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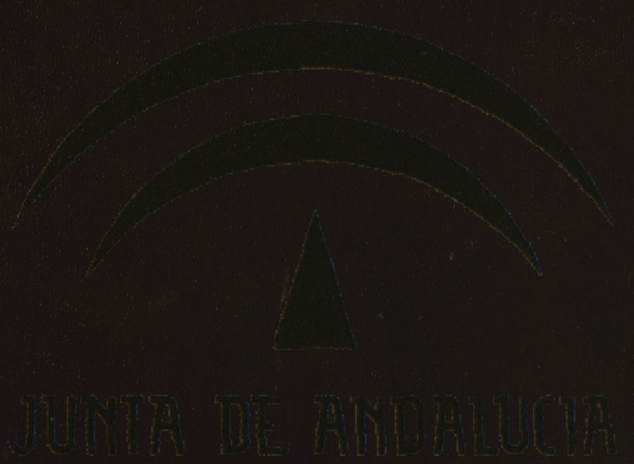
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YEAR  
IN SPAIN

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A

**YEAR IN SPAIN.**

Proyecto de la Alhambra y Generalife

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JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife  
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*A Cyrus Reddick*

# YEAR IN SPAIN.

BY

A YOUNG AMERICAN.

Bien se lo que son tentaciones del demonio, y que una de las mayores es ponerle a un hombre en el entendimiento que puede componer y imprimir un libro, con que gane tanta fama como dineros, y tantos dineros cuanta fama.

CERVANTES.

Donativo del Sr. Conde

Romanes á la Biblioteca

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A

# YEAR IN SPAIN.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### KINGDOM OF NEW CASTILE.

Second Excursion.—Father Patrick.—The Carro.—Arrival at Aranjuez.—Jose.—The Palaces and Gardens.—Tedious Ride to Toledo.—Pause at a Venta.—Renew our Journey.—Wamba.—Arrival at Toledo.

ON my return from Segovia, I received intelligence which made me anxious to depart with as little delay as possible for the south of Spain. Being, however, extremely unwilling to leave Castile without visiting Toledo, I determined to steal time enough to make a short journey to that famous old city, and to turn a little aside in the way, in order to see something of the palaces and gardens of the much boasted Aranjuez.

On the first of April I was ready to depart, and as there would be no diligence passing through

Aranjuez until Wednesday, I endeavoured to find some earlier conveyance. Of the many galeras which trade regularly to the four kingdoms of Andalusia, there were none just then ready; but I was able at length, with the assistance of my good friend Don Diego, to find a *carro* in the Calle Toledo, which was to start at an early hour on the following morning. Finding myself at the time in the neighbourhood of Father Patrick, and remembering that he had offered me a letter, in case I should go to Toledo, to an old friend of his—a canon in the metropolitan cathedral—I entered his house, and going up a single pair of stairs, rang the bell at the door of his apartment.

Father Patrick was an Irishman, who had come when a youth to Spain, and had studied theology, as many of his countrymen had done before, in the Colegio de los Irlandeses at Salamanca. Since then he had passed an eventful life, chequered with a more than usual share of that incident and adventure which has been the lot of the Spanish clergy, during the various revolutions which have of late convulsed the Peninsula. He had, doubtless, taken an active part in politics; for he was once a prisoner of the French, and with his liberty had like to have lost his life. But he had gone safely through all these troubles, and now that the church had again triumphed over the constitution, he was busily em-

ployed in securing the advantages of victory. For aught I know, he might have been connected with that vast system, by means of which the Spanish hierarchy not only influence, but control the leading measures of state; that parallel government, which, though unseen, runs beside the ostensible one—is constantly informed of every thing going on all over the world, of a favorable or unfavorable tendency to the cause of the church—and is ever ready with heart and hand to forward the great interests of that alliance, by means of which the Altar and the Throne still struggle to maintain their tottering dominion. Be this as it may, Father Patrick was often in possession of news, foreign and domestic, before they had reached the diplomatic circles; and I even once heard him say, when bewailing a disaster which had befallen the crusaders in Portugal, that he had been in possession of the particulars ere they were known at the palace.

