

the shore, his boat already waited for him and bore him in silence to his brig. As he passed over the bulwarks a young man advanced to greet him, but being deeply occupied with his own reflections he passed him by, and descended to his cabin, when he flung himself on a couch and yielded to a state of deep mental abstraction; but after a few minutes, he suddenly started up, and enquired if "Jose was still on board."

Jose, the young man just alluded to, hearing the question, stepped up to the companion-way and answered for himself.

"My dear friend," said he, laying peculiar stress on the second word, "your Jose is at your service."

"Come down, I want to tax your friendship."

Jose was, to use a modern word of doubtful import—"a loafer." Well known about the bay, he knew the foibles, follies, tricks and knaveries of every man and woman far and near.—Having little but his wits to live on, except an old crazy drogher, he sometimes made pretence of trading with, but in which the largest cargo ever carried in the latter days of the old craft's wanderings, if we except a trifle now and then to cheat the customs, and amuse its officers, was scandal; Jose contrived by dint of flattery and the last named commodity to pick up an honest livelihood. All he asked in return for this, neatly done up in parcels, and retailed with fluency, to order, was approbation. But it was remarked that Jose, (the only name he ever went by) never refused a meal, however scanty, if not *grudgingly* bestowed; on the last point he was fastidious, nay, he was sublimity itself. But Jose's code admitted one or two exceptions. And what perfect system does not? He could request a peice of beef, pork, fish, or "quarter dollar," but not, mind you, reader! until he had *done* a favour or chalked out one in prospect, for Jose was a good purveyor, a very jackall to amusement. Moreover he would sometimes undertake what he was morally certain he would never be called on to

perform; the favour being attended with so great a sacrifice on his part, that you would not think a moment of accepting it.

If one should inconsiderately close with Jose's offers, he would regret that adverse circumstances had occurred to bar his wishes, and you would not see him for a week to come. Jose was a "half caste," and didn't like the Spaniards, nor they him, perhaps.

"I'm at your service, captain, in what and where you will, tax indeed! I—"

"Yes, but the matter is important, on your fidelity and tact, and I know you have the last to recommend you—"

"Did you ever have occasion to doubt the first," said Jose, hastily interrupting him.

"Nay, Jose, I have't time to trifle now. If I had doubted you, I had not sought your services. You know Leonardo?" "I do, the scoundrel; I owe him one, as you English say, and hope to pay him soon."

"Now's your time then! I've cause to think his charge against Signor Gomez is founded on revenge. If you can worm the secret from him you'll oblige yourself and me too. You'll be cautious, though; the scheme is fraught with danger."

"So help me all the saints! I'll do it. Danger!" he added contemptuously, "have't I outlived the greatest hurricane we've known for years, on half an oar? Have't I stood without flinching, and seen the pirate crew rip up our decks! and——"

"Yes, yes, I've heard it all, and think you equal to the task I've given you. You're better acquainted with his nature than I am; I shall therefore leave the plan and execution all to you."

Jose's eyes sparkled, and a slight quiver shot through his frame at this sudden announcement of his responsibility; his looks became more serious and his lips compressed with an expression of determination. Townsend looked at him and thought he might argue success from the very change.

"You will want some money; here, be diligent; success shall be rewarded! Good night!"