

THE
INFERNAL SECRET!

OR, THE
INVULNERABLE SPANIARD
WHO WAS TERMED
THE TERROR OF MADRID!

*Containing an account of the wonders of his
Withered Arm, and his connection
with a Horde of*

DESPERATE BANDITTI,

*Whom he employed to Imprison and Subjugate those
who refused to swear obedience to his Will;*

ALSO, OF

HIS UBIQUITY!

OR POWER OF BEING IN TWO PLACES AT ONCE

HIS HELLISH COMPACT

With the Powers of Darkness,

AND

HIS AWFUL DEATH,

AT THE TERMINATION OF A CENTURY.

GLASGOW:
PRINTED FOR THE BOOKSELLER.

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OR THE
INVULNERABLE SPANARD

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Containing an account of the conduct of the
Spaniards, and his operations
with a class of

DESPERATE BANDITS!

Which is supposed to furnish our Subjects with
the means of their destruction to the last!

AND,

THE

OR TOWER BEING IN TWO PLACES IN ONE

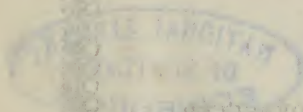
HIS BELLISH COMPANY

SEALING THE HISTORY OF THE

AND

HIS AWFUL DEATH!

AT THE TERMINATION OF A CENTURY.



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THE

INFERNAL SECRET.

ALL Madrid; that is, every body of the least note in the capital of Spain, had been invited by the ancient and honourable family of the Antaldis, to be present at a festival given, in consequence of the recovery of some estates in India, belonging to the widowed and only daughter of Don Alvarez; the grandees vied with each in the splendour of their dresses and equipage, and the superb illuminations of the halls, and the glitter of a gorgeous banquet—aided by the soul-inspiring sounds of the best vocal and instrumental performers, filled every heart with joy save one—and that one heart was Isidora's, for whom the feast was given; to whom every noble present, and whom all her own sex spoke of as a glass wherein the youth of the day might see and study virtue; yet had Isidora the high-born, the beautiful—the rich—watched an opportunity of retiring from the crowd of fashion and rank, to indulge in solitary musings the sadness of her aching heart. The Dona's absence could not fail of being known; and the youthful nobles who aspire to the lovely widow's hand, attributed her departure to the appearance of a stranger, who seemed to pursue her every where; "Who is he? What is he? Where are his titles? Where does he come from?" were questions in every mouth, yet could no one answer satisfactorily. The dress he was always seen in, was dark, but splendid, and his features noble,

but pallid. The Marquis Antaldi, though by no means pleased with his mysterious guest, yet bowed respectfully at his approach. He passed out of sight towards a lonely pavilion, here he found the Donna Isidora and thus he addressed her—"Ah, lovely Isidora! though every eye averts itself in terror and disgust at my approach, yet yours will beam more mildly on me, when you recollect what I have achieved in far more distant climes, to prove the love and high wrought interest you have here;" saying this, he placed his hand upon his heart, and bent quite lowly before the Donna. Isidora, whose recent obligations to this man, would admit of no equivocal reply immediately added, "Only clear one mystery; think how painful it is to hear the man, whose life is honour and whose practice is benevolence, accused of dealing with the powers of darkness." The stranger's countenance at this address became more gastly; but he said in a tone of voice suddenly assumed, "I can scarcely think you credit this." You know I strive to cast aside every injurious thought where you are concerned," added the Donna; yet your personal knowledge of many things for ceturies past; your instantaneous recovery of my long lost papers from India in one short day; your presence every where when my presence or my interest need a champion, fill my soul with superhuman awe; mingled with a gratitude, I find no words to express sufficiently: but the perpetual secrecy to which you bind me puzzles and alarms me:" and here the Donna waved her hand in a melancholy and forbidding manner—the stranger bent before her, and slowly retiring as he uttered—"Farewell, ungrateful Isidora! mystery and guilt are then you think inseparable—a long farewell."