Before I had time to give a second pull at the bell of Father Patrick, his own voice was heard within calling "*Quien?*" I gave the usual answer, and was at once admitted. He was no longer habited in the long hat, low robe and flowing cloak of the Spanish priest; but had on a dark surtout, beneath which were seen a pair of neat legs in black stockings. A small black neck-stock, having a narrow streak of violet, and a silk skull-

cap to cover the tonsure, alone indicated the man of God. As for his face, it was well fed and rosy, full of mirth, frankness, and good humor; in short, it was all Irish. He had been sitting at a table covered with books, breviaries, and newspapers, and in front of his chair was a half-written paper, which he presently covered, and which might very well have been a letter to the noisy Shiel or the noisier O'Connell.

And here, too, I would willingly tell the reader of a pilgrim, who was very often in the company of Father Patrick. He was the son of a protestant clergyman in Ireland, but had gone back to the faith of Saint Peter, and, by way of penance, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He was a tall man, with lank white hair hanging about his features, from under a broad-brimmed hat. In his right hand was the long staff of the pilgrim, whilst, for garments, he wore a surtout and breeches, which might have fitted him when he left Ireland, but which had grown far too capacious in less healthy climes. With the limbs and frame of a giant, our pilgrim had not only the simplicity, but even the squeaking tones of a child; for he had lost his voice in a fit of dysentery in Palestine. His language was simple and unaffected, and from much reading of the Bible, he had caught the Scripture phraseology, which was rendered still more quaint

by his cracked unmanageable voice, which would change from a bass to a treble, mount a full octave, and quaver off into a whine at the end of his sentences. He had many moving accidents by flood and field to tell of, and many wonders concerning the Holy Land, together with sore rib-roastings received from infidel Turks during his lonely pilgrimage; which meek and pious narrations would often be interrupted by a hearty fat laugh or a broad jest from Father Patrick, who held both pilgrimage and self-denial in great contempt, but whose lewd waggery was little regarded or perhaps understood by his simple-minded companion. To return from this digression, Father Patrick, when he found I was going to Toledo, at once offered me a note to the Canonigo, which he wrote upon the spot, and I returned home with every thing ready for the journey.

Having risen the next day at an early hour, I repaired in due time to the inn of my carro. And here, lest the reader should form too magnificent an idea of our vehicle from the favorable sound of its name, it may not be amiss to tell him that it was neither more nor less than a rough cart, made entirely with the broad axe. Instead of shafts, it had a single piece of timber projecting from the centre, by means of which and a transverse beam, the vehicle was sustained in a horizontal position, resting upon the backs of the two mules which

drew it. Like the galera, it had a canvas covering, under which, and upon a solid load of various commodities, the passengers were to be accommodated. All being ready, we got in and sallied through the gate of Toledo. The carro I soon discovered to be a very inferior conveyance to the galera. The latter, covering a very large space, is not easily disturbed, and rolls over the ground with a certain gravity of motion; but the carro is a restive, vivacious vehicle, hopping and jumping over every pebble, and, inasmuch as you cannot seat yourself at any great distance from the wheels, its caprices are all brought home to you.

Towards noon we had gone fourteen miles, which was half the journey, when we stopped to dine in Valdemoro—Valley of the Moor. Our meal was rather a homely one, consisting of a soup seasoned with garlic, which was served up in a large earthen basin, from which each one helped himself with a wooden spoon. Next came the puchero, from which the soup had been made; and then a salad. This being despatched, each one sought a bench or table, upon which to make a hasty siesta. At two we again departed from Valdemoro. The sun was very powerful. There was not a breath of air, and the heat became intense. Furthermore, it had not rained for some time, and the dust which covered the road was as fine as powder, and rose into the

air upon the slightest agitation. We had not got far from Valdemoro, when we were overtaken by two galeras of the king's stables, conveying furniture to Aranjuez, preparatory to the removal of the court. Each of them was drawn as usual by a great number of mules, so that they did not lack the means of kicking up a dust. Our charioteer, being young and ardent, was anxious to recover the lead. This the galera men would not consent to, so we galloped on, in the cloud of dust which followed them. Not content with outstripping us and choking us with dust, the galera men now rallied and ridiculed us. In this, however, they had no advantage of our man, who in his jokes treated majesty itself with little ceremony. "*Los caleseros del rey, poca honra!*"—"The king's wagoners, forsooth! small is the honor!" The Spaniards, though on ordinary occasions grave and taciturn, when they become excited by a race, or by any other contest for superiority, are the wildest creatures in the world.

