

CRUISE AND COMBATS OF THE "ALABAMA."

BY HER EXECUTIVE OFFICER.



THE *Alabama* was built by the Lairds, of Birkenhead, England, for the Confederate States Government, and in violation of no law. In the House of Commons the senior partner of the constructors stated "that she left Liverpool a perfectly legitimate transaction." Captain James D. Bulloch, as agent for the Confederacy, superintended her construction. As a "ruse" she was sent on a trial trip,

with a large party of ladies and gentlemen. A tug met the ship in the channel, and took off the guests, while the two hundred and ninetieth ship built in the Laird yard proceeded on her voyage to the island of Terceira, among the Azores, whither a transport had preceded her with war material. Captain Raphael Semmes, with his officers, carried by the *Bahama*, met her there. Under the lee of the island, outside the marine league, we lashed our ships together, and made the transfer of armament and stores.

Arriving on Wednesday, August 20th, 1862, by Saturday night we had completed the transfer, and on Sunday morning, under a cloudless sky, upon the broad Atlantic, a common heritage, we put in commission the *Alabama*, by authority of the Confederate States Government. Thus empowered, we proceeded to ship such men from the crews of the several ships as were willing to sign the articles. Eighty men signed, and these formed the nucleus of our crew, the full complement being soon made up from the crews of our prizes. From the above date we commenced our cruise of twenty-two months, which was the most successful accomplishment of the work for which she was constructed of any single ship of any nation in any age.

The *Alabama* was built for speed rather than battle. Her lines were symmetrical and

fine; her material of the best. In fifteen minutes her propeller could be hoisted, and she could go through every evolution under sail without any impediment. In less time her propeller could be lowered; with sails furled, and yards braced within two points of a headwind, she was a perfect steamer. Her speed, independent, was from ten to twelve knots; combined, and under favorable circumstances, she could make fifteen knots. When ready for sea she drew fifteen feet of water. She was barkentine-rigged, with long lower masts, which enabled her to carry an immense spread of lower canvas, and to lay close to the wind. Her engines were three hundred horse-power, with a condensing apparatus that was indispensable. Since we lived principally upon provisions taken from our prizes, their water-supply was never sufficient. Our condenser enabled us to keep the sea for long periods, we having to seek a port only for coals.

Our armament consisted of eight guns: one Blakely hundred-pounder rifled gun, pivoted forward; one eight-inch solid-shot gun, pivoted abaft the mainmast; and six thirty-two pounders in broadside. Our crew numbered about one hundred and twenty men and twenty-four officers. Captain Semmes, an officer of high standing in the old navy, had studied law, paying particular attention to the international branch, and was admitted to the bar in Alabama, of which State he was a citizen. Thus he was eminently qualified for the position he was now called upon to assume. During the Mexican war he commanded the brig *Somers* in the blockade of Vera Cruz, and lost that unfortunate vessel in chase, during a norther, and narrowly escaped drowning. He afterwards accompanied the army to the city of Mexico, ever foremost in the path of duty and daring heroism. The writer, his executive officer, had served twenty years in the old navy, and had had the good fortune to accompany every expedition of a warlike nature fitted out by the United States during that period. In the Mexican war, on the coast of California, I served ashore and afloat; then with the gallant Commodore Perry, in his expedition to Japan, and again in the Paraguay expedition. Our second lieutenant, R. F. Armstrong, from Georgia, and third lieutenant, J. D. Wilson, from Florida, came out with us in the *Sumter*.



REAR-ADMIRAL RAPHAEL SEMMES, CAPTAIN OF THE "ALABAMA."
 (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH IN POSSESSION OF MRS. J. MCINTOSH KELL; TAKEN IN ENGLAND AFTER THE LOSS OF HIS SHIP.)

They were just from Annapolis, each having resigned on the secession of their respective States. Both the father and grandfather of our fourth lieutenant, Arthur Sinclair, Jr., of Virginia, had been captains in the United States Navy. Our fifth lieutenant, John Lowe, of Georgia, had seen some service, and was a most efficient officer; our Acting Master I. D. Bulloch, of Georgia, was a younger brother of Captain James D. Bulloch. It will thus be

seen that the watch-officers of the ward-room were not ordinary material. A few months' experience in active service gave them confidence, and it may safely be affirmed that older heads could not have filled their places with greater efficiency. The remainder of our ward-room mess was made up of our surgeon, Dr. F. L. Galt, of Virginia, also of the old service; Dr. D. H. Llewellyn, of Wiltshire, England, who, as surgeon, came out in the ship when

under English colors, and joined us as assistant surgeon. First Lieutenant B. K. Howell, of the Marine Corps, brother-in-law to President Davis, was from Mississippi, and Mr. Miles J. Freeman, our chief engineer, had been with us in the *Sumter*. The steerage mess was made up of three midshipmen — E. M. Anderson of Georgia; E. A. Maffit of North Carolina, the son of the captain of the Confederate States steamer *Florida*; and George T. Sinclair of Virginia. The latter was afterwards detached from the *Alabama*, and made executive officer to Lieutenant Lowe on the *Tuscaloosa*, a tender that we commissioned. The *Tuscaloosa* had been the bark *Conrad* of Philadelphia, captured by us June 21, 1863. Upon our arrival at Cherbourg, Sinclair came at once to join his old ship, having heard of the contemplated engagement. Accompanying him came also Lieutenant William C. Whittle, Jr., of Virginia, a gallant young son of Commodore W. C. Whittle of the old navy, and Lieutenant John Grimball, a South Carolinian, offering their services for any position during the engagement. They were not permitted to join us, on the ground that it would be a violation of French neutrality. The remainder of the steerage mess was made up of young master's mates and engineers, most of whom had come out with us in the *Sumter*.

