

U. S. BATTLESHIP KEARSARGE IS THE FINEST IN THE WORLD.

Successful Test of her Double-Deck Turrets May Revolutionize Warship Designing.

In fifteen minutes the broadsides of the Kearsarge can hurl against the enemy projectiles weighing 85,000 pounds; in an equal time the Iowa can fire 48,000 pounds. Turned into short tons, these weights become 42, as opposed to 24, or a possible energy for the new ship nearly double that of the earlier built vessel.

In the Kearsarge the most powerful vessel in our navy, on an equal displacement, does she surpass in fighting qualities any battleship of the other great sea powers? The peculiar distribution of her battery and the uniqueness of the design have excited wide attention in the navy, but since her trials during the last week this claim has been made more insistently by her admirers.

During the trials the most important considerations were the amount of energy expended in firing, the rate of fire, the loss in weight of the shells, the loss in eight-inch guns to be outweighed by the intensity of action secured through the employment of so many of the smaller quick firing guns. Such a large battery would of course demand a very liberal supply of ammunition and a resultant increase in weight of armor, but the reduction of weight by the abandonment of the four eight-inch guns and their two turrets enabled the designers to increase the magazine spaces and ammunition and have something to spare for the extension of other important qualities.

These striking differences in battery, or armament, as it is called, says D. B. Jerrard Kelly, commander United States Navy, in the New York Herald, are accomplished by equally marked variations in the methods adopted to carry it. On board the Iowa the twelve-inch guns are mounted in pairs within single turrets, built on the fore and aft line of the ship, the four mounted eight-inch are protected by turrets disposed at the four angles of a central armored citadel constructed amidships within the space separating the main turrets. The same general arrangement was adopted in the Oregon class, because this installation was supposed to give a very powerful "broadside" fire of six heavy guns. It was discovered, however, that this concentration could not be secured in practice, because the blast of the eight-inch affected the crews in the lower turrets. It was finally decided that the guns could not be trained with safety nearer than ten degrees to the longitudinal line of the ship, and hence the "broadside" really became a bow and quarter distribution.

When the designs of the Kentucky and the Kearsarge were under discussion these defects were pointed out, and remedies were suggested. Certain experts, indeed, went further and asserted that such an arrangement of the eight-inch guns, both at home and abroad, was not only dangerous, but wasteful of important weight—and it may be well to remember here that the proper distribution of weight is the practical question controlling warship design. It was decided, however, that the turrets, each mounting two guns, had to be

in honor of an innovation that has started the naval world and may cause a revolution in warship construction. An examination of the accompanying sketches will show the general character of the design. It will be noticed that the muzzles of the eight-inch guns extend beyond the firing trough in the lower turret, that they have a free angle of fire for about 250 degrees around the horizon and that their ammunition supply tubes are protected by the walls of the lower turret and hoisted to the upper turret by the water space. The distribution in weight, the increased area for gun fire and the superior protection over the old style are most pronounced. Besides these there are other advantages that were revealed during the trials last week, but these may be passed over for the moment and be grouped later.

As usual the raised department invited strenuous objections, that were based upon both the structural and military features of the design. It was declared that structurally the ship would be top-heavy; that the ammunition supply could not be arranged, that the blast and powder of the upper guns would interfere with the working of the lower, and that injuries to one turret would disable both. The principal military objections were founded upon assumptions that it might be necessary to engage two enemies at once on the same fighting side, one heavily armored and the other protected with a thick plating of armor which only the thirteen-inch guns could be effective. Furthermore, it was a grave error, declared these opponents of the change, to put four guns in one structure when two of them were of smaller caliber, with different firing speeds, ranges and en-



TESTING THE FORWARD TURRETS OF THE KEARSARGE.



DIAGRAM SHOWING ARC OF FIRE OF THE TURRETS.

But, as usual, a way out soon appeared. The chief system of naval administration, the Bureau of Ordnance, devised the character and arrangement of ships' batteries, and at this time Captain Sampson (now Admiral) was Chief of the Bureau, and Edwin Joseph Strauss (now Lieutenant) was the assistant in charge of the designs of heavy gun carriages and turrets. The vexed question was naturally a subject for consultation between these two experts, and finally, after very earnest study, Edwin Strauss found what seemed to be a solution of the difficulty. He proposed that four of the eight-inch guns should be abandoned and that the other four should be mounted in two turrets, one of which was to be superimposed upon each of the thirteen-inch structures. This original and striking proposition was readily accepted by Captain Sampson, was approved by the department, and is today the very design realized in iron and steel on board the battleships Kearsarge and Kentucky. To the young Edwin Strauss, and to him alone, belongs, therefore, the credit and

explains, especially when all were dependent upon the safety and condition of one turning engine.

