

✧ THE ✧ PORTFOLIO. ✧

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✧ The Alhambra. ✧

✧ ONE of the most fascinating books in Literature is Washington Irving's little volume the Alhambra.

As a work of description it stands unrivaled for exquisite word painting and poetic beauty.

It is a collection of tales, essays and legends of the Moorish people and their celebrated palace, the Alhambra

The author begins by describing his journey from Seville to Granada. He leaves the quaint Spanish town in company with several friends, who according to Spanish custom are to accompany him for a few miles out of Seville. The journey is described as only Irving can; the wild mountain scenery, the ruins of stately Moorish castles, silent reminders of the fate of

nations; and finally the entrance into the famous Moorish capital, Granada.

The Alhambra was a fortress and palace of the Moors until they were driven out by Ferdinand and Isabella. It was begun in the middle of the 13th century by Alhamar, a well beloved Moorish King.

Firmly believing that the great Moslem Kingdom in Spain, would, by the will of Allah, endure through all ages, he wished to build an edifice fit to be the palace of a line of Moorish Kings. His successors each in turn, took up the work employing the best architects and artists in the Kingdom.

In 1348 it was finished by Yusef, another well beloved Moorish monarch. It was his delight to continually add to the beauty of the palace. Gardens bloomed on every hand, fountains flashed in the sunlight, and the architecture of its halls resembled frost work in its delicacy.

When we think of the work and money expended by the Moors in the building of their palace, by their faith in Allah and the duration of their kingdom, we can better understand their sorrow when Boabdill, their last King, was compelled to deliver to the victorious Ferdinande and Isabella, the keys of the Alhambra, and they were driven forever from the country they loved.

At present the Alhambra is vacant except in the more remote and dismantled parts which shelter a motley throng of gypsies, beggars and crippled soldiers.

The governor of the province resides in the city, at the time of the author's visit, and the palace is put in charge of a Spanish woman and her pretty niece who act as guides to visitors.

Irving receives an invitation from the governor to occupy his apartments in