The eleventh day after going into commission we captured our first prize, not one hundred miles from where we hoisted our flag. After working round the Azores for some weeks, with fine breezes, we shaped our course for Sandy Hook. But we encountered frequent gales off the Newfoundland banks, and on the 16th of October lost our main-yard in a cyclone. Being considerably shaken up, we decided to seek a milder latitude. Running down to the Windward Islands, we entered the Caribbean Sea. Our prizes gave us regularly the mails from the United States, from which we gathered the fitting out of the army under General Banks for the attack on Galveston and the invasion of Texas, and the day on which the fleet would sail. Whereupon, Captain Semmes calculated about the time they would arrive, and shaped his course accordingly, coaling and refitting ship at the Arcas Keys. He informed me of his plan of attack, which was to sight the shipping off Galveston about the time that General Banks was due with his large fleet of transports, under the convoy perhaps of a few vessels of war. The entire fleet would anchor in the outer roadstead, as there is only sufficient water on the bar for light-drafts. All attention at such a time would be given to the disembarkation of the army, as there were no enemy's cruisers to molest them; our presence in

the Gulf was not even known. We were to take the bearing of the fleet, and after the mid watch was set and all quieted down, we would silently steam among them with both batteries in action, slowly steam through their midst, pouring in a continuous discharge of shell to fire and sink as we went, and before the convoys could move we expected to accomplish our work and be off on another cruise.

But instead of sighting General Banks's fleet of transports we sighted five vessels of war at anchor, and soon after, our lookout reported a steamer standing out for us. We were then under topsails, only, with a light breeze, heading off shore, and gradually drawing our pursuer from the squadron. About dark she came up with us, and in an action of thirteen minutes we had sunk the *Hatteras*! She carried a larger crew than our own, and every living man on board of her was saved. General Banks, as it proved, had gone up the Mississippi with his fleet of transports. Knowing that the squadron would soon be upon us, every light on board ship was put under cover and we shaped our course for broader waters. During the night one of those fearful northerers came sweeping after us, and under the circumstances was a welcome gale. Hoisting our propeller, we crowded all the sail she could bear, and soon were out of harm's way. As Captain Blake of the *Hatteras* (whom I had known in the old service) came on deck, he remarked upon the speed we were making, and gracefully saluted me with, "Fortune favors the brave, sir!" I wished him a pleasant voyage with us; and I am sure he, with his officers and men, received every attention while on board the *Alabama*.

We paroled them at Kingston, Jamaica, and after repairing a few shot-holes and coaling ship, we passed on to our work in the South Atlantic, taking our position at the cross-roads of the homeward-bound East India and Pacific trade, as pointed out by Commodore Matthew F. Maury, whose wind and current charts have marked the highways of commerce on the ocean as plainly as do the mile-posts on our public roads. After a few weeks of good work in that locality and along the coast of Brazil, we crossed over to the Cape of Good Hope, where we played "hide and seek" with the United States steamer *Vanderbilt*, whose commander, Captain Baldwin, had generously explained to Sir Baldwin Walker, the English admiral of the station at Simon's Town, "that he did not intend to fire a gun at the *Alabama*, but to run her down and sink her." We were not disposed to try issues with the *Vanderbilt*; so one night about eleven o'clock, while it blew a gale of wind from the south-east, we hove anchor

