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ble and better kept. Except during training hours and during ma? noeuvres, a group of the men obtain permission to go ashore, and you see the embarkation leaving the ship quietly, noiselessly, without shouts. A few sailors walk on the rear deck chatting peacefully. A sentinel keeps watch on the upper deck and describes everything that goes on aboard the other ship, on the sea and on the shore; whenever a canoe glides close by, it is hailed. Another sentinel stands guard near the stairs. The ship's boys play in some corner of the ship, laugh behind a cannon, eventually get out of control and are then brought to order by a stern supervisor.... Therefore, the days, despite their peacefulness and their calmness, passed quickly enough. Some of us went hunting, others tried miracu? lous fishing. Already a bit tired of cod, we desperately tried to hook trouts who were just as abundant and salmon, which ought to have been. Then we also visited the locals. Sydney would be a little left out of the rest of the world were it not for the annual visit of the French naval squadron. Her Britannic Majesty's warships seldom visit here. That is why our sailors are welcomed here with an eagerness equalled only by their lack of rivals. Most of the officers had already visited these shores more or less frequently; they were old acquain? tances; they knew all the local gossip and they introduced the new ar? rivals who, very soon, were as well received as themselves. In these far-off regions, in the midst of these forlorn habitations, strangers are always welcome. They bring news from away and a bit of socializing which would be almost completely non-existent without them. One must admit it; the citizens of Sydney do not have much fun, and youth, at least, is starved of rec? reations and amusements. I said earlier that young people are not numerous. The scant resources offered by the country do not allow for a good life and, very early on, force those who were born there to leave. It should be noted that many of them had to go far away from their homestead in order to get an edu? cation, either in Halifax, the United States or even in England. In their stead come, occastonally, other persons who, in terms of sheer fun, are not quite able to take their place, but they bring, never? theless, to the little society of Sydney, a new element quite in keeping with the dignity of the place. It is a well-known fact that many English? men have a passionate love of fishing and hunting. It happened that travellers, brought here from the metropolis by this double interest, took a great liking to this peaceful country and, after a few years, they became permanent residents. At first they were pleased with the abun? dance of fish; then they left to be taken up by civil life and its womes. Later they remembered the tranquil and peaceful place they had known during their youth; many returned permanently. Disgusted with everything, they looked for absolute peace precisely where it is to be found and, in the middle of these forests, they abdicated every memory, every desire, but not every social habit they once had. One could find amongst these hermits, without much difficulty, many a hero of a romantic story now forgotten by a world who has a surfeit of these and which does not keep a register of the victims. Once, during my trip, but not in Sydney, I happened to enter a small house, in the middle of the forests, to ask for fire. A



narrow garden enlivened by common flowers was to be found near the door? step. When I walked in I found myself in the midst of a classroom where very young children recited their lesson in the presence of a schoolmaster who, despite his greying hair, seemed to me to be in the prime of life. When I had formulated my request, after having apologized for the trouble I had so evidently brought into this busy hive, so easily upset, the teacher took me to his room to find a match. I was stmck by the peculiar appearance of the room. It certainly did not contain any priceless object, only the basics were to be found. However, be it the choice of drapes or the arrangement of things, or some elusive quali? ty, it was obviously much more than the at>ode of a common man. My improvised host, without trying to prolong the meeting, confimried me in my opinion by his dignified and sober manner and his exquisite politeness. I later learned that he was an English gentleman who, af? ter a series of most poignant misfortunes, had left the Sen/ice and had settled in this desert where, guided by religious beliefs, he was devoting his life to the education of children. It is quite conceivable that, for a certain type of souls, such country, and certainly Sydney and its sun-ounding area, constitute an oasis of peace. Here there is not hustle and bustle, there is no future and, apart from the few summer months when nature is kind and warm, it is a confinement in the snow where nothing, not even the pleasures of the eyes, distracts or tires a disenchanting, suffering or bored imagina? tion. The ladies and young girls of Sydney certainly did not wish to see such morbid characteristics developed by our officers and, probably to prove that they had other inclinations, they asked the captain, one nrxDrning, for permission to give a ball aboard the Gassendi. Permission was granted immediately and the ball was held that very evening.