Hear me, hear me, thou unknown and awful being" hastily exclaimed Isidora, when she found

him departing in sorrow. "Not so;" replied he, "I can encounter danger and difficulty, but I cannot endure your reproach; recollect a moment, I protected thy late husband's life when surrounded by a band of desperate bravoës; I released thee with thy pining infant from the Inquisition's stony walls." "I know thy worth," exclaimed the lady; "but an inward feeling which I cannot conquer, and which I dare not rebel against, compels me to demand thy name. "Montilla," uttered the uneasy stranger. "Montilla!" said Isidora, slowly and distinctly repeating the name, "why more than a century has elapsed since any of that name were herd of." Isidora fixed her eyes upon the stranger, but his face underwent no change; her perplexity was as great as ever, when the whole drift of her mind was changed by a loud and shrill scream, and the voice of Isidora's female attendant exclaiming,—"The child is lost, O Juan! dear little Juan!" "O here me; holy Virgin," ejaculated the distracted mother, rushing to the spot; but her attempt was perceived by the stranger, who bade her remain and fear nothing—on uttering these words, he hurried instantaneously to the spot. Voices were heard, but nothing satisfactory could be resolved on by Isidora—lights were up and down in quick motion, but no certainty of the fate of her little Juan relieved the agonized mother. "O stranger! O Montilla!" ejaculated she, "I repent my coldness and ingratitude towards thee; where is now thy strong arm to save—where art thou now?" "Here!" returned Montilla, leaping towards the rails, and placing the boy safely in her arms. "Bless thee! bless thee with a mother's blessing; for myself I will become thy victim or thy bride." At this moment voices and footsteps were heard making towards the pavillion, drawn by the stranger's boldness to save the child.

“Ah!” said Montilla, “voices approach, strangers are at hand—I will shun the sight of man until my Isidora is confirmed my own; remember thy solemn promise has been given.” Most true,” said Isidora, raising a jewelled rosary to her lips, “and registered above.” Enough,” said the mysterious one, and was speedily lost among those leafy walks, left in darkness to increase the effect of the remainder of the garden, which shone brilliant with a hundred thousand lamps. The Marquis Antaldi; her aged father, entered, and started with pleasure at perceiving the infant safe, after the various terrible accounts which had reached him; he was awè struck to learn from Isidora she owed the infant’s restoration to the stranger; he reproached her with encouraging his advances, but was cut short by the appearance of Don Alphonso who bowed to the lady and her father, and was about to withdraw, when the Marquis insisted he should stay and propose any question he pleased to his daughter; but Isidora coldly replied, “To-morrow, Signor, every satisfaction shall be afforded you.” Alphonso withdrew, and the perplexed and astonished father demanded of his daughter where she had ever seen the extraordinary being who thus walked the earth, in order to perplex and alarm the world. “I have seen him in Europe, Asia, and America, my father.” The Marquis looked as if he expected to hear more; but Isidora was silent, for she recollected her solemn promise of secrecy so seriously pledged to the stranger. “Has he no name?” demanded the Marquis. “None, Signor,” was his daughter’s reply; “but I can answer no further interrogatories—he saved my child at the peril of his life, and I am bound by solemn oath, and no mortal creature can tempt me to infringe it.” Isidora remained in a fixed and resolute position, from which she was only moved

