high cliffs and eminences which surround the port. The first sound of cannon shot, distinctly heard in this town, brought out all who had been waiting for a certainty, and a crowd of excursionists, having just arrived from Paris, without the most remote idea that one of the prettiest contests of the age was to be thrown in for their amusement.

In a few moments thousands of people had gathered upon the hill-tops looking out upon the open sea, where the contestants were engaged in deadly strife. All the military and naval authorities of the port were assembled there, with spy-glasses in their hands, and witnessed the fight with great satisfaction. Even with the naked eye the combat could be distinctly observed; for the day was particularly bright and clear. After the Kearsage opened her batteries on the Alabama, a rapid and continuous fire was kept up on both sides. Each vessel, of course, kept her steam up, and each sailing in a circle in a direction opposite to the other, keeping the starboard battery bearing upon her antagonist.

Spectators describe the maneuvering of both vessels as beautiful. They continued approaching each other until, toward the end of the fight, a distance of about five hundred yards separated them. The Alabama fired much more frequently than the Kearsage, and was much more of powder than the latter. Generally her shots were badly aimed, wild and high. Evidently her force was to attack and awe into surrender unarmed merchant vessels, but from the first the firing from her showed that she was not competent to grapple with the trained and disciplined crew of a vessel of war. Many shots, however, struck and cut the rigging of the Kearsage, without inflicting, however, any serious damage—the shrill whistle of every shot, as it flew over their heads, exciting the crew of the Kearsage, and rendering them more than ever determined to conquer.

The fight continued at twenty minutes past ten o'clock, and lasted just one hour and five minutes. During this time four shots lodged in the hull of the Kearsage. Eight shots in all struck her hull. One rifle shot passed entirely through her starboard side, below the main rigging, near the sheer plank, bearing and wounding three men, causing the only casualties to the crew of the Kearsage. The other shots were of no account. One of these men, a man named Donnelly, had his arm taken off, and the others received fractures of the legs. Another rifle struck under the stern and lodged in the rudder post without exploding; another carried away the starboard life-boat; another scattered the hammock-netting off. Three thirty-two pound shot passed the port-side, opposite the ward-room hatch. Another carried away one of the cranes above the ward-room hatch, and taking a slanting direction, struck the mainmast, the bottom of the cat on the port side. Another rifle-shot struck the top of the engine-room skylight, cutting clear across it as a saw, and finally passed through the skylight window. Several struck the starboard light, but their force was broken by chains hung on the side to cover and protect the battery. These, therefore, caused no damage. Shots were continually whizzing through the rigging like hailstones, and it seems almost a miracle that more casualties did not occur.

The first shot noticed as producing any effect upon the Alabama struck her amidships, but in her upper works, making a perceptible gap, but doing little or no serious damage. About half-way through the fight an eleven inch shell exploded on the Alabama's deck, near one of the divisions, killing 15 out of the 19 men, and scattering bones and flesh in all directions, cutting one man entirely in two.

One of the Alabama's crew said that the Kearsage literally "ran him down." Third Lieutenant Winslow also says that he was knocked down four times, but escaped without a wound. From the deck of the Kearsage it could be plainly seen that her effective and destructive fire was seriously injuring the Alabama, and at each shot struck her sides loud cheers went up from the crew of the Kearsage, more than ever enthusiastic by a speedy prospect of success. During the entire fight the men (whose first danger of fire this was) acted with the greatest coolness and determined courage.

One hundred and seventy-four rounds were fired during the fight from the Kearsage, and it is computed that the Alabama fired at least twice that number. At a quarter past 11 it was observed that Capt. Semmes had altered his opinion in relation to the skill and prowess of his Yankee antagonist, and arrived at the conclusion that "discretion was the better part of valor," had, in short, as our amiable President once elegantly expressed it, decided to "turn tail and run." He reversed round and fired in the direction of the French coast, evidently desirous of placing himself as speedily as possible within the limits of the "marine league" which marks the boundary between French territory and the common ocean.