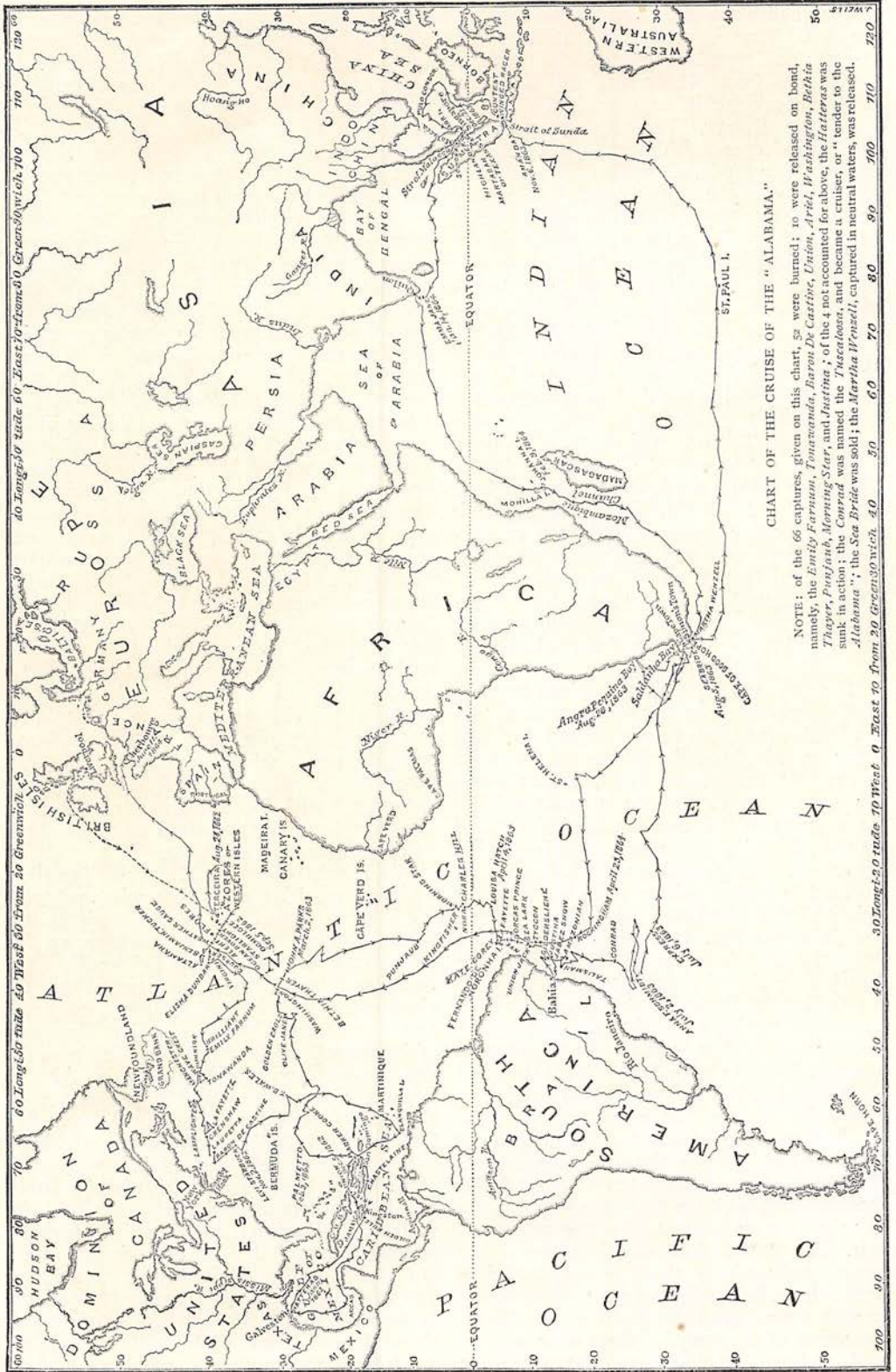


CHART OF THE CRUISE OF THE "ALABAMA."

NOTE: of the 66 captures, given on this chart, 52 were burned; 10 were released on board, namely, the *Emily Ferguson*, *Toussaint*, *Baron De Caesbire*, *Union*, *Ariel*, *Washington*, *Bertha*, *Thayer*, *Playfair*, *Morris Star*, and *Merline*; of the 1 not accounted for above, the *Flatterus* was sunk in action; *Conrad* was named the *Tacaloon*, and became a cruiser, or "tender to the *Alabama*"; the *Sea Bride* was sold; the *Martha Wenzel*, captured in neutral waters, was released.

and steamed out of Simon's Bay. By morning we had made a good offing, and, setting what sail she could carry, hoisted our propeller and made a due south course. We ran down to the fortieth degree south latitude, where we fell in with westerly gales and bowled along nearly due east, until we shaped our course for the Straits of Java. Our long stretch across the Indian Ocean placed us in the China Sea, where we were least expected, and where we soon fell in with the China trade. In a few weeks we had so paralyzed the enemy's commerce that their ships were absolutely locked up in port, and neutrals doing all the carrying trade. Having thus virtually cleared the sea of the United States flag, we ran down to Singapore, coaled ship, and then turned westward through the Straits of Malacca, across to India, thence to the east coast of Africa. Passing through the Mozambique channel, we again touched in at the Cape of Good Hope, and thence crossed to the coast of Brazil.

Among the many prizes we captured and destroyed, we necessarily saw many varieties of the *genus homo* in the guise of the Yankee skipper. While taking the burning of their ships very philosophically as among the fortunes of war, some clung to "creature comforts" regardless of heavier losses. Upon one occasion, going aboard a fine ship, I told the captain "he might bring away his personal effects." He made a most ludicrous scene by earnestly appealing to me "to grant him one request," that he "might be permitted to take with him 'Spurgeon's Sermons' and a keg of very fine whisky." The sermons I granted, but told him the whisky must go overboard. The prisoners on board of the *Alabama* as a general practice were *not* put in irons, but were simply confined to an allotted space with a guard over them. The prisoners of the first half-dozen prizes taken were put in irons, including the captains and mates, at which the captains were very indignant, and remonstrated with Captain Semmes that their position should entitle them to different treatment. Captain Semmes replied that he confined them in irons in retaliation for the manner in which the agents of the U. S. Government had treated the purser of the C. S. steamer *Sumter*. The purser, under orders, was *en route* from Gibraltar to Cadiz in a French merchant steamer. Stopping at Tangier to put off and take on passengers and cargo, the purser walked on shore, and was there, in a neutral country, seized by the U. S. consul at the head of an armed force of Moorish soldiers, and brutally imprisoned, with heavy manacles. From there he was taken in irons by the U. S. armed vessel *Ino*,

and finally sent to New York in irons. The purser was a gentleman of unimpeachable character and high position. Again, there were occasions during the cruise when the number of prisoners warranted placing some in irons, but never were captains put in irons after that first measure of retaliation.

