

Alvar Perez lately deceased, and he associated with him Nuño Gonzalez, with orders to besiege Arjona. This was a place dear to Aben Alhamar, the King of Granada, being his native place, where he had first tasted the sweets of power. Hence he was commonly called the King of Arjona.

The people of the place, though they had quailed before King Fernando, despised his officers and set them at defiance. The king himself, however, made his appearance on the following day with the remainder of his forces, whereupon Arjona capitulated.

While his troops were reposing from their fatigues, the king made some further ravages, and reduced several small towns to obedience. He then sent his brother Don Alfonso with sufficient forces to carry fire and sword into the Vega of Granada. In the mean time he returned to Andujar to the Queen Juana. He merely came, say the old chronicles, for the purpose of conducting her to Cordova; fulfilling, always, his duty as a cavalier, without neglecting that of a king.

The moment he had left her in her palace at Cordova, he hastened back to join his brother in harassing the territories of Granada. He came in time; for Aben Alhamar, enraged at seeing the destruction of the Vega, made such a vigorous sally, that had Prince Alfonso been alone in command, he might have received a second lesson still more disastrous than the first. The presence of the king, however, put new spirits and valor into the troops; the Moors were driven back to the city, and the Christians pursued them to the very gates. As the king had not sufficient forces with him to attempt the capture of this place, he contented himself with the mischief he had done, and, with some more which he subsequently affected, he returned to Cordova to let his troops rest from their fatigues.

While the king was in this city, a messenger arrived from his mother, the Queen Berenguela, informing him of her intention of coming to pay him a visit. A long time had elapsed since they had seen each other, and her extreme age rendered her anxious to embrace her son. The king, to prevent her from taking so long a journey, set off to meet her, taking with him his Queen Juana. The meeting took place in Pezuelo, near Burgos,¹ and was affecting on both sides, for never did son and mother love and honor each other more truly. In this interview, the queen represented her age and increasing weakness, and her incapacity to cope with the fatigues of pub-

¹ Some chroniclers, through mistake, make it Pezuelo, near Ciudad Real, in the mountains on the confines of Granada.