

## CHAPTER LVII.

### THE EMPEROR REVIEWS THE PEOPLE AT QUARTERS.

I Beg their Royal Highnesses' pardons all round, but I had almost forgotten to chronicle the fact, that with the Emperor came several other royal Princes--kings for aught we knew--since it was just after the celebration of the nuptials of a younger sister of the Brazilian monarch to some European royalty. Indeed, the Emperor and his suite formed a sort of bridal party, only the bride herself was absent.

The first reception over, the smoke of the cannonading salute having cleared away, and the martial outburst of the brass band having also rolled off to leeward, the people were called down from the yards, and the drum beat to quarters.

To quarters we went; and there we stood up by our iron bull-dogs, while our royal and noble visitors promenaded along the batteries, breaking out into frequent exclamations at our warlike array, the extreme neatness of our garments, and, above all, the extraordinary polish of the bright-work about the great guns, and the marvellous whiteness of the decks.

"Que gosto!" cried a Marquis, with several dry goods samples of ribbon, tallied with bright buttons, hanging from his breast.

"Que gloria!" cried a crooked, coffee-coloured Viscount, spreading both palms.

"Que alegria!" cried a little Count, mincingly circumnavigating a shot-box.

"Que contentamento he o meu!" cried the Emperor himself, complacently folding his royal arms, and serenely gazing along our ranks.

Pleasure, Glory, and Joy--this was the burden of the three noble courtiers. And very pleasing indeed--was the simple rendering of Don Pedro's imperial remark.

"Ay, ay," growled a grim rammer-and-sponger behind me; "it's all devilish fine for you nobs to look at; but what would you say if you had to holy-stone the deck yourselves, and wear out your elbows in polishing this cursed old iron, besides getting a dozen at the gangway, if you dropped a grease-spot on deck in your mess? Ay, ay, devilish fine for you, but devilish dull for us!"

In due time the drums beat the retreat, and the ship's company scattered over the decks.

Some of the officers now assumed the part of cicerones, to show the distinguished strangers the bowels of the frigate, concerning which

several of them showed a good deal of intelligent curiosity. A guard of honour, detached from the marine corps, accompanied them, and they made the circuit of the berth-deck, where, at a judicious distance, the Emperor peeped down into the cable-tier, a very subterranean vault.

The Captain of the Main-Hold, who there presided, made a polite bow in the twilight, and respectfully expressed a desire for His Royal Majesty to step down and honour him with a call; but, with his handkerchief to his Imperial nose, his Majesty declined. The party then commenced the ascent to the spar-deck; which, from so great a depth in a frigate, is something like getting up to the top of Bunker Hill Monument from the basement.

While a crowd of people was gathered about the forward part of the booms, a sudden cry was heard from below; a lieutenant came running forward to learn the cause, when an old sheet-anchor-man, standing by, after touching his hat hitched up his waistbands, and replied, "I don't know, sir, but I'm thinking as how one o' them 'ere kings has been tumblin' down the hatchway."

And something like this it turned out. In ascending one of the narrow ladders leading from the berth-deck to the gun-deck, the Most Noble Marquis of Silva, in the act of elevating the Imperial coat-tails, so as to protect them from rubbing against the newly-painted combings of the hatchway, this noble marquis's sword, being an uncommonly long one, had caught between his legs, and tripped him head over heels down into

the fore-passage.

"Onde ides?" (where are you going?) said his royal master, tranquilly peeping down toward the falling Marquis; "and what did you let go of my coat-tails for?" he suddenly added, in a passion, glancing round at the same time, to see if they had suffered from the unfaithfulness of his train bearer.

"Oh, Lord!" sighed the Captain of the Fore-top, "who would be a Marquis of Silva?"

Upon being assisted to the spar-deck, the unfortunate Marquis was found to have escaped without serious harm; but, from the marked coolness of his royal master, when the Marquis drew near to apologise for his awkwardness, it was plain that he was condemned to languish for a time under the royal displeasure.

Shortly after, the Imperial party withdrew, under another grand national salute.