by the entrance of some noblemen, who made inquiries after her child, endeavouring to obtain notice and attention; but Isidora's whole soul was so wrapt in aching wonder of the past and present, that she passed directly by the noblemen; when she was gone, violent denunciations were uttered against the stranger, whose mysterious bearing alarmed every one. One nobleman, whose fanciful mask and rich domino bespoke him a grandee of the first order, exclaimed, as he drew the company together, with the air of imparting some important matter—"This is some signor who exhibits himself as a show, at bull feasts, carnivals, and masquerades; but at an assembly of men of courage, reputation and honour he is seldom if ever to be found." "You are mistaken Signor," said a figure in the centre, whom no one recollected to have seen before. "He is always to be found when sought for;" when withdrawing his mask, he appeared before the eyes of the astonished Antaldi and the affrighted nobles to be the "Mysterious Stranger." At this moment loud cries of help, murder, assassination, were heard close upon the gate communicating with the pavillion—the stranger turned his eyes upon them, and tauntingly asked which of them chose to move, but they were all mute. Montilla cast a look of deep scorn at the nobles, and snatching a sword from the last speaker, he rushed out leaving them with opened eyes and mouths to gape and gaze at each other. Before they could recover themselves from their trance of wonder and alarm, the stranger appeared before them, bearing the suitor of Dona Isidora, the gallant Don Alphonso in his arms, pale and wounded; on recovering, Alphonso seemed to recollect his obligation to the stranger, and extended his hand to thank him, but Montilla shrunk from him, exclaiming—"your touch is hateful to me"—and rushed from their presence. No one pursued; and, Theodore, the domestic of Don

Alphonso, now presented himself to assist his master, they each accompanied the wounded gentleman to the palace of Antaldi. The wretch's limbs were quivering, and though no one was near at hand he seemed struggling with some superior being. Theodore ran to his assistance, at the request of Alphonso, who was now joined by the Marquis Antaldi, to whom every information had been given, and who resolved to be present at the examination of the dying man. His mind was relieved on the score of his daughter's safety from his having observed her enter the picture room, which was nearly on a level with the ground. Thither he had ordered the wounded man to be brought, and he impatiently awaited the summons of Theodore to learn the horrid particulars of the case. We will now return to Isidora, who having seen her little son Joan attended to, and watched until he fell into a deep sleep, had wandered, full of perplexing doubts, into the picture chamber, where pausing for a moment, her hand touched the crucifix she had used to register her oath upon before the presence of her child's deliverer.—“Why” exclaimed she aloud, is my heart possessed with such perpetual fear? I quiver but to think upon my oath. At this moment, her father entered with Theodore, bearing the wounded man, Isidora closely observed, in trembling silence, all that passed. The Marquis addressed the wounded wretch, by asking, who and what he was. The bleeding man replied, a dying man fast hastening to perdition, yet not sold, not sold, nor bartered. Oh, speak my lord, and tell me, cannot years of burning torture wash out the deadliest crime? Must I be lost for ever? Speak thy crime, said the Marquis, while life permits, and we will seek some holy man, to comfort thee. A cordial was now handed to the

poor wretch, who was somewhat revived, and thus continued:—"Skulking from the city where my brother will this morning be broken on the wheel alive, I encountered a signor, nobly dressed. I was perishing for bread and I fired upon him with an aim that never once has failed in twenty years, but the ball fell harmless to the earth. I rushed upon him, and seized some property he bore about him, but he held me with an iron grasp. My mortal powers were paralyzed, and I could only utter cries for mercy. "None, none, wretch," he cried, "unless with thine own blood thou signest a compact to—Oh, I dare not, cannot utter what.—Here Isidora rushed forward, and with an energetic shriek, exclaimed, "say on, say on, for heavens and all our safeties sake." The poor departing victim opened his half-closed eyes, and faintly uttered, "I cannot, they are words before unheard by human ears. I refused his terms." Here the poor wretch entered into convulsions and died. The corpse was born away and the Marquis about to follow, when Rosa, a domestic belonging to Donna Isidora, rushed in to say the stranger was at the feet of her mistress, and had nearly frightened half of the family out of their senses by his sudden appearance." The Marquis resolved on an immediate interview and explanation with Montilla. Accordingly, he requested Rosa to step back, and say he awaited a conference with the stranger in the picture room; but hardly had the girl departed from the chamber by the right-hand door, before Figaro, an old domestic of the house, entered by the left, to say the stranger had been seen by him at the rack beside the brother of the miserable victim who had just expired, and that on a sudden, the condemned malefactor was released from the wheel by the mysterious powers of the stranger, and neither of them were to be found by the