Our little ship was now showing signs of the active work she had been doing. Her boilers were burned out, and her machinery sadly in want of repairs. She was loose at every joint, her seams were open, and the copper on her bottom was in rolls. Captain Semmes decided to seek a port in Europe, and to go into dock.

One pleasant day, on the coast of Brazil, we captured a prize, and Captain Semmes said to me, "We will make a target of her. Up to this time we have carried out the instructions of the Department, destroying the enemy's commerce and driving it from every sea we have visited, while avoiding their cruisers. Should we now fall in with a cruiser not too heavy for us, we will give her battle." I at once called all hands to general quarters, and, taking convenient distance from our prize, practiced principally with shell to see the effect. Many of our fuses proved defective. Upon visiting the target I found that one of the hundred-pound shells had exploded on the quarter-deck, and I counted fifteen marks from its missiles, which justifies me in asserting that had the hundred-pound shell which we placed in the stern-post of the *Kearsarge* exploded, it would have changed the result of the fight. I at once examined every fuse and cap, discarding the apparently defective, and at the same time made a thorough overhauling of the magazine, as I thought, but the action with the *Kearsarge* proved that our entire supply of powder was damaged. The report from the *Kearsarge's* battery was clear and sharp, the powder burning like thin vapor, while our guns gave out a dull report, with thick and heavy vapor.

We now set our course for Europe, and on the 11th day of June, 1864, entered the port of Cherbourg, and at once applied for permission to go into dock. There being none but national docks, the Emperor had first to be communicated with before permission could be granted, and he was absent from Paris. It was during this interval of waiting, on the third day after our arrival, that the *Kearsarge* steamed into the harbor, for the purpose, as we learned, of taking on board the prisoners we had landed from our two last prizes. Captain Semmes, however, objected to this on the ground that the *Kearsarge* was adding to her crew in a neutral port. The



A CLIPPER ESCAPING FROM THE "ALABAMA" (SEE PAGE 907.)

authorities conceding this objection valid, the *Kearsarge* steamed out of the harbor, without anchoring. During her stay we examined her closely with our glasses, but she was keeping on the opposite side of the harbor, out of the reach of a very close scrutiny, which accounts for our not detecting the boxing to her chain

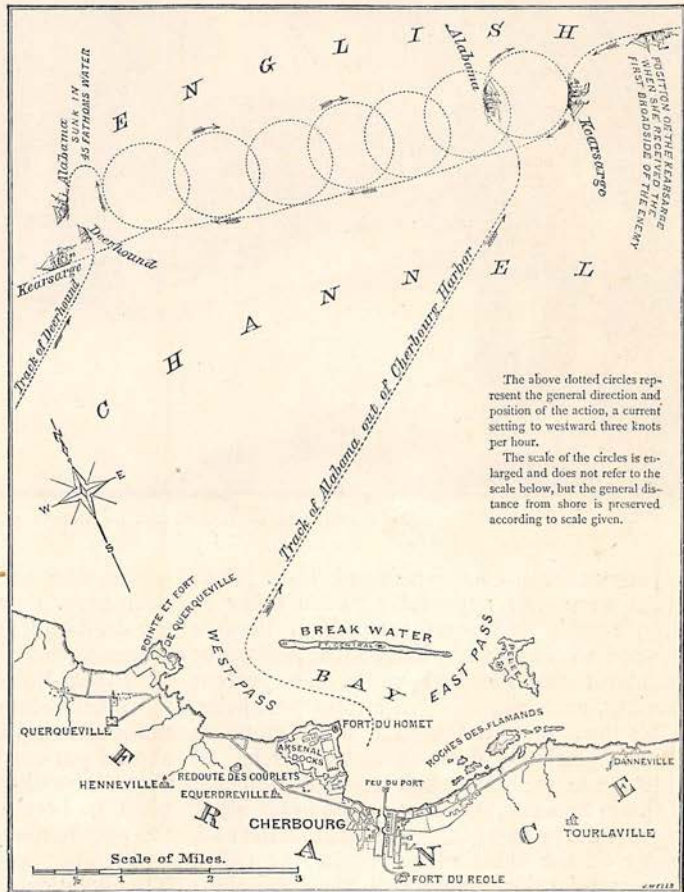
armor. After she left the harbor Captain Semmes sent for me to his cabin, and said: "I am going out to fight the *Kearsarge*; what do you think of it?" We discussed the battery and especially the advantage the *Kearsarge* had over us in her eleven-inch guns. She was built for a vessel of war, and we for

speed, and though she carried one gun less, her battery was more effective at point-blank range. While the *Alabama* carried one more gun, the *Kearsarge* threw more metal at a broadside; and while our heavy guns were more effective at a long range, her eleven-inch guns gave her greatly the advantage at close range. She also had a slight advantage in her crew, she carrying one hundred and sixty-two all told, while we carried one hundred and forty-nine. Considering well these advantages, we nevertheless decided to engage her as soon as we could coal ship.