In due time we reached the bold bank of the Jarama, and caught a view of that stream, of the more distant Tagus, and of the verdant groves of Aranjuez, all contrasting most gratefully with the dusty sterility of the country through which we had been passing. We descended by a winding road to the valley of the Jarama, crossed that noble

bridge of which I have elsewhere spoken, and before five o'clock our carro had traversed the Tagus, and paused for us to descend in the Plaza of Aranjuez. I had scarce reached the ground before several lads offered their services to carry my little travelling bag. All looked disappointed except the successful candidate, who took the prize under his arm, and led the way to the posada.

Having shaken off a portion of the dust, which had gathered round me during the journey, I walked forth to refresh myself in a ramble along the banks of the Tagus. In crossing the Plaza to join the river, I was accosted by a lad, whom I presently recognised to be one of those who had offered to conduct me to the posada. He asked me if I had lost any thing when I got down from the carro, and at the same time took from his cap a cut glass ink-stand with a brass cover, which fitted tightly with a screw. I was pleased with this little act of honesty in a needy boy, and on turning to take more notice of him, was struck with his frank sunburnt face, and keen black eye. Having asked him to show me to a pleasant walk, he took me at once across the bridge, and as we traced a foot-path which lay along the margin of the river, I drew from him a story which was more than melancholy.

Jose—for such was the name of the lad—had

never known his father; as he had been born to sorrow, he might also have been begotten in guilt. All that he knew of himself was, that three years before, at the period when the entry of the French troops into Spain had restored the priest party to preponderance and power—at that period of universal licence, when from a pulpit in Madrid it was publicly proclaimed to be no sin to kill the child of a Constitutional, though in its mother's womb—two royalists had entered their dwelling in the dead of night, and despatched his mother with their knives. Jose could not tell whether this murder had been instigated by religious or political fanaticism, or by revengeful jealousy—it was enough for him that they had killed his mother. Since that fatal night, he had wrestled for his bread, as best he could. His character seemed to have formed itself prematurely, and though only twelve years old, he had already something of the bearing and dignity of manhood. Yet his ragged clothing and uncombed hair showed that he still needed a mother's care.

I was greatly struck with the solitary and unfriended condition of this poor boy, and determined to employ him the next day in showing me the wonders of Aranjuez. In returning towards the posada our road lay through the market place. It was thronged with laborers, returning from their

work in the palaces and gardens, and who paused in groups to talk over the gossip of the day. All the men wore the undress of royalist volunteers. I had no where seen so many of these birds of evil omen. In one group near which we passed, I noticed a stout, powerful man with thick hair and long black mustaches. His jacket was hanging carelessly from the left shoulder, and a red cockade of most royal dimensions was stuck under the ribbon of his hat. He followed us with his eyes as we went by, and when we had turned a corner, the boy drew towards me and said, "It was he who killed my mother!"—" *Es el, quien mató á mi madre!*"

The next morning I was waked at sunrise, by my little companion of the day before; and we went at once to the principal palace. This building was commenced by Charles V., who delighted in Aranjuez. Since then many ranges of buildings have been erected for the accommodation of the throng with which this court is always accompanied. They are all built with arcades and terraces. Had a uniform plan been observed throughout, they would form a noble assemblage. The arrangement and furniture of the interior have nothing striking, and there are few good paintings. But it is upon its gardens, rather than upon its palaces, that Aranjuez founds its reputation. They are indeed delightful. The Tagus, being dammed up, is rendered navi-

gable above for the amusement of the court, and at the same time its waters are poured at pleasure over the grounds, and led to the roots of every shrub. This may account for the unequalled size and luxuriance of the trees. A portion of the river being thus diverted to irrigate the garden, the remainder rushes over the dam, forming a perpetual cascade beneath the windows of the palace. The garden is laid out in straight walks, adorned by arbors, parterres, fountains, and groups of statues, and the trees, instead of being trimmed to the quick, are left to their own luxuriance.

