

Madrid Tuesday Morn'g Nov: 21st 1843.

My dear Papa.

I received yesterday a long letter from Carroll Livingston to announce the receipt of a letter of thanks from you, which he says is so much more than his attentions to me deserved that he shall leave me to answer it for him - he accuses me of being the author of his much ado about nothing; and can only account for it ~~by~~ on the supposition that I am very much of a somebody at home - I shall begin to be of his opinion, and to think myself of some importance - in my absence at least.

The Ministerial crisis has now lasted more than a week and the entanglement increases daily - The Queen has been declared of age; - which signifies in other words, the rule of the parties and cliques which surround her; and the mockery of such a declaration appears already in the intrigues and shuffling among the notabilities who aspire to direct the government. The day following the one in which she swore to observe the Constitution, the Lopez Cabinet presented her a paper setting forth the many excellent reasons which induced them to retire and requesting her to accept their resignations - M. Olozaga then has an interview at which the Queen tells requests him to form a Ministry, at the same time expressing (according to her lesson) her entire confidence in the persons ^{then} ~~now~~ in office and her wish to retain them, if they could be induced to remain -

This is succeeded by two or three days of negotiations between Oloza and the Ministry, in which the latter appears to be playing fast and loose; - one day the Majority announcing that they would remain under certain conditions, the next day positively declaring that under any circumstances they would not retain their posts - As I said before, Oloza wished to avoid the necessity of forming a gov^t at this juncture, and when pushed to the wall by the Moderados, who fear and suspect him, attempted to form a junction with Cortina his rival, and induce him to share the responsibility and risk, but this Cortina has refused peremptorily to consent; and his position at present seems to be that of opposition to any possible arrangement; at the same time drawing to himself the discontented of all parties, and making a formidable party of Ultras, democrats, & Exaltados - Moderate men begin to despair of the situation, as the evidences of discord, selfishness, and the absence of any thing like public spirit, ~~are unfolded~~ ^{are} unfolded: The Moderados I believe, beginning to regret the part they took in pulling down Espartero, to whom they would have naturally succeeded at the expiration of the Minority, and who, tho a progressive, acted as a check upon the violent and extravagant men of that and other parties - Yesterday two new causes of difficulty were created by the Minister of the Interior, who has ordered the reorganisation of the National Militia within ten days which had been disbanded and abolished in July last; and has decreed that the elections for the Municipalities shall take place under a law which extends very much the right of suffrage, and by her opposition to it - was the cause of Christina's downfall in 1840. - The first measure secured to the Ayacuchas (Espartero's friends) and to the parties opposed to the Moderados, generally, arms and ^{military} organization; the second gives them the command of the municipal authority, which has been always important in Spain and plays a prominent part in revolutions and political disturbances. - To counterbalance these the Moderados count upon the army, and as they say the mass of the Nation which is not truly represented in the popular branch of the legislature. - The first is certainly a most unsafe reliance, and the last

may well be doubted, if under the present extended suffrage, it is not supported by the political views of the representatives of the people - Among the Moderados there are suggestions of Coats d'Etat; doing away with the Cortes, and Constitution, and allowing the Crown to rule without any of these impediments. Should the attempt be made, it will bring on a dreadful struggle.

I am fast confirming myself in the opinion, that as a nation the Spaniards are incapable of constitutional government, and that the "Rey Repto," the absolute King, is best adapted to their extraordinary character.

To day, the foreign gentlemen, Chefs de Mission only, - dined with her Majesty, in honor of Her Majority. As it is my first dinner with royalty and I have heard wonders of the magnificence of the apartments, the table, and service generally, I am very curious to see the show. - So my expectations are not required to appear in harness, so that one can make observations at one's ease, as well as enjoy the old Spanish wines, - if they have escaped the many revolutions. Nov. 23^d. - Mr. Oloza was appointed on the 21st Minister of Foreign affairs and President of the Council, - I have rec^d this morning the official note from him announcing it, - and yet nothing further has been done and matters are at a stand-still. It appears that between the jealousies of some and the distrust of others he cannot complete his cabinet, and the mischievous orders of the expiring ministry are thus allowed to continue in full force.

The news from Catalonia is not much more encouraging - Ametller the leader of the Insurgents, made some days since a convention with Genl. Pomi, by which he was to ~~leave~~ march at once from Lerida to Figueras and the castle of San Fernando, which was also by the treaty to be delivered up in five days - after ~~reaching~~ ^{reaching} the fortress, with 4 or 5. thousand men, sweeping up all the cattle and provisions on his way, Ametller complaining of some infraction on Pomi's part, of the stipulations, refuses to execute the treaty, and deliver up the fort, and commences a fire which was continued up to the last account. - The effect of this operation has been therefore to move the main body of insurgents from an almost indefensible City, whose ~~wall~~ defences were weakened recently by an inundation - to one of the strongest fortresses in Spain, fortified by Vauban, and which has always required either an overpowering force, or a blockade to reduce it - about

The same time a truce was entered into at Barcelona which it was supposed would terminate in a capitulation - at the last intelligence the truce had been broken off; the firing recommenced; and the citadel and principal square - where the last stand was to be made, - had been undomined by the rebels with the intention, when all was lost of destroying themselves amid the ruins of the city! -

Saturday Ev^g Nov^r 25 - Barcelona has surrendered on the most favorable terms to the insurgents, and Mr. Oloza has succeeded in forming a ministry, so that the political sky seems a little clearer.

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1843
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I have no news yet from Mr. Irving and begin to fear he has had a relapse - he wrote on the 10th intimating that he would be on his way before this time - Mr. Bresson is expected in 5 or 6 days and an attaché of the French Legation has been despatched to the port to meet him - They are still trying to destroy Narvaez - a week since a bourgeois was discovered who had been six days in his house employed to poison him with corrosive sublimate having been hired for the sum of \$3000 - and two nights ago I saw Narvaez at the Opera, with his escort of dragoons drawn up in front of the theatre - during the performance an old woman gave notice that three men with blunderbusses were lying in wait in the Plaza de Bilbao, a square just beyond our house - they escaped however before the dragoons could overtake them - These wretches will succeed at last.

I send a thousand kisses to Maria & the girls and wait with impatience for the letters from Davis by the next steamer - Your affectionate son A.H.