Captain Semmes communicated through our agent to the U. S. consul that if Captain Winslow would wait outside the harbor he would fight him as soon as we could coal ship. I at once proceeded to get everything snug for action, and by Saturday night we had finished taking in coals, and had scrubbed the decks. I reported to Captain Semmes that the ship was ready for battle.

The next morning, Sunday, June 19th, between the hours of nine and ten o'clock, we weighed anchor, and stood out of the western entrance of the harbor, the French iron-clad frigate *Couronne* following us. The day was bright and beautiful, with a light breeze blowing. Our men were neatly dressed, and our officers in full uniform. The report of our going out to fight the *Kearsarge* had been circulated, and many persons from Paris and the surrounding country had come down to witness the engagement. They, with a large number of the inhabitants of Cherbourg, collected on every prominent point of the shore that would afford a view seaward. As we rounded the breakwater we discovered the *Kearsarge* about seven miles to the northward and eastward. We immediately shaped our course for her, called all hands to quarters, and cast loose the starboard battery. Upon reporting to the captain that the ship was ready for action, he directed me to send all hands aft, and mounting a gun-carriage, he made the following address:

"OFFICERS AND SEAMEN OF THE "ALABAMA": You have at length another opportunity of meeting the enemy—the first that has been presented to you since you sunk the *Hatteras*! In the mean time you have been all over the world, and it is not too much to say that you have destroyed, and driven for protection under neutral flags, one-half of the enemy's commerce, which at the beginning of the war covered every sea. This is an achievement of which you may well be proud, and a grateful country will not be unmindful of it. The name of your ship has become a household word wherever civilization extends! Shall that name be tarnished by defeat? The thing is impossible! Re-



The above dotted circles represent the general direction and position of the action, a current setting to westward three knots per hour. The scale of the circles is enlarged and does not refer to the scale below, but the general distance from shore is preserved according to scale given.

CHART OF THE ACTION.

member that you are in the English Channel, the theater of so much of the naval glory of our race, and that the eyes of all Europe are at this moment upon you. The flag that floats over you is that of a young Republic, which bids defiance to her enemy's whenever and wherever found! Show the world that you know how to uphold it! Go to your quarters."

In about forty-five minutes we were somewhat over a mile from the *Kearsarge*, when she headed for us, presenting her starboard bow. At a distance of a mile, we commenced the action with our one-hundred pounder



AN ELEVEN-INCH SHELL BURSTING ON THE "ALABAMA."

pivot-gun from our starboard bow. Both ships were now approaching each other at high speed, and soon the action became general with broadside batteries at a distance of about five hundred yards. To prevent passing, each ship used a strong port helm. Thus the action was fought around a common center, gradually drawing in the circle. At this range we used shell upon the enemy. Captain Semmes, standing on the horse-block abreast the mizzen-mast with his glass in hand, observed the effect of our shell. He called to me and said: "Mr. Kell, use solid shot; our shell strike the enemy's side and fall into the water." We were not at this time aware of the chain armor of the enemy, and attributed the failure of our shell to our defective ammunition. After using solid shot for some time, we alternated shell and shot. The enemy's eleven-inch shells were now doing severe execution upon our quarter-deck section. Three of them successively entered our eight-inch pivot-gun port: the first swept off the forward part of the gun's crew; the second killed one man and wounded several others; and the third struck the breast of the gun-carriage, and spun around on the deck, till

one of the men picked it up and threw it overboard. Our decks were now covered with the dead and the wounded, and the ship was careening heavily to starboard from the effects of the shot-holes on her water-line.

Captain Semmes ordered me to be ready to make all sail possible when the circuit of fight should put our head to the coast of France; then he would notify me at the same time to pivot to port and continue the action with the port battery, hoping thus to right the ship and enable us to reach the coast of France. The evolution was performed beautifully, righting the helm, hoisting the head-sails, hauling aft the fore try-sail sheet, and pivoting to port, the action continuing almost without cessation.

This evolution exposed us to a raking fire, but, strange to say, the *Kearsarge* did not take advantage of it. The port side of the quarter-deck was so encumbered with the mangled trunks of the dead that I had to have them thrown overboard, in order to fight the after pivot-gun. I abandoned the after thirty-two-pounder, and transferred the men to fill up the vacancies to the pivot-gun under the charge of young Midshipman Anderson, who

in the midst of the carnage filled his place like a veteran. At this moment the chief engineer came on deck and reported the fires put out, and that he could no longer work the engines. Captain Semmes said to me, "Go below, sir, and see how long the ship can float." As I entered the ward-room the sight was indeed appalling. There stood Assistant-Surgeon Llewellyn at his post, but the table and the patient upon it were swept away from him by an eleven-inch shell, which opened in the side of the ship an aperture that was fast filling the ship with water.