guards or executioner. Isidora now entered, to say the stranger had left her. The Marquis crossed himself devoutly, and repeated a prayer against witchcraft and sorcery. While her father was thus employed, various and many were the thoughts that whirled through the burning brain of Isidora; if this mysterious being is in league with powers of darkness, what should prevent me doing justice to his crimes? What prevent me from telling all I know?" "Thy solemn promise uttered on the crucifix," said the stranger, suddenly appearing behind the figures portrayed on the canvas. "Ah! my father! Behold! behold!" cried Isidora; but on turning her eyes towards the centre painting, nothing was to be seen but the customary furniture of the apartment. Figaro had neither seen nor heard anything extraordinary; and the Marquis began to be alarmed for the intellects of his daughter; he therefore advised her to seek absolution of any oath or vow she might have made, when, to the utter astonishment of all present, Montilla himself walked in, and bowing haughtily to Antaldi, said in a reproachful tone, "Farewell, signor, where I do a service, I may at least expect civility," said the stranger, as he strode out at the opposite door-way. Isidora silently seated herself, and told her beads, while she kept her eyes fixed on an image of the virgin. Antaldi, followed by Theodore, repaired to the bed-chamber of Don Alphonso, who was deeply bending under horrible fears and suggestions. Theodore, his favourite servant and confident, exhorted him to bear up with a manly heart, and assured him Dona Isidora could not but esteem him, and declared, if prudent resolutions were taken, he did not doubt but the whole of the stranger's views might yet be foiled. On being urged to explain himself a little more explicitly on the subject, he said

"Taking shelter from a burning sun near the ruins of St. Marcos's Abbey, and overcome by heat, I slept; on my awaking up, the sun set, leaving the queen of night, to guide bewildered travellers. I was about to rise, when a deep sigh arrested me, and on looking up, I beheld my brother, pale and muttering. We long had noted that he shunned all human intercourse, and was a prey to wretchedness and melancholy. I withheld my very breath, fearful of discovery, and so eager to learn his guarded secret, I became possessor of his cause of sorrow at a price no human tongue can tell the misery of. In fine, he loved a maid far beyond his lot in life, and was muttering incantations as the bell struck twelve with heavy sound. The moon rode on in blood; the wholesome foliage of the plants and shrubs was suddenly burnt up; a noisesome vapour filled the place; the enemy of man, in form enormous, in power infernal, obeyed my brother's call. I would have cried out, but my jaws were bound with ribs of iron. I seized my crucifix, which, pressing to my heart, preserved my sight and sense. Here let me hurry on—My wretched brother was promised super-human power, and strength and riches, and a life to be preserved by wedding with an unstained Catholic each century. Mad for love, he was about to agree, and accordingly put forth his arm, and a voice, more potent than the whirlwind's wildest roar, demanded blood to sign the compact; and as evidence impossible to be resisted, the hand and arm were given mighty strength, but stript of flesh and blood for ever. He drew his poniard, when I, all fainting and exhausted as I was, put forth my quivering hand, in which I held the emblem of our holy faith, and cried, "my brother, oh, my brother."—The archfiend fled, howling, and my brother fell fainting into my arms, but his reason had fled for ever." "Do you then deem this mysterious man

aided in like manner by supernatural agency?" asked Don Alphonso. "I doubt it not, my lords," replied Theodore, "and will hasten to impart the same to the noble Donna, who may hold herself prepared for every supernatural attack by bearing ever on her person the crucifix she wears." Rosa now staggered into the apartment, pale and trembling, and addressed Theodore, remarked, she saw the stranger signor at her lady's feet, and heard her compelled to promise to meet him at ten o'clock this very night."—The signors stood aghast, and recollecting they had no common enemy to deal with, Antaldi sought the chief inquisitor of Spain to defend him in these awful emergencies.