These protests are still influential, and however wise an agreement may be reached upon the structural question after more extended trials, it is certain that the military one must continue in despite until the blast and stress of battle finally settle it. It is not until such test offers to run nearly along in the same old grooves of positive assertion and that contradiction that the naval arguments have the certainty of a win and have them those believed, for naval experts are a stubborn tribe. Whenever the first military objection is advanced the ready answer comes that the turret can make one complete revolution in a minute, and that any delay in the firing of the heaviest guns at the moment is a few seconds will be required to raise the other mass-armor lighter armor, and again, the champions of the design are able to declare that even in the remote case where the rotating power of the turret might be interfered with and the upper guns would fire into the vessel, would only drop from the class of a battleship to that of an armored cruiser. What is more, even then she could have some fighting effect in her heaviest guns through the maneuvering powers of the ship itself.

Some definite news has come, however, and it is most satisfactory to all who believe in the American capacity for tackling and solving difficulties. In order to test the hull, structures and guns the ship has been subjected to several offshore trials. As before in her speed trials, she proved to be a good sea boat, and nobody even mentioned that she was top-heavy. The gun tests were carried on progressively and according to a programme intended to reveal the virtues and vices both of ship and armament. The Kearsarge came out of them most successfully, and her structural fitness was demonstrated beyond all. The battery was fired with safety and precision; there was no interference between the fire of one gun and of any other, and the crew suffered no inconvenience from the shock of discharge or from blast and powder fumes. Rear Admiral Sampson and Captain Bradford, U. S. N., witnessed the experiments, which were conducted by the commanding officer of the ship, Captain Edgar L. Child of Naval Ordnance. "There is no ship in the world," declared Admiral Sampson, "that can withstand the impact of those four projectiles simultaneously fired from one of the superimposed turrets of the Kearsarge." "I think," asserted Captain Bradford, "that the trial shows conclusively the value of the turret for military purposes and that it marks a new advance in war engines." And Captain Folger reported officially: "The double turret is an assured success, both from military and structural standpoints."

THE FIRST ST. LOUIS BORN FRENCH WOMAN IS MAKING READY FOR DEATH.

When the Americans Came Mrs. Cecilia Aubuchon Was Afraid.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

After the four score years mark has been passed in one's life one is inclined to begin to think of death and make preparations for it.

Therefore Mrs. Cecilia Aubuchon, who will be 89 years old on the 16th of next July, has prepared for her end. She has selected all her burial clothing, which she has carefully laid aside, and has chosen eight from among her grandsons to act as pallbearers at her funeral.

There is nothing to especially indicate that Mrs. Aubuchon is any nearer death than she has been for the past score of years, but she thinks there are not many more days left to her, and smilingly says: "Why should I not prepare for death? I am old—very old. I have lived long—I have seen my great-grandson's son. I have seen St. Louis grow from a little village to a great city. I have seen the first steamboat come here, and the first steam railroad ever built here. All these I know when I was young and dead. My children are grown and old; my grandchildren are grown and have grandchildren. I have lived long enough. Soon I am going to die. So, why not be ready for it?"

Mrs. Aubuchon lives with her eldest daughter, Mrs. Cecelia Fowler, in the rear of No. 237 North Broadway. She will live nowhere else. Her other children want her to spend some of her time with them, but she refuses. She is now bent and feeble. Within the last few weeks she has been troubled with asthma, but her mind is clear, and she reads and sews without the aid of glasses. Glasses hurt her eyes, she says. "Later I shall be blind and never see you. So, why lie down now?"

Her two favorite possessions are a large arm-chair, in which she spends most of her time, and a curious old leather trunk, which she guards jealously, and into which no one is allowed to even peep. Mrs. Aubuchon claims the distinction of being the oldest St. Louis-born French woman. She was born near the corner of what is now Third and Chestnut streets, in 1811, but the old home has long since been torn down. Her father was Francois Clement, well known in his day as a stone-mason and builder. She lived at the place of her birth for a number of years, but for the past thirty-five years has lived in North St. Louis. One of her granddaughters is a sister-in-law of Pat Tebeau, manager of the St. Louis baseball team, she being the wife of Louis F. Tebeau, the baseball man's brother. A son, Adolph Danton, is well known in Florissant, where he has for many years. It is through the son that she can boast that she is "three times grandmother." Adolph's daughter was married to Vincente Gooday; their

daughter Georgie married Joseph Montague, and this couple has two sons, the eldest of whom is 2 years of age.