It took me but a moment to return to the deck and report to the captain that "we could not float ten minutes." He replied to me, "Then, sir, cease firing, shorten sail, and haul down the colors; it will never do in this nineteenth century for us to go down, and the decks covered with our gallant wounded." The order was promptly executed, after which the *Kearsarge* deliberately fired into us five shot.* I ordered the men to stand to their quarters, and not flinch from the shot of the enemy; they stood every man to his post most

* This unwarranted conduct of Captain Winslow's was evidently the result of a misapprehension on his part, which cannot be admitted as a reasonable excuse. In his letter (dated Cherbourg, June 21, 1864) to the Secretary of the Navy, he says: "Towards the close of the action between the *Alabama* and this vessel, all available sail was made on the former for the purpose of again reaching Cherbourg. When the object was apparent the *Kearsarge* was steered across the bow of the *Alabama* for a raking fire; but before reaching this point the *Alabama* struck. Uncertain whether Captain Semmes was using some ruse, the *Kearsarge* was stopped"—and continued his fire, for by his own words he thought Captain Semmes was making some ruse. The report that the *Alabama* fired her guns after the colors were down and she had shortened sail is not correct. There was a cessation in the firing of



ASSISTANT-SURGEON DAVID HERBERT LLEWELLYN.
(FROM A PORTRAIT IN THE LONDON "ILLUSTRATED NEWS.")

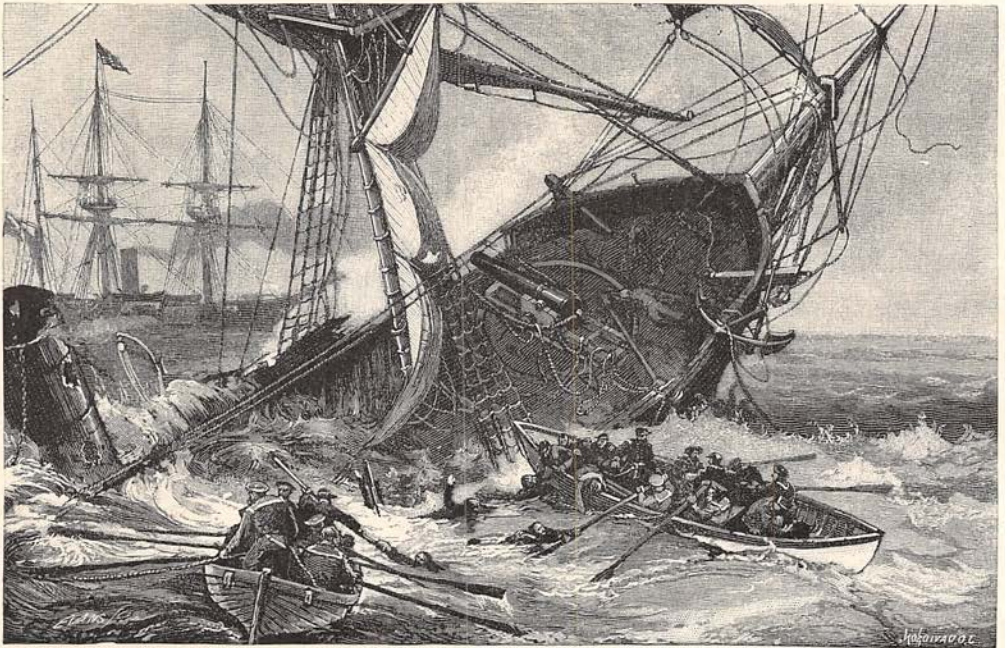
heroically. With the first shot fired upon us after our colors were down, the quartermaster was ordered to show a white flag over the stern, which order was executed in my pres-

our guns when we shifted our battery to port, after which we renewed the action. Almost immediately afterward the engineer reported the fires put out, when we ceased firing, hauled down the colors, and shortened sail. There was no gun fired from the *Alabama* after that. Captain Winslow may have thought we had surrendered when we ceased firing and were in the act of shifting the battery; but the idle report that junior officers had taken upon themselves to continue the action after the order had been given to cease firing is not worthy of notice. I did not hear after-firing, and the discipline of the *Alabama* would not have permitted it.—J. M. K.

In the letter from which Captain Kell quotes Captain Winslow does not speak of "continuing his fire." But in his detailed report (dated July 30, 1864) Captain Winslow says of the *Alabama*, after she had winded and set sail: "Her port broadside was presented to us, with only two guns bearing, not having been able, as I learned afterward, to shift over but one. I saw now that she was at our mercy, and a few more guns well directed brought down her flag. I was unable to ascertain whether it had been hauled down or shot away; but a white flag having been displayed over the stern our fire was reserved. Two minutes had not more than elapsed before she again opened on us with the two guns on the port side. This drew our fire again, and the *Kearsarge* was immediately steamed ahead and laid across her bows for raking. The white flag was still flying, and our fire was again reserved. Shortly after this her boats were seen to be lowering, and an officer in one of them came alongside and informed us the ship had surrendered and was fast sinking."—EDITOR.



RETURNING FOR THE WOUNDED.



SINKING OF THE "ALABAMA."

ence. When the firing ceased, Captain Semmes ordered me to dispatch an officer to the *Kearsarge* to say that our ship was sinking, and to ask that they send boats to save our wounded, as our boats were disabled. The dingey, our smallest boat, had escaped damage. I dispatched Master's-mate Fullam with the request. No boats appearing, I had one of our quarter boats lowered, which was slightly injured, and I ordered the wounded placed in her. Dr. Galt, the surgeon who was in charge of the magazine and shell-room division, came on deck at this moment and was at once put in charge of the boat, with orders to "take the wounded to the *Kearsarge*." They shoved off just in time to save the poor fellows from going down in the ship.