We must now request our readers to accompany us to the outskirts of Madrid until we stop at a lone spot, overgrown with brambles, on either side of the pass, (which was seldom crossed except by way-lost travellers, who seldom lived to describe it, so numerous was the band of desperadoes who inhabited this dreary refuge,) were overhanging rocks, thickly clothed with long coarse weeds, from which the ruffians frequently took aim at the unsuspecting traveller. A rude cross or two, with inscriptions of entreaty to pray for the murdered, made this naturally lone and fearful spot more fearful and repulsive still. Here, then, at early morn, the terror of Madrid, the fearful Montilla, led forth the brother of the wretch who expired immediately after the dreadful disclosure he had made in the family of the Marquis Antaldi. Montilla now addressed the wondering robber thus:—"Thy life is spared, and thy fate is bound to mine; dare not even in thy thought to flinch from thy blood-signed agreement, or by the terrors of this my right arm, whose power thou hast witnessed, I will extend thee a corpse upon the earth, Recollect, thou art not now to learn my power; I snatched thee from

the arm of justice, and I demand thy promise." "Yes, yes, stammered the wretch, each limb trembling with alarm; but, oh! release me from the fire of those unearthly eyes, I cannot bear their gaze." "Well then, be it so," replied Montilla, turning from him; "but mark, I can be every where at will, so think not to deceive me—serve me faithfully until the hour of midnight, and all will be well for thee, for beyond that time I shall not need thee more—for then," exclaimed this wretched mortal mentally, "I shall be spared another century, or lost for ever." Uttering this to himself he stood musing and silent. Spalatro looked round and recognised the haunt of his former associates; he felt some slight assurance at a sight, and observing the stranger whom he dreaded to depart towards an upper range of rocks, he felt for his signal whistle; it was there the thought occurred, that he would venture every thing, and looking around to see where his dreadful master was, he beheld him mounting a distant rock—to resolve and act at once where the only chance left for him; he kept his eye upon the unknown, who was departing farther away, when, casting aside his cloak, his whistle got entangled with it; and turning once again to see where his dread persecutor was, he stooped to pick up the same signal whistle; but though at the identical moment he bent, he cast his eyes towards the hilly rock, and saw the back of the stranger; yet no sooner had he touched the whistle, than he felt his hand grasped by the same cold bony gripe that had borne him from the rack and from the officers of justice. He turned to the rock, but the stranger had disappeared from thence, and was close by his side regarding him with a ghastly smile. I perceive, said Montilla, "that until I have convinced thee thou art nothing in my grasp, thou wilt not obey me, look, I am

unarmed, I command thee to assail me." Spalatro recollected his oath and the bloody evidence he had given to Montilla; but he had long dealt in blood, and was resolved to make a desperate effort to release himself—he drew his sword and rushed upon the stranger, thrusting and striking with all his force, the sword frequently entered Montilla's body, but no blood issued, no injury was sustained. "Now call forth thy comrades; thou hast been their leader long, and thou shalt now command them on a bold and desperate expedition; call them forth, I say, for I am aware this is the spot which they inhabit." Spalatro obeyed at once—the rocks rung with the shrill whistle, and a numerous horde of ruffians, speedily issued forth, welcoming the return of the Captain Spalatro, whom they imagined was that morning broke by the wheel. They examined the figure of Montilla, who exclaimed, "Behold I have restored your leader to you." "Now mark again," said the mysterious one, as he scattered ducats before him, "obey and follow whither I shall lead, and I solemnly pledge myself to grant each man his request—Behold," continued he, opening his vest, "I am invulnerable; discharge your pistols and carbines at me, and if a wound or scratch appear, distrust my promises." Montilla was taken at his word; guns, carbines, pistols, and arquebusses were discharged at him; but the balls fell from his person on the ground. They all raised their caps and hats in token of obedience, "Not so," said he, "attend to your gallant leader, brave Spalatro here." Saying this, Montilla whispered his commands to Spalatro, who promised implicit and unequivocal obedience. "Why yes; I do believe thou see'st how very needless all contention with my power must prove to thee." Montilla then bent his steps hastily towards Madrid and hoped success, even should Isidora refuse to gratitude

and her oath, the performance of the only rite that could secure the being he held on terms so dreadful even to himself.

