

THE THREE- CORNERED HAT

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The Three-Cornered Hat by Pedro A. de Alarcón & Jacob S. Fassett

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PEDRO A. DE ALARCÓN & JACOB S. FASSETT

THE THREE- CORNERED HAT

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THREE-CORNERED
HAT

BY
PEDRO A. DE ALARCÓN

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH
By JACOB S. FASSETT, Jr.



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1918

*Alfred
Colonial
1-15-39
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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

PEDRO ANTONIO DE ALARCON was the fourth of ten children. Born on the tenth day of March, 1833, in the picturesque little city of Guadix, in the province of Granada, Spain, he came of a noble and ancient family whose considerable fortune had disappeared in the Napoleonic wars and the subsequent political disorders.

He studied philosophy at the Guadix Seminary under a secularized Franciscan monk, and took his degree as a Bachelor in that subject when he was but fourteen years of age. In Granada he took up the study of law, but the inability of his parents to furnish him with the necessary funds soon forced him to return to his native city, where at his father's request, he embarked upon the study of theology.

Poor as he was, he managed somehow to collect a considerable library which embraced books in

INTRODUCTION

French and Italian as well as in Latin and Spanish. French and Italian being absolutely unknown tongues to him, he forthwith set about their acquisition by a rather unusual method. Among his possessions were two copies of *Jerusalem Delivered*, one of which was in French, the other in his own tongue. By dint of infinite patience and a good deal of hard work, he succeeded in acquiring at least a reading knowledge of French in an incredibly short time. He taught himself Italian by the same method.

As his reading progressed, his love for literature grew, and his taste for theological studies decreased. He determined to become a writer; and therefore, as the first and most necessary step in that direction, he decided to go to Madrid. His parents did not look with favour upon his literary ambitions, as they felt that he should continue in the more lucrative career that the church offered. However he had made up his mind, and he cast about him for means to accomplish his purpose.

Finally, through a young novelist of his acquaintance, Torcuato Tarrago, who lived in