The Kearsage immediately followed the Alabama continuing to fire her stern gun. Finding that the speed of the Kearsage, who was rapidly gaining on her, was superior to hers, the Alabama slackened speed, and it was reported that she had struck her flag and seemed to be settling; but her boats were not lowered, because, as was afterwards learned, they had been so badly shaken by the shot from the Kearsage, no white flag being sent up from the Kearsage, she delivered another final broadside, which did more damage than all the pre-

vious ones. The white flag was run up from the Alabama, and a boat from her approached the Kearsage.—The firing then ceased. The boat was under the command of an English officer, belonging to the Alabama, who informed Capt. Winslow that the latter was in a sinking condition, and asked for boats to rescue the crew. A single cable boat of the Kearsage was now lowered, and manned; but before a single one could reach her the Alabama went down—down clear and straight to the bottom of the ocean. She was at this time about six miles outside the port, and about five hundred yards distant from the Kearsage. The men, as she was sinking, jumped overboard. Many were doubtless drowned—how many is not yet known. She had about the same sized crew as the Kearsage, and several of the Alabama were saved by the available boats of the Alabama and taken from the water by those of the Kearsage. Fifteen of those who were wounded. Two of these died after being rescued, and the carpenter of the Alabama, one Robinson, was picked up dead and perfectly unharmed.

A new character now appeared on the scene. An English yacht steamer, belonging to the Royal Navy, and named the *Albatross*, owned by a gentleman in Liverpool, came in sight of the Kearsage immediately upon the disappearance of the Alabama. It seems she had been at anchor during the early part of the action, but toward its close weighed anchor and steamed away outside of the Kearsage, afterward passing under her stern. Captain Winslow hailed her and asked her assistance in rescuing the drowning men of the Alabama. She proceeded toward them, lowered her boats, which were sent to pick up a few men, and then without approaching the Kearsage again steamed away, and spreading her canvass headed towards the English coast.

A few scattering men were picked up by some French pilot and fishing boats and taken into Cherbourg. After saving all the men she could find, the Kearsage took a pilot and came into Cherbourg, arriving here about two o'clock, without, it is believed, any serious damage, although it will require her some weeks, probably to repair.

I met Captain Winslow last evening, in company with the surgeon and Purser Smith, at the American Consular Agent. I am greatly indebted to these gentlemen, and particularly to the purser, who has sat up with me nearly all night detailing the particulars which I have given you. The officers are of course all in high spirits. Captain Winslow is a brave man, and a very brave one, and determined. In response to "God bless you," you have made yourself immortal," he simply replied that he was glad to have been the instrument in riding the ocean and the world of such a pest as the Alabama. He is a short, thick-set, good-natured looking man of about fifty, and is looked upon by the people here as a great hero.

Thus ended, with the destruction of the Alabama, one of the most interesting naval battles which has occurred during this war. Let the country rejoice and render homage to the gallant fellows who so gallantly fought and won it.

CHARACTER OF GEN. GRANT.
Grant is a brave man, not only fearless in all necessary exposure of his person in battle, but cool, calculating, and a very astute politician. A splendid tactician, and a great personal endorser, perhaps he is seen to best advantage on the field of battle directing the movements.

He is a true man; true in his aims, and in his adherence to them; true in speech and in act. He has no tortuous policy, no subterranean maneuvers. He does not parade his thoughts, indeed, he does not mean one thing and say another. He has no talking gift, and he cuts no white ruffles, and he is not the least of a philosopher declared to be divine. He is no boaster, no temperer, no dreamer; he builds no Arcadian castles. He is simply a straightforwarder; between his thoughts, words and deeds there is an exact correspondence; and very often the thought and deeds dispense with the words—always, when possible.

He is a man of strong will and great mental endurance, not disheartened by disaster, always ready to retrieve it, and to make an especial advantage of it. He is a man of great energy, and a great personal endorser, perhaps he is seen to best advantage on the field of battle directing the movements.

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