We now return to the palazzo of Antaldi, where in a chamber communicating with the terrace at the gardens, sat Isidora and her infant son. "Why," thought she, "did I promise another interview after the terrors of the past." Ten o'clock chimed from the chapel and convent, and the stranger was beside her. He shuddered at the last sound of the bell, and turning to Isidora, said in a low and melancholy tone, "hath not every year of my life since you have known me, been devoted to your safety—thy late husband owed his life to me—thy fortune was preserved by my exertions—and thy slumbering child owes his existence to this ready arm." "Ah! that arm that dreadful arm," shrieked Isidora. Montilla bent before her, and in a solemn voice exclaimed, "Dismiss thy terror and hear thy friend, whose fate now hangs on thine: by all that men hold great and terrible or deamons tremble at, I'm lost for ever, if when two hours have passed thou art not my bride." Isidora shook her head mournfully exclaiming, "Alas! alas! I dare not." "Let me perish then," added Montilla; "but learn from me, thy life is threatened with the safety of thy infant." "Who will then deliver both." The eyes of Isidora were suffused with tears, at the idea of her friend and deliverer undergoing death and torture, after the sacrifices made for her. She bent forward, and extending her hand would have said, accept it; but the door of the apartment was at that moment burst open, and Theodore, who had been on the watch, ran in, and with an earnest agony of manner, exclaimed, "Oh! Dona Isidora, beware! for you would ally yourself to a miserable outcast, who for a term of superhuman life, is sold to powers of darkness; only pause till midnight,

lady, and when that hour is past, every thing will be revealed. Show thy hand and arm thou fearful and mysterious being. Montilla's eyes glared savagely on Theodore, but he answered not a word. The youth continued, "Ah, thou canst not, they both are fleshless, cursed from the moment thy infernal compact with the king of fiends was signed—he can only be preserved by wedding with a spotless catholic; thus each century has his mortal existence been preserved." Saying this, Theodore clapped his hands together, which being a preconcerted signal, Antaldi entered, leading the way for an Inquisitor and six familiars. They approached Montilla who did not resist or elude them; but he turned to Isidora and said—"thou see'st me pass to death—farewell ungrateful Isidora." He then passed out, followed by Antaldi. Rosa was dismissed for the night, but not before she had brought the intelligence that Montilla was securely lodged within the walls of the Inquisition. Scarcely was Isidora left alone, ere the bell of the Santa Casa tolled eleven. "Ah," thought Isidora, her mind reverting to the stranger, "will he then indeed be dragged to death?" "Not so, ungrateful woman," exclaimed Montilla, "now shalt thou in spite of every earthly opposition, become my bride;" and he advanced towards her as he spoke, but as soon drew back, at observing she held a crucifix towards him. "Approach not Montilla, this emblem of our faith protects me against unholy power." "But not against thy fellow mortal, Isidora," said the stranger—thou hast refused my interference, but thou wilt immediately be born from this place; thy friends are now engaged in the palazzo in carousing, to the destruction of the unknown stranger. What, Oh! my satellites," he roared, on which

