

T. George Smyth
1843
whits

Biarritz Saturday Ev. 1 July 1st

You will be rather surprised, my dear J., after the last letters which I wrote from Madrid to find me hailing from this place; and as the great & growing fame thereof may not yet have reached your ears, I will tell you that it is a thriving watering place about six miles from Bayonne - you will begin to suspect that it is near the sea, which it is indeed; the roar of the breakers now sounding most agreeably in my ears - a small bay with little Islands, and a beautiful beach; on one of the headlands which form it, stands the light house at the mouth of the River Adour; further on, the sandy coast of the pays des Landes; and on the other side, the Pyrenees and the Mountains of Spain; such is the view landward; before us is the "open sea"; that is, the Bay of Biscay, and this is the feature which particularly attracts me, - you, who have not yet tried the effect of a few months in dry, dusty, Madrid, cannot estimate the parched feeling with which one gazes at the broad blue water: It is exceedingly refreshing - but before going further, I may as well mention how it happens that I am found here so suddenly:

My friend Wright whose arrival in Madrid I have already mentioned was to return to London at the beginning of this last week, and as Mr. Irving's departure would probably be deferred some time, he suggested to me

that I should take advantage of so good an opportunity, to reach the frontier and make my visit to the Spaniards: I agreed both in writing, & in word to have started on Sunday night. - Then on Monday night, - but the news from the Spaniards was so bad, that Mr. Astor feared for his safety - Burgos, Bilbao, and other towns on the French side had been taken, the French had joined them, and the mail & ~~stoppage~~ had been stopped - Spanish letters were stopped, and all our friends declared that if we crossed the border, we should fall into the hands of the others, or in the confusion of the revolution there had been a general post-delivery to add to the elements of disorder - at last, however, on Sunday night or rather early Wednesday morning, the soldiers out of Madrid, armed with muskets of various kinds and small Phil's domestic pistols, carefully loaded, in addition to an escort of four dragoons: we met with no impediment as the snow lay all except a heavy storm of rain & wind in crossing the snow-climbed range, and on the morning arrived in Burgos - at the Post house where we breakfasted, our authorization to travel had been demanded and mine, in which my official character was described at full length, was ~~presented~~ presented: it was promptly returned to us, and we went on our way before: - Burgos - the Spaniards are killed in the same way and burning through the Spanish frontier on Monday night, we arrived at Bayona. ~~Friday~~ Friday (Friday) morning at 12. Making his journey from Madrid in 53 hours, in spite of frequent rains and heavy winds: It was a relief to us to cross the frontier, not from any risk to our individual selves, but to the Republic of Spain which the Spaniards 'might not have expected, the official deals to the contrary notwithstanding - the route from Bayona on the road to the anterior frontier at Madrid -

The journey to Bayona, was very pleasant, though we in good spirits & very lively: we laughed and joked, and soon and then dropped a slight report of the changing horses and overtook the carriage: the Captain breakfasted with me at Bayona yesterday and after two hours cool, hurried off on his way to Paris - I had

the rest of the day quietly - dined with a country hotel from Bayona of Mr. J. Graham), the Mayor of Bayona, and at one a the station of to Bay - found myself in a cabriolet for the place.

I am very pleasantly situated in a house belonging to the English Vice Consul, with a fine view of the sea and I share, a la carte in a capital hotel connected with across the street - the village is small, and dependent on the town, and the population is composed of the usual classes of bourgeois or at least places: some of my Madrid friends started this morning for Switzerland, and leaving I was in Bayona called at the hotel on their way, but I was still busy making up for these last night - Bayona is at Bayona certainly the nation, and it was with difficulty, I could secure a seat for "la Juive" in favorite piece tomorrow night - I saw the little man in the street today: he has a most warlike and look. Tomorrow & Monday are great festive days in honor of St. Pierre - on Monday I am invited to a beautiful place two leagues distant, where the tide is best - after dinner we are to walk abroad the grounds and see the beauties during a merry making - you remember the "Don"? - Where the first act is ended by a dance.

On Monday and Tuesday from the south of France.

Our place will be my head quarters for some or few days, with occasional excursions - Cannot distinguish is I believe at Bay: I have written to him that I am in the neighborly hotel. I shall go from there to Bay, then to Bayona where the Spaniards is, and Cauter - after that I have decided little plans for my three weeks holiday - Why I shall enter Spain is yet uncertain - It will depend on the condition of the country, at this moment - had almost as it can be: the last news seems to threaten the downfall of Bayona in a short time - His troops are said to have driven back from Barcelona, and Bilbao the port of the Bayona Spaniards on the Bay of Biscay had joined in the general cry to kill the bourgeoisie has now made the circle of Spain: Bayona

Full
14. of agents, Spanish refugees & Intriguers of all kinds - two or three noted
Christians General crossed the frontier two nights ago. - I think it not
improbable that serious difficulties may grow out of these Spanish
troubles in other quarters.

11 Buena noches! - the large French bed at my elbow
is most invitingly open, and the low beam of the bookcase already makes
me nod; to which may also be added a long ~~stroll~~ stroll over the
rocks & along the sea shore. Adt.

11 July 5th Wednesday Evg - I have been passing backwards & forwards
between this place & Bayonne since I wrote on Saturday and shall bid
good bye to the sea tomorrow on my way to Pau. - the two last days
& until 2. pm. today have been scorchingly hot - wind overland dry and
heating - this afternoon there was a change and a fresh westerly breeze
came up, bringing along with some black heavy clouds from the open
ocean: as yet no rain, tho the sun set in a dark gloomy bank, and the
horizon is threatening - I have at this moment a beautiful scene from
my window - on one side a moon in the second quarter, bright & clear
with half the heavens to herself, on the other the sea & sky of the same
dusky lead colour, not to be distinguished from each other, and the light on the
headland shining doubly bright in the surrounding darkness: there will be a
row before morning - I am sorry to leave the salt water, but I wish to
see the Livingstons & Lourdes, and make an excursion along the Garonne beyond
Toulouse, so that I am rather pressed for time. I know scarcely any body
here, and pass my ~~days~~ days on the rocks & in the surf, where I bathe twice a
day, very pleasantly - a sail is almost an impossibility, tho I shall try
to leave one tomorrow, if I can find the owners of one or two fishing boats, I
have seen on the shore.

In the Paris papers of the 2nd the Academi arrival
is mentioned and my letters I imagine are on their way to Madrid or more
probably stopped at Burgos by the d-d Junta: I should like to make them a
speech on the sacredness of private correspondence.

The sea growls a little louder: there are sharp flashes
of lightning and other signs of a lull among the elements: I shall sleep soundly
through it all, while it rather heightens one's enjoyment, provided there is no
danger of having to turn out to let go another anchor: Good night Yours ever Adt.