Leaving the palace, we now struck into the *Calle de la Reyna*, a fine wide road, which runs along the Tagus, and is shaded by noble trees. The river in its windings sometimes receded from the road, sometimes approached it closely. The space between them formed one continuous orchard, called the Garden of Spring, planted with peach, pear, plum, almond, and cherry trees, which were then covered with flowers, exhaling the most grateful fragrance. Fruit trees certainly add a wonderful charm to a mere pleasure garden; for they carry with them that idea of utility which raises every thing in human estimation. Nor did Flora withhold her aid in decking forth this Garden of Primavera. On every side were seen bushes of roses and beds of the gayest flowers, enclosed in hedges

of odoriferous shrubs, whilst the vine, clambering along the trunks of the trees, was preparing, with shoot and tendril, to send abroad its airy festoons. My enjoyment of the garden was shared by the whole feathered tribe, for the groves and shrubberies resounded with their songs. The nightingales are said, especially, to delight in this favored abode, where they arrive in incredible numbers about the middle of April, to pass their joyous season of love and matrimony.

Never have I made so pleasant a walk as this along the Calle de la Reyna, and beside the Garden of Primavera. The time was that auspicious hour, when the sun had just strength enough to dissipate the coolness of the morning without bringing in exchange the least feeling of languor, and ere he had yet drunk up the dewdrops, which still clung to the leaves, the blossoms, and the branches. The place, too, was Aranjuez, the land of Galatea, the scene of many a pastoral ditty; whilst the river which glided by with scarcely a ripple, reflecting the flying clouds, the azure sky, the hovering birds, the stately trees which skirted its banks, or the humbler willows which plunged their branches into its current, was the *Tajo dorado* of Cervantes, Gongora, and Garcilaso. As for the season of the year, it was that very vernal time, sung by poets and eulogized by moralists, when nature, escaping from the

dreary durance of her wintry sleep, arrays herself once more in the habiliments of joy; that spring, which we love by comparison with the past and in anticipation of the future, whose promises we value higher than the realities of summer, because not having yet reached maturity, it does not bring with it the idea of decay, just as we prefer virgin beauty to the perfection of womanhood, or the blowing to the full-blown rose.

Tracing the stream upward, we came at length to the Casa de los Marineros. This is a naval arsenal in miniature, with its buildings, its dock-yard, its ships, and even its sailors, who come from the sea-coast, and wear the naval uniform. Opposite is a little battery with embrasures for cannon, and, in the time of Bourgoanne, a number of frigates in miniature might be seen with spread canvas and fluttering pennons, coursing it over the Tagus, engaged in mock combat with each other, or in bombarding the battery. The only boat which I saw was the king's barge. It was gorgeously decorated, and seemed manned with statues, rising like mermaids above the water.

Leaving behind the naval arsenal, we next came to the Casa del Labrador. This fairy palace was built by Charles IV., a prince who added a passion for rural enjoyments and a refined taste in the arts to a singular destitution of every honorable feeling

Its exterior forms three sides of a square, with busts and statues standing in niches in its walls, or upon the balustrade which surrounds the court-yard. The decoration of the interior is rich, elegant, and tasteful; but, by a singular caprice, the apartment usually doomed to the most scrupulous concealment is here the most conspicuous of all. Its windows command the pleasantest view of the surrounding country; whilst within it is decorated with the costliest tables, vases, and time-pieces, and even hung round with four superb paintings, drawn by the magic pencil of Girodet, and presented by Napoleon.