I now gave the order for "every man to jump overboard with a spar and save himself from the sinking ship." To enforce the order, I walked forward and urged the men overboard. As soon as the decks were cleared, save of the bodies of the dead, I returned to the stern-port, where stood Captain Semmes with one or two of the men and his faithful steward, who, poor fellow! was doomed to a watery grave, as he could not swim. The *Alabama's* stern-port was now almost to the water's edge. Partly undressing, we plunged into the sea, and made an offing from the sinking ship, Captain Semmes with a life-preserver and I on a grating.

The *Alabama* settled stern foremost, launch-

ing her bows high in the air. Graceful even in her death-struggle, she in a moment disappeared from the face of the waters. The sea now presented a mass of living heads, striving for their lives. Many poor fellows sank for the want of timely aid. Near me I saw a float of empty shell-boxes, and called to one of the men, a good swimmer, to examine it; he did so and replied, "It is the doctor, sir, dead." Poor Llewellyn! he perished almost in sight of his home. The young Midshipman Maffit swam to me and offered his life-preserver. My grating was not proving a very buoyant float, and the white caps breaking over my head were distressingly uncomfortable, to say the least. Maffit said: "Mr. Kell, take my life-preserver, sir; you are almost exhausted." The gallant boy did not consider his own condition, but his pallid face told me that his heroism was superior to his bodily suffering, and I refused it. After twenty minutes or more I heard near me some one call out, "There is our first lieutenant," and the next moment I was pulled into a boat, in which was Captain Semmes, stretched out in the stern-sheets, as pallid as death. He had received during the action a slight contusion on the hand, and the struggle in the water had almost exhausted him. There were also several of our crew in the boat, and in a few moments we were alongside a little steam-yacht, which had come among our floating men, and by throwing them ropes saved many lives. Upon

reaching her deck, I ascertained for the first time that she was the yacht *Deerhound*, owned by Mr. John Lancaster, of England. In looking round I saw two French pilot-boats engaged in saving our crew, and finally two boats from the *Kearsarge*. To my surprise I found on the yacht Mr. Fullam, whom I had dispatched in the dingy to ask that boats be sent to save our wounded. He reported to me that our shot had literally torn the casing from the chain armor of the *Kearsarge*, indenting the chain in many places, which explained satisfactorily Captain Semmes's observation of the effect of our shell upon the enemy, "that they struck the sides and fell into the water."

Captain Winslow, in his report, I think, states "that his ship was struck *twenty-eight* times!" and I doubt if the *Alabama* was struck a greater number of times. I may not, therefore, be bold in asserting that had not the *Kearsarge* been protected by her iron cables, the result of the fight would have been different. Captain Semmes felt the more keenly the delusion to which he fell a victim (not knowing that the *Kearsarge* was chain-clad) from the fact that he was exceeding his instructions in seeking an action with the enemy; but to seek a fight with an iron-clad he conceived to be an unpardonable error. However, he had the satisfaction of knowing she was classed as a wooden gun-boat by the Federal Government; also that he had inspected her with most excellent glasses, and so far as outward appearances showed she displayed no chain armor. At the same time it must be admitted that Captain Winslow had the right unquestionably to protect his ship and crew. In justice to Captain Semmes I will state that the battle would never have been fought had he known that the *Kearsarge* wore an armor of chain beneath her outer covering. Thus was the *Alabama* lost by an error, if you please, but, it must be admitted, a *most pardonable* one, and not until "Father Neptune" claimed her as his own did she lower her colors.

The eleven-inch shells of the *Kearsarge* did fearful work, and her guns were served beautifully, being aimed with precision, and deliberate in fire. She came into action magnificently. Having the speed of us, she took her own position and fought gallantly. But she tarnished her glory when she fired upon a fallen foe. It was high noon of a bright, beautiful day, with a moderate breeze blowing to waft the smoke of battle clear, and nothing to obstruct the view at five hundred yards. The very fact of the *Alabama* ceasing to fire, shortening sail, and hauling down her colors simultaneously, must have attracted the attention of the officer in command

of the *Kearsarge*. Again, there is no reason given, why the *Kearsarge* did not steam immediately into the midst of the crew of the *Alabama*, after their ship had been sunk, and like a brave and generous foe, save the lives of her enemies, who had fought so nobly as long as they had a plank to stand upon. Were it not for the timely presence of the kind-hearted Englishman and the two French pilot-boats, who can tell the number of us that would have rested with our gallant little ship beneath the waters of the English Channel. I quote the following from Mr. John Lancaster's letter to the London "Daily News": "I presume it was because he *would* not or could not save them himself. The fact is that if the captain and crew of the *Alabama* had depended for safety altogether upon Captain Winslow, not one half of them would have been saved." *

* In his report of June 21, 1864, Captain Winslow said: "It was seen shortly afterwards that the *Alabama* was lowering her boats, and an officer came alongside in one of them to say that they had surrendered and were fast sinking, and begging that boats would be dispatched immediately for the saving of life. The two boats not disabled were at once lowered, and as it was apparent the *Alabama* was settling, this officer was permitted to leave in his boat to afford assistance. An English yacht, the *Deerhound*, had approached near the *Kearsarge* at this time, when I hailed and begged the commander to run down to the



"THE 'ALABAMA' SETTLED STERN FOREMOST, LAUNCHING HER BOWS HIGH IN THE AIR."