the walls of the terrace we have already described as communicating with the chamber of Isidora, were scaled by Spalatro and his horde. A breach was made in the wall, and the stranger advanced to possess himself of the Donna, when Theodore, alarmed by the unusual noise he had heard above, entered sword in hand; he saw at oncè that all was lost. All then that can be done is to convince Isidora, and though my weapon cannot reach the stranger's life, it may at least assist in exposing his infernal secret; accordingly with his sword in one hand and his stiletto in the other, he advanced and suddenly fixing his dagger blade in the right-hand cuff of Montilla's tunic, and ript it up, and disclosed a sight that thrilled every beholder with freezing horror—an arm quite fleshless and as of a skeleton was clearly seen by every one. Before timely assistance could be procured, it appeared on visiting the Donna's chamber, that herself and child had been borne away on mules and horses, stationed withoutside the breach in the terrace wall. On Isidora's awakening from the insensibility which the circumstances of her disappearance had caused, she found Montilla beside her; she looked and shuddered. He said in a firm but hurried tone, concealment is no longer possible, therefore Isidora thou shalt hear all the truth—thou hast seen my power when opposed; and tho' I can hold no potency o'er man not sworn to obey me, yet I can use evil men for my agents, and I have dono so; all human punishments are in my grasp; yet the hour is fast approaching that consigns me to a fate—here his voice became tremulous, and he with some difficulty proceeded—a fate that—Oh! son of God. Here he wiped away cold dews from his forehead, and resumed in a forced tone of hope—or saves me for a century, and I have fixed on thee

o save me." "Me," faintly reiterated Isidora." "Yes," continued the detected wretched man, "Thee; thou canst not suffer with a union with me, though I am thus preserved—shudder not for I am yet a man—a wretched, tempted, conquered being; pride, curiosity, and ambition, urged me to study secrets beyond the unaided art of man to reach. I have gained them, thou hast learned at what a price." Isidora could only utter, "No more, no more," and grasped her crucifix. "Well then, inhuman woman, learn that I have earthly power at least upon thee; judge between me and thy child"—and as he spoke he seized the boy with his never-failing arm, and was instantly surrounded by the drawn blades of the ruffians, who declared they awaited his bidding. "Oh! my child!" screamed the distracted Isidora—"my child, my only one, my widowed hope. Montilla! stranger! pity me." "I do," replied he, "but I owe myself an awful act of justice—wilt thou be mine? the hour of midnight fast approaches—wilt thou be mine?" "Never! never!" resolutely answered the lady, making a grasp towards her child: but Montilla was aware of the movement, and passed the child to Spalatro, saying, "Keep within hearing of my whistle; nerve thy arm with strength, and if I fail to give a signal to thee when thou hearest the first stroke of the midnight bell, let it guide thy weapon to the youthful Juan's heart." On hearing this the heart of Isidora gave way, and she uttered a faint assent to the demand of Montilla; but the pealing thunder prevented it reaching the year of any one. Nature began so clothe herself in all her terrors; but Isidora's heart was heedless of the pelting storm, and occupied alone by terrors for her boy. Time went on, and Montilla, who beheld the angry omens of heaven, turned once again before the Dona, in the hope of affecting a change in her

apparent settled resolution. With deep humility he kneeled, and imploringly entreated her to spare him the commission of an act of cruelty and bloodshed. "Ah! touch me not," said the affrighted and receding Isidora, "that terrible right hand! no Montilla, no! my gratitude is wholly thine; but never ask, for thou can'st never have my hand." Here to the terror of Isidora, and the more than mortal horror of Montilla, the first sound of midnight struck. "I shall be lost," thought he; then with a desperate feeling he turned towards Isidora, and in a voice demoniacal with rage, he thus addressed her, in reply to her tears and cries for her child—"Tremble, my moments now are few, the last day of my century is come; but Montilla, the dreaded one, will not fall unavenged. I now feel a savage joy to think my misery will not alone be —," Here he was interrupted by the bell a second time. "Strike, Spalatro, strike the brat." "Enough," uttered the ruffian, and the storm increased as if the elements were all at war. Juan shrieked; and a clash as if of arms and combatants in motion, was heard at intervals only. The bell had now nearly tolled the hour of twelve, when the wretched Montilla falling on his knees, uttered, "Save me, save me, Isidora, and thy child shall be restored; Oh! recal your cruel order—gave me thy hand, and swear that thou art mine and I am thine; the trembling mother did as she was entreated; her hand was stretched out, and she demanded, what form of words she was to utter that might save Montilla, when Theodore rushed towards her with the infant Juan in his arms, and exclaimed, "Oh! lady! barter not your faith nor harm your soul, your child is safe. I expect assistance from the family every moment to reinforce the small party already assembled, and who are now successfully opposing the ruffians which are now stationed above and below." Say-