The court comes to Aranjuez in April, and remains until the dog-days, when it removes to La Granja; for, when the violent heats of summer set in, the air of this place is loaded with exhalations from the swampy valley, and becomes so noxious, that even the inhabitants are forced to withdraw to the neighbouring highlands. Thus Aranjuez, which in May has a population of nearly ten thousand, has no other inhabitants in August than the few that are detained by poverty\*. From La Granja the court retires, as we have seen, to the Escorial, and thence, in November, to Madrid. From Madrid it goes to the Prado, and thence, again, in the spring,

\* Bourgoanne.

to Aranjuez. Each of these *Sitios Reales*, not to mention several minor palaces, has its separate administration and train of attendants—a monstrous state of things, utterly inconsistent with the beggarly condition of the national resources.

Of all the *Sitios Reales*, however, none may compare with Aranjuez. Indeed, when the powerful sun of this elevated region strikes with unmitigated fury upon the naked plains of Castile, here one may find lofty trees to intercept the burning rays, and shade that is ever impervious. The smell is greeted with the most grateful perfumes, and the singing of birds, and the rushing of water in subterranean canals, or its splash as it falls from ever-gushing fountains, or the louder roar of the tumbling cataract, come cheeringly upon the ear.

After being detained a day longer at Aranjuez than I had contemplated, for want of a conveyance, my little friend Jose at length procured me the means of reaching Toledo. Indeed, I was just thinking of the expediency of departing afoot, on the fourth morning of my absence from Madrid, when Jose knocked at my door, and told me that he had got a horse for me, and that he was to go along, to bring him back, on a borrico. I liked this arrangement well. So, paying my bill and packing up my sack, I sallied out into the courtyard, to commence my journey. I did not expect

to be very splendidly mounted, but my astonishment and confusion were indeed great, on finding that I had to ride upon a miserable *rocin*, that had lost its hair by some disease, especially upon the tail, which was as long and as naked as the trunk of an elephant. The only flesh the animal had left seemed to have descended into its legs, and as for his hips, his backbone, and ribs, they were every where conspicuous, save where covered by a huge pack-saddle, stuffed with straw and covered with canvas. What made the matter still worse, the master of the beast, an old man in a brown cloak, held his hand before me, as I was approaching to take a nearer view, and told me that if it was *igual* to me, he would take the two dollars beforehand. I explained to the old man how very possible it was that his horse would not live to complete the journey; to which he replied, with some indignation, that he would carry me to *las Indias*, much more to Toledo. As he continued to hold out his hand with a resolute air, I dropped the required sum into it, and grasping the pack-saddle for want of a mane, I vaulted at once into the seat. The back of the poor animal cracked and twisted under the burthen, and as he gave some indications of a disposition to lie down, I drew forcibly upon the halter. Thus roughly handled, his neck bent backward like a broken bow, and, making a few retrograde steps,

he backed full upon Jose, who, well pleased with the idea of so long an excursion, was drawn up behind, upon a little mouse-colored ass, with the game-bag, which contained all my travelling equipage, hung round his neck and hanging from his shoulder. Three or four sound blows from the cudgel of Jose, accompanied by a kick under the belly from the master of the beast, corrected this retrograde motion, which being changed for an advance, we sallied out of the inn and took our way through the market-place, to the admiration of all Aranjuez.

Leaving the palace on the right, we entered a fine road which passed through the royal possessions, and was skirted on either side with fine trees, planted in a double row. This part of Aranjuez is similar to Flanders in its level surface and the fertility of the soil; whence its name of Campo Flamenco. Having passed the barrier, which marks the royal domain, the trees, which had originally been planted a mile or two farther, became rare and scattering. The few that still remained were either wounded in the trunk, or had a ring of bark removed, with a view to destroy them; a singular evidence of that inveterate antipathy to trees, which has already been noticed as being prevalent throughout the central provinces of Spain.

