

THE WRECK OF THE "SUTHERN."

BY ALBERT B. REAGAN.

About 1850 a revenue cutter (?), the "Suthern" was damaged at sea in a storm; and, to save the crew, the captain ran the vessel ashore in the old mouth of the Quillayute River near what is now the Indian village



of LaPUSH, Washington. Immediately on grounding, the vessel was taken possession of by the Quileute (Quillayute) Indians. The savages boarded her and emptied her supply cargo into the sea. The dried fruits and the flour they knew not how to use as they had never seen such things before. So they emptied the fruit overboard to get the pretty boxes. They also poured the flour into the surging surf that they might get the sacks to make into clothes. The money of the ship also fell into their hands. It was gold. They had never seen gold before. They knew not its value or pur-

pose. So they rolled the double eagles around on the beach and used them as disks in their gambling games. They also made prisoners of the crew; and for a time all were ill treated very much. Finally, Chief Howeattle, who was up the river at the time of the capture, compelled the Indians to release them. By this time the storm had pounded the vessel beyond repair. At that time there was no communication from the Olympic peninsula with the outside world. So Chief Howeattle had houses built for his now guests. He also furnished the houses as best he could with his meager means. He also gave the single men of the crew Indian wives that they might be more contented in their forced home; two of his sisters married members of the crew. For a considerable time the strangers were compelled to stay there. At last a note was got out to civilization by an Indian messenger; and, finally, they were rescued by another government boat and taken to their respective homes, the men leaving their Indian wives behind with their own people.

Time passed, and years. Finally, another government vessel hove in sight. It anchored in the bay and from it many presents "from the Father in Washington" and the white people who had been stranded there were brought ashore and given to the good chief and relatives. The government also built Chief Howeattle a house and put a brick, fireplace in it for his saving the people of this vessel. They also furnished the house for him. But Mr. Howeattle was not permitted to enjoy his present long. A fire burned it to the ground. He, however, had the satisfaction of knowing that he had the good will of the white people and that he had done right.

The wreck of this old vessel can still be seen at LaPush. In summer it is covered with sea wash; but in winter the waves carry the sand far out to sea. Then, there exposed to view are the "irons" to remind one of the days of the wreck in that long ago and the change that has come over the country and the aborigines since that time.