Mrs. Aubuchon was first married, in 1831, to Adolph Danton, a French sailor, who drifted to St. Louis from New Orleans. He died in 1839, and two years later his widow married Anton Aubuchon, who was well known in the old days as a musician. His widow and children relate that he was frequently sent for to play the violin at big balls as far away as St. Paul, Minn. Aubuchon lived until 1872, when he died during the great plague of that year.

"Oh, those old days are almost too far back for me to tell of now," said the old woman, when asked to relate incidents of her girlhood. "St. Louis was a little bit of a village. There were no Americans here then—only French and Spaniards and Indians. All gone now—just I am left. There was not much of a town, just a few houses down on the river bank. It was all woods back of where we lived, only there was a Courthouse where the present one stands, but it was a little thing, and all about it were deep gullies. And there was a jail—yes, it was back of the Courthouse somewhere. It was not big, just little bit. I

went there once. A cousin had distributed the peas and he was put in the jail to see her up. I went to see him—yes, I went right into the jail.

"When I was a little girl Indians used to come here and camp every year. They camped on the big mound, and sometimes we would go there to watch them. They would come down into town and dance, and the Frenchmen would give them little pieces of money. Oh, no, not nickels, there were no nickels then. We had pennies, little pieces of money that were worth what you call six and a quarter cents. They were half a bit. But we had no nickels. That came later, after the Americans came. And when the Americans came they scared us so! I was scared so scared that I ran and hid. And big, brown men were scared, too. You see, we did not know the Americans then. We did not know what they would do to us. We were afraid of them.

"Yes, the Indians would come downtown and dance and get money. Sometimes they were bad, and we were afraid of them. One time an Indian was after me. He was mad. But I don't blame him. I had hit him in the back with a soapstone. It was not big, just little bit. I

big mound. It is not there any more, but it used to be there a great big mound. But they have cut it down now. It goes like so many other things I used to know. I went to see a little girl and play with her. A great big Indian used to be in the house. He did not wear a blanket, he was nearly naked. I hated the Indians. I said I would kill this one. There was a soapstone on the table in the kitchen. I picked it up. It was great big. I ran to the door, and threw the soapstone at the Indian. He ran into the back. Then I ran. The Indian ran after me. I hid in the corner wood-box, they call it a cupboard wood box, but it was gone now in those days. The woods were very high, and the Indian could not find me. But he came close to me, and I was so afraid I thought he would scare me. My heart went thumping like the drum, and she tapped her old and with red hands together sharply. "But, I did not see me. Then he went to the house, and said he would whip everybody if they did not tell him where I was. But they said I had run away, and they could not find me. After a while, the Indian went away, and I came out of the wood-box. But I never did throw another soap stone at an Indian.

"I was 11 years old when the General Lafayette came to St. Louis. I saw him as he came from the boat. It was the Rocky Mountain. Mr. Chouteau took him with him. Oh, no, it was not the old man Chouteau, oh, no. He was too old then. It was Pierre. Pierre met the General Lafayette at the steamboat, and took him to his carriage that was waiting for him at Third and Market streets. I saw him as he came up from the steamboat. He was a little bit of a man—little and lame—

KLONDIKE-TRAVEL RECORD BROKEN BY THIS WOMAN.



MRS. THOMAS S. MAHONEY. Who Made the Trip from Dawson to Chicago in Twelve Days and Twelve Hours.

