

Madrid Tuesday Nov. 7th 1843.

My dearest M:

While I was at work with my octogenarian professor, Don Gregorio, this morning, Pepe brought me your letter of 13th & Papa's of the 14th. October: From yours I could follow the movements of the family subsequent to the great northern expedition; and the last gave me very agreeable accounts of the financial prospects in the matters of Steamboats and railroads as to which I can at this distance I cannot help feeling some uncertainty. — you had received my dates to the 9th Sept^r, after the departure of Mr. Irving, and as I look back, the space seems incredibly short for two journeys between here and New York: this last passage of the *Lixidia* however has been very rapid.

After several days of cold rainy weather we are now, yesterday & today, enjoying a bright warm sun and clear sky; a full moon too gives us beautiful nights: for the last week I have been engaged in showing the lions to Jasper Livingston, Carroll's brother, who arrived here in such a discouraged mood, from the disagreements of the journey, and the discomforts of all things and all places that he was on the point of returning after a few days sojourn: I have improved his condition, shown him the better sides of Madrid life, and by dining him every

day, and making him feel at home in the legation have induced him to remain. - he is tall, good looking, and gentlemanlike: speaks Spanish very well without having ^{been} before in Spain and is a favorable specimen of one's country men; on his own account as well as for the sake of his family I feel disposed to be amiable, without saying anything of the relief, after a solitary life of two months, afforded by a conversable individual from one's native land.

So the young ~~ones~~ was not to be caught? - I expected as much when he left, and charged him especially on that head, but having escaped - for ever I imagine - from diplomacy he no longer felt himself ^{bound} by my directions - Brewster has, it is probable, sailed by this time from England; he is quite a different character - tho' somewhat troubled also with mauvaise honte, - and if you see him you can get from him a great deal of valuable information: he has had excellent opportunities for informing himself and has improved them.

I had a note from Mr. J. yesterday morning dated 30th Oct. - his health was improving slowly, and his physician, one of the best in Paris announced that he should keep him under his care a fortnight longer - I suppose he will be back here about the end of the month: Uncle Geoffrey is enraptured with Gysi's acting in Norma which he says is one of the finest he has ever witnessed; to be classed with the performances of Siddons, Pasta, Duchesnes and other great luminaries of the century. In one of his drives she came unexpectedly upon Rogers the poet - sunning himself in the Champs Elysees. Tho' bowed with age, he still retains his companionable faculties and amused Mr. J. with a quiet anecdote of Queen Victoria and her dry & sententious minister Lord Aberdeen, who has had to attend her in her late nautical expeditions, much to his distaste. "I believe my lord," said she one day in a tone implying a favorable reply,

"I believe my lord, you are not often sea sick?" - "Always Madam," replied his lordship with grave emphasis. - "But - not - very sea sick, my lord?" - "Very Madam!" - Lord Aberdeen declares if she continues her cruising, he will have to resign.

The *Arco* (our Opera) flourishes gaily: Gury Stephan the dancing star continues to draw crowded houses in "Giselle" and toades the hearts & pockets of the Madridenos, who have never, except in their travels seen so much grace & lightness combined. I believe I told you that I was member of an association by which we had "Magnifique at her chere" the cr: tree of the theatre: being all diplomats our box has become the rendezvous of the Corps, so that we hear the news of the day & evening during the entractes. - Well, now to my story after all this preface - last night the Queen and her sister were present - the house illuminated & adorned, and crowded of course with the double attraction - at the end of the first act, divers representatives of Kings & potentates appeared to announce, that Genl. Narvaez had been fired at, in the calle Desengano; and an aide de Camp killed at his side. - It appears that he left his house at 8, on his way to the theatre and at the distance of a few hundred yards, rec^d two shots fired from under the portico of a church; - one of his ~~lords~~ ^{lords} was slightly wounded in the forehead; - a few steps further, more discharges - the coachman in terror drew up his horses - Narvaez called to him to drive on to the nearest corps de garde, shortly after, they rec^d quite a volley and another aide de Camp was shot in the head exclaiming as he fell upon the General's shoulder - "They have killed me!" - The assassins fled: the wounded man was carried to the nearest house; and Narvaez proceeded immediately to the barracks of two or three regiments - ordered the men under arms and patrols thro' the streets; sending notice of the occurrence to the Queen & the Ministers at the Opera: he himself appeared in his box at the second act, and remained through the performance; his gloves & vest stained with blood - It was a bright moon light night, and before the ballet was over, I sallied out with Livingston to stroll through the city,

- besides the usual escort of cavalry we found that Her little Majesty was guarded by a line of Infantry drawn up in the square before the Arco; and as we advanced, there were sentinels at the corners of the streets and orderlies dashed about at a furious rate: the ~~dashed~~ through the street in which the attempt was made and where the Captain General, Narvaez's, house is situated: It was a very picturesque scene: fragments of infantry & cavalry stationed at short intervals; the horsemen dismounted; but holding their long lances & bridles ready at a moment's notice to gallop off: no one was allowed to stop in this quarter; tho on other parts of the city groups were collected to talk of our "novedad," which had spread rapidly from one end of the town to the other. Not one of the assassins has yet been caught; tho the deed has been described and ^{the} night as I have said was ~~light~~ and clear: - there were probably about fifteen, and they fled thro' different streets: - What a police! What a city! What people! -

The discussion of the proposition for the Queen's Majority excites great interest, and the neighbourhood of the palace of the Deputies is crowded. It began yesterday, but will not probably last many days as there seems a large majority disposed to carry it thro' - the 19th is spoken of for the ceremony: the day of St. Isabella, and the name's day of the Queen: - Balls and dinners at the Palace are announced, of all which I shall keep you properly informed: There is a disposition to celebrate the event in regal style; but it is much fettered by a difficulty which is in the way of all Spanish governments: - an empty Treasury. -

Thursday Evl. - A note from Mr. Loudero a few days ago gave me the ~~the~~ ^{very} Staalsberg account of your Ocean expedition: I am trying to tempt ^{here} in order to ingratiate myself as much as possible, and thus not lose entirely this winter, which I have a presentiment is destined after all to annihilate my ^{my} ~~my~~ hopes: The ladies are arranging their trains; the men their uniforms for the great day tomorrow; the termination of the second Isabella's long & unfortunate minority: - Great preparations are making in several quarters to celebrate the event with proper rejoicings; and I hope sincerely they may reap all the benefit which is expected from it: - How provoking it would be if I were offered a grand cross of something on this happy occasion! - Adios. Yours M. H. -