

"Buen : noche," responded Jose, vaulting up the cabin stairs ; and in a moment after the splash of oars beneath the counter announced his departure.

It was many hours after the interview with Jose, before the captain yielded him to sleep. Various and conflicting were his feelings. Embarked on an enterprise never before dreamed of, and in its nature entirely new to him, he had employed an agent, whose character he had never thought of analysing, and on whose fidelity his own *life* even, and her's he held most dear, might be dependent ;—he felt uneasy. Jose had been a good deal back and forth, had told him tales of his own exploits, the truth of which he felt disposed to question ; but he did not think he wanted courage, and as to faithfulness, he thought the grudge he had against Leonardo, in addition to his hopes of being well rewarded, ensured him that ; on the whole, therefore, his fears were quieted, and he fell asleep.

Late as was the hour, Leonardo's shop, the most conspicuous on the bay, from the superior taste displayed in its outward decoration—for half the distance up the front it rejoiced in a smiling coat of red, while its upper part maintained its pristine purity, unbedaubed with paint or any other foreign mixture ;—was still open. Jose entered just in time ; for the last guest had gone out, and the little shopman was employed in sweeping the tumblers off the counter previous to "shutting up."—The greeting he gave our friend was any thing but courteous, as he expected no addition to his harvest from the untimely visit ; but Jose was not to be put off.

Placing a *real* on the counter, which he had taken care as he drew it from his pocket to jingle against some coin of larger size, he called for a glass of claret.

"The very best, none of your *real-a-bottle-stuff*, mind you !"

Leon stared at Jose while he placed the bottle on the counter ; Jose took a sip, smacked his lips, then took another ; and then he dilated on a recent

speculation he had made, and seemed disposed to spend with Leon part of his profits. The latter had no strong objections, and he softened down a point ; and by degrees, after repeated calls to swallow wine already paid for, showed more civility, and at last chimed with Jose's humour.

The latter kept up an animated conversation for some time on ordinary topics, and like a skilful general sent out skirmishers now and then to detect the weaker points.

"By the bye," said Jose, observing that Leon became more voluble as the wine began to take effect ; "old Gomez must have a pleasant night of it. How he must envy the crabs passing in and out at freedom ; wonder he doesn't try to follow them."

Leon chuckled and Jose continued :

"Was ever there, Leon ?"

"Never."

"Then you've a treat before you. How well you caught the old fellow. Santiago ! I wish I'd been there."

"I wish you had instead of me ; unpleasant duty, but must be done," said Leon, looking amiable.

"Yes," responded Jose, deprecatingly, "I give you credit for your feelings—mine have been ruffled by hard usage ; and you know, one can't help feeling angry-like at a man that has used him harshly."

Leon was silent and Jose was confident something would leak out ; but after a seeming combat between prudence and good fellowship the first prevailed.

"Jose, we ought to forgive our enemies."

"Ho !" thought Jose, "is that it ? I'll try again, though."

"I say, Leon, now it occurs to me I must have been within an ace of sharing in your discovery. That very night my pony broke his halter, and as I was afraid I might have some difficulty in finding him if I let him go till morning, I got up and followed him most to the top of the hill. I suppose something of the sort took you there, Leon ?"

Here Leon's suspicions became excited, and a blank ran over his face as