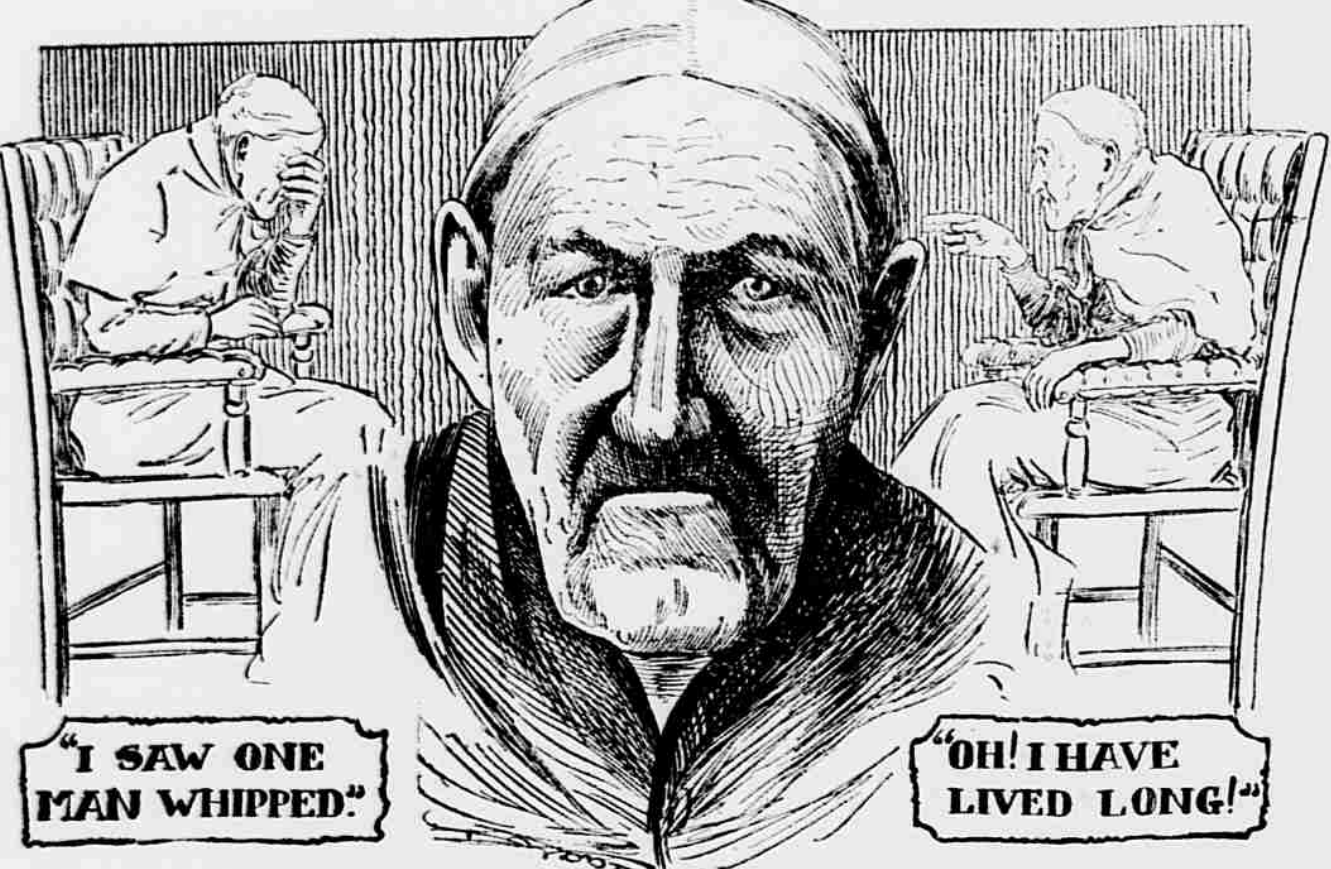
WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

Mrs. Thomas S. Mahoney of Chicago, wife of the manager of a trading post at Dawson, Alaska, has broken the time record of the Dawson journey from the Klondike. She recently completed the trip in the hitherto unbroken time of twelve days and twelve hours, not including stops. This journey was made in March, the middle month of the frozen country, and no little peril, as well as much suffering, attended it.

Mrs. Mahoney received word that her mother, who lives in Chicago, was ill; and when she left Dawson she felt that she was entering in a race with death. Her husband secured a dog-sled, and the first lap of the journey was made in this horse-sled brought the lone traveler on the divide to Bennett, where she took a train for Skagway. At Skagway Mrs. Mahoney was fortunate enough to find a steamer ready to clear for Vancouver. From this latter point the travel was entirely by rail. During the whole journey Mrs. Mahoney says she experienced no uneasiness and she felt amply repaid for the hazardous undertaking when, on arriving at home, she found her mother rapidly improving. The best previous record for this trip was made by an old trader, who covered the distance in thirteen days.

I have lived so long, I have nothing to complain of. I have seen many changes, and I am ready to die. "You say you are from the Republic? Oh, yes, I remember—it used to be the Republic. I remember, I used to see it when I was a girl. But we did not read the paper then. The Germans did not stay in St. Louis in those days. They went out in the country, and they bought land, oh, they were smart! They bought land, and they got rich.

"When I was a girl there were no Protestants here, not even any Catholics. I remember when the old cathedral on Walnut street was built. My husband helped build it. And I have always gone to church until I got too old. For I am old, you know—very old. I will not be here much longer. But why should I not be? I am a grandmother three times. I have seen my children grow up, and marry, and have children; their children have children, and their children have children. I am proud of my children. I am glad that



"I SAW ONE MAN WHIPPED."

"OH! I HAVE LIVED LONG!"

MRS. CECELIA AUBUCHON.