

The Darro "Alhambra" *

WASHINGTON IRVING'S desire—long felt, he tells us—to be able to visit the Alhambra has been the cause of many another wish of the same sort since his book of 'tales and essays' was first printed, and the publishers of the Darro Edition of his book will be responsible for the spread of similar desires. They have taken 'The Alhambra,' put it in an illuminated cover, each page in an illuminated border, and added some thirty photogravures of scenes in and about the old Moorish castle. These last are taken from photographs specially made for the work; and although there have been changes since Irving's visit, they have not always been for the worse. The elm wood planted not long before has now grown into a magnificent setting for the old towers and gateways. The great fore-court, the 'Plaza de los Aljibes,' is little changed except in being better kept; the picturesque population of the old palace, which did more than a little to assist in its decay, has been ousted; white-wash has been removed from many a tiled wall, and some little necessary rebuilding has been done. The fountains now seldom play, the water supply being short; but otherwise, we are assured, the plates of these two pretty volumes show us substantially the Alhambra in which Irving lived and dreamed. One of these plates shows the window of his lodging looking out on the tangled mass of cypress and orange trees known as the 'Garden of Lindaraxa.' Another shows us a group of those gypsies who burrow under the Alhambra hill and who have charmed not only Irving but Borrow and George Eliot and everybody with a taste for the slatternly-picturesque who has ever made their acquaintance. In still others we see the Wine Gate, now railed up; the Alberca, with its slender colonnade and fish-pond bordered by myrtle hedges; the Darro, and the Tower of Comares; the Vega, and the Generalife. The second volume shows us the lion court; the Sultana's cypress in the Generalife gardens; the aqueduct and the mosque of the Alhambra, not to mention many bits of scenery, architecture and ornament. The borders of red and gold hold all these pictures together like the filigree links of a rosary, and

* *The Alhambra*. By Washington Irving. Darro Edition. \$6. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

keep the eyes filled with something of that local color that Irving knows so well how to suggest to the mind. In all respects this is one of the handsomest holiday books of the season.

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