ing this he placed the boy near his mother, and by his looks and manner endeavoured to inspire her with courage to encounter the threats and entreaties of the desperate and almost lost Montilla, the bell again gave dreadful note of the close approach of midnight. Montilla's eyes gleamed fire when he beheld Theodore with his uplifted crucifix, and he furiously exclaimed, "Art thou of earth or hell—if I reach thee I'll tear thee piecemeal," he then discharged a pistol at the interpid and faithful domestic; but Theodore, whose eyes were narrowly on the watch stooped, and avoided its effects. Here the bell gave the last warning save one, of midnight, the wretched Montilla became delirious with rage, terror, and approaching death, he looked fearfully around, and saw, for the last time on earth, the entire failure of all his purposes. The Alphonso party had arrived many hundreds strong; the bravos were nearly all cut to pieces. The Marques Antaldi reached his daughter and her child. Isidora cast a remorseful look to the appalled Montilla, and exclaimed, "Pray, Montilla, pray, and we will join in supplication for thee; but the only answer she could obtain was, "All prayer is mockery now; the fiends and furies gnaw thee with perpetual remorse." here he paused as if suffering great internal agony; but suddenly drawing forth his poniard he aimed a blow at Juan, who would have perished beneath the murderous aim, had not the dreaded hour of midnight tolled. The face of nature became suddenly darkened—the moon refused her light, a violent gust blew out every torch; when the grey glimmering of morning light appeared, no traces of the stranger were to be discovered, but the skeleton arm and hand grasping a poniard.

MONTILLA AND ISIDORA.

A SPANISH LEGENDARY TALE.

On which the "Infernal Secret" is supposed to have been founded



MONTILLA with young Isidora the fair,
Discours'd in Antaldi's grand Hall ;
Mysterious his manner, terrific his air,
And the Donnas who eye'd him were heard to de-
clare,
That with him they'd not open the ball.

His dress it was sable, but pale was his cheek—
"Who is he? whence comes he?" the cry ;
But he sternly look'd on, too disdainful to speak.
Isidora alone did he constantly seek,
The rest he indignant passed by.

Now the young Isidora a widow was left,
 With Juan her infantine heir ;
 But ah ! tho' of one husband she was bereft,
 Whose skull by a Saracen's sabre was cleft,
 Yet of husbands she need not depair.

For the grandees of Spain, however renowned,
 On her beauty and riches would dwell ;
 And he that could gain her, might think himself
 crowned
 With nuptial enjoyments that rarely are found,
 Tho' hoped for, and promised right well.

But, ah ! Don Montilla now haunted her sight,
 And in forms superhuman was seen ;
 So stern was his visage, so great was his might,
 That the fair Isidora beheld with affright,
 This monster of magical mein.

He governed his bandits with absolute sway,
 At his bidding each man drew his sword ;
 When a victim he saw, he would bear him away,
 And the Powers of Darkness were bound to obey—
 Not a Deamon disputed his word.

His belov'd Isidora resolv'd he to gain,
 And he forc'd her to swear with an oath,
 That his bride she'd become—yet her oath was in
 vain,
 And she liv'd an example of sorrow and
 pain,
 While happiness frown'd on them both.

Montilla in fury would often repair
 the palace, demanding her hand;
 But she shrunk back with horror, and sunk in
 despair,
 When, uplifted, she saw his arm wither'd and
 bare,
 And refused to obey his command.

"Oh! now is the moment of darkness," he
 cried,

While the century's last midnight bell
 Toll'd mournfully solemn—"Ah! here is my
 bride,"

Montilla exclaim'd—as she stood by his
 side—

Let's away to the portals of hell.

Then, grasping his poniard, he aim'd a fell
blow,

At young Juan, who shook with affright;
But the power of Montilla was over—and lo!

He was borne to the regions of darkness
below,

And vanish'd in flames from their sight.