During the remainder of the seven leagues, which

lie between Toledo and Aranjuez, we passed through a country, once, perhaps, by the aid of irrigation, rendered as fertile as the neighbouring fields of Aranjuez, but now a complete desert, without inhabitants and without cultivation. The valley of the Tagus continued level as we advanced; but towards Toledo, the course of the river seemed to be arrested by a rocky barrier, upon one of the pinnacles of which the city was seen, conspicuous by its lofty Alcazar. We did not follow the circuitous course of the stream, but left it far on the right. Sometimes it approached the road, and then receded from it again; but where the water itself could not be discovered, its meanderings might easily be traced by a winding track of verdure. But the distant vegetation, the cooling noise of the water, and the shade of the trees, were all lost upon us, or, still worse, seemed placed so near only to mock our suffering. The heat was intense; for, as is usual in this climate, a cloudless sky left a free action for the rays of the sun. The dust, too, set in motion by my horse, had time to envelope me, ere he could get beyond it. Nor was there any comfort in my seat. The pack-saddle was hard and uneven, and, being without stirrups, my legs, abandoned to their own support, seemed at each instant to grow longer and heavier. I had tired them, too, in kicking the ribs of my beast, in order to make him keep up with

Jose and his borrico, which moved its feet so quickly over the ground, that it seemed even to be getting on much faster and leaving me behind, though it preserved always the same interval. It was a long and a weary ride this; for the lofty Alcazar of Toledo seemed ever to maintain the same distance as when we first discovered it, in emerging from the groves of Aranjuez.

Towards noon, we reached a part of these desert and barren downs, where some laborers were constructing nórias to raise water for the purpose of irrigation. Hard by stood a solitary *venta*, which we gladly entered, to procure some food, and to escape awhile from the fury of the sun. A muleteer accompanied by two women had paused just before us, and was busy skinning a hare which he had just shot, and from which they were about to make their dinner. As we carried no gun, and had not been so fortunate, we asked a coarse-haired, dark-eyed old woman, what she had to eat; and, being answered that there were eggs, we ordered a *tortilla*. Our hostess went into the next room, whence some hens had just come cackling forth to join the group that were picking the crumbs in the kitchen, and presently returned with half a dozen new-laid eggs, breaking them at once into a frying-pan, the bottom of which she had previously covered with oil. Whilst this operation was going

on, Jose led his beast to the shady side of the house, and, taking a few handfuls of barley from a canvas bag which hung from the back of the borrico, he threw it upon the ground, and left the two animals eating together in peace, like Rosinante and the Rucio.

The eggs were soon emptied into an earthen dish, where they floated at large in a sea of oil; the dish was placed on a low table, which, for want of a bench—the only one in the house being occupied by the party of the muleteer—we drew close to the door, so as to take our seats upon the sill. Now that we had our meal before us, however, it was not so easy to eat it. The bread and the wine, indeed, gave us no trouble; but the eggs were as much beyond our reach, as fishes that you see in the water, but have no means of catching. In vain did we ask for a spoon or a fork. Our hostess only regretted that she could do nothing for us. Until a week before, she had two wooden spoons and one horn one, for the accommodation of cavaliers, who did not carry their own utensils; but some *quintas*, or conscripts, had passed by, on their way to the frontier of Portugal, and halted during the heat of the day at her house. Since then, she had seen nothing either of her horn spoon or of the two wooden ones, and she never meant to buy another. As our invention was sharpened by hunger,

Jose and I bethought ourselves to cut the bread into slices, and to use two pieces as chop-sticks, after the manner of the Chinese. In this way, and by lending each other occasional assistance in catching a refractory egg, we were enabled to drive them, one by one, into a corner, and draw them out, until nothing remained but the oil.

Leaving the venta, when we had finished our meal, we set forward anew. Soon after we came up with a curate, who was doubtless going to pass the holy week in Toledo, with his *ama* or house-keeper, and a good number of little orphans and nieces. The *pádre cura* was seated upon a mule, with his robes drawn up around him, so as to make room for the back of the animal, and displaying a pair of legs which seemed all unused to the saddle. As for his hat, it was tied under the chin by a white handkerchief, which passed over the crown. He had, altogether, a very helpless, roasted look, yet seemed to take every thing with much christian resignation.

At length, towards three in the afternoon, we drew near the end of the valley, and began to approach the rocky pinnacle upon which stands the city of Toledo. Our journey became more pleasant towards the close; for a rugged mountain, along whose base the road wound its way, protected us from the scorching heat of the sun, whilst here