When Mr. Lancaster approached Captain Semmes, and said, "I think every man has been picked up; where shall I land you?" Captain Semmes replied, "I am now under the English colors, and the sooner you put me with my officers and men on English soil, the better." The little yacht moved rapidly away at once, under a press of steam, for Southampton. Armstrong, our second lieutenant, and some of our men who were saved by the French pilot-boats, were taken into Cherbourg. Our loss was nine killed, twenty-one wounded, and ten drowned.

It has been charged that an arrangement had been entered into between Mr. Lancaster and Captain Semmes, previous to our leaving Cherbourg, that in the event of the *Alabama* being sunk the *Deerhound* would come to our rescue. Captain Semmes and myself met Mr. Lancaster for the first time when rescued by him, and he related to us the circumstances that occasioned his coming out to see the fight. Having his family on board, his intention was to attend church with his wife and children, when the gathering of the spectators on the shore attracted their attention, the re-

port having been widely circulated that the *Alabama* was to go out that morning and give battle to the *Kearsarge*. The boys were clamorous to see the fight, and after a family discussion as to the propriety of going out on the Sabbath to witness a naval combat, Mr. Lancaster agreed to put the question to vote at the breakfast table, where the youngsters carried their point by a majority. Thus many of us were indebted for our lives to that inherent trait in the English character, the desire to witness a "passage at arms."

That evening we landed in Southampton, and were received by the people with every demonstration of sympathy and kindly feeling. Thrown upon their shores by the chances of war, we were taken to their hearts and homes with that generous hospitality which brought to mind with tenderest feeling our own dear Southern homes in *ante-bellum* times. To the Rev. F. W. Tremlett, of Belsize Park, London, and his household, I am indebted for a picture of English home life that time cannot efface, and the memory of which will be a lasting pleasure till life's end.

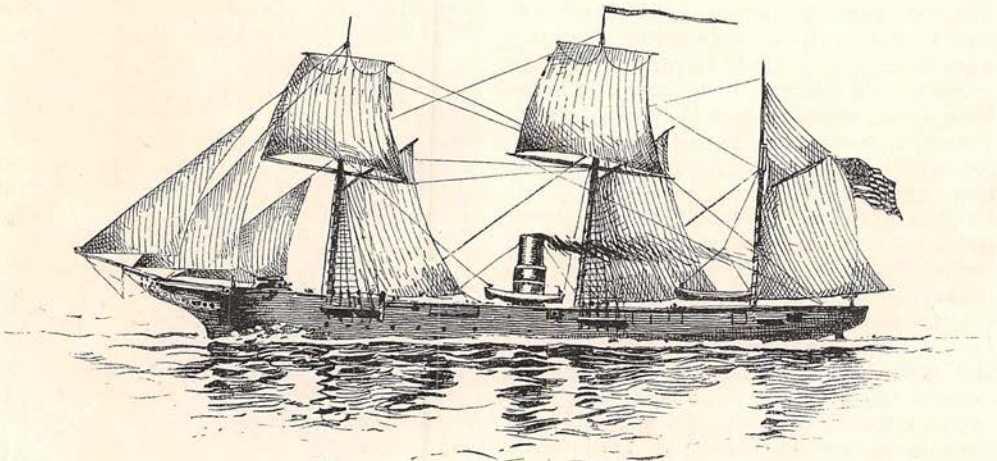
Jno. McIntosh Kell.

SUNNY SIDE, GA., April 16, 1885.

Alabama, as she was fast sinking and we had but two boats, and assist in picking up the men. He answered affirmatively and steamed towards the *Alabama*, but the latter sank almost immediately."

The following is an extract from Mr. John Lancaster's log, dated "Steam-yacht *Deerhound*, off Cowes:" "Sunday, June 19th, nine a. m. Got up steam, and proceeded out of Cherbourg harbor. Half-past ten, observed the *Alabama* steaming out of the harbor toward the Federal steamer *Kearsarge*. Ten minutes past eleven, the *Alabama* commenced firing with her starboard battery, the distance between the contending vessels being about one mile. The *Kearsarge* immediately replied with her starboard guns. A very sharp, spirited firing was kept up, shot sometimes

being varied by shells. In manœuvring, both vessels made seven complete circles at a distance of from a quarter to half a mile. At twelve a slight intermission was observed in the *Alabama's* firing, the *Alabama* making head-sail, and shaping her course for the land, distant about nine miles. At half-past twelve, observed the *Alabama* to be disabled and in a sinking state. We immediately made toward her, and in passing the *Kearsarge* were requested to assist in saving the *Alabama's* crew. At fifty minutes past twelve, when within a distance of two hundred yards, the *Alabama* sunk. We then lowered our two boats, and with the assistance of the *Alabama's* whale-boat and dingey, succeeded in saving about forty men, including Captain Semmes and thirteen officers. At one p. m. we steered for Southampton."—EDITOR.



THE UNITED STATES SCREW-SLOOP "KEARSARGE" AT THE TIME OF THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE "ALABAMA."

When the *Kearsarge* was at the Azores, a few months before the fight with the *Alabama*, Midshipman Edward E. Preble made a mathematically correct drawing of the ship, of a photograph of which the above is a sketch copy. After the fight alterations were made in the *Kearsarge* which considerably changed her appearance.—EDITOR.