

persons of both sexes, who all seemed bent on amusement. It was truly a *sans souci* meeting. Seldom have I seen so much good taste as was displayed in the arrangements, or so good a tone of society. A good band of music, all Brazilians, played waltzes and marches alternately. I was told there were many distinguished persons, senators, representatives of the congress, &c., present.

These balls take place monthly, and are really what they profess to be, for the pleasure of meeting, innocent amusement, and recreation. All the expense that attends them is the music and lights; some few dulces were the only refreshments.

The language generally spoken was Portuguese, though some few of the ladies, and many of the gentlemen, spoke French. I was not much struck with the beauty of the ladies, though many were quite pretty. The great charm thrown over the whole was the unaffected manners and *naïveté* exhibited by the whole company. I left the ball at a late hour, exceedingly gratified with my visit, and the politeness and kindness that had been shown us.

On the 27th of November the Relief arrived, after a passage of one hundred days from the United States, the longest ever made. On requisitions being made for her stores, I was greatly and vexatiously disappointed to receive a report that they required a survey, as all were considered defective, including even the bread and flour. This report, after a careful survey by seven officers, proved to be true. I had been informed before taking command of the squadron that these provisions had been inspected, and understood them to be in good order, and that they would last over a year.

Although this did not delay us, for the repairs in progress could not have been completed before we would be able to replace them, yet coming as it did with other vexations and delays, it was rather trying to the patience, and made it necessary to redouble our exertions.

The Relief was despatched at the earliest day possible, the 14th of December, in order to enable her to reach Orange Harbour, in Terra del Fuego, the place I had fixed upon as a rendezvous, supposing she would take at least fifteen days more than the other vessels to reach the place at the same time. The boats towed her down the harbour and gave her a fair start.

Two of the officers of the squadron ascended the Sugar Loaf. Hearing the expression of my surprise that they should have performed such an undertaking without instruments, they immediately volunteered to make it again. Lieutenants Underwood and Dale were furnished with the requisite instruments, and the height was obtained by the sympiesometer, which agreed within a few feet of