

Madrid Wednesday October 25th 1843

My dear Papa: I had delayed writing my last letter by the steamer of Nov. 4th in the hope of acknowledging to day your letters to the 1st Oct^r; but a storm in the Channel has intercepted the London mail of the 17th and with ~~them~~^{it} in all probability the letters by the Caledonia - I have thus a great pleasure in store for tomorrow or the day after.

I am continuing to lead the same uniform quiet life, which commenced with the departure of Mr. Irving, now nearly two months since: The business of the Legation is almost nil; no despatches arrive from Washington; where Spanish revolutions excite little interest or sympathy; and as there is a calm in affairs here at present I do not trouble them at home with ^{the} conjectures & flying reports which follow each other every half hour; equally unimportant and unfounded - Under these circumstances I can devote myself almost entirely to my own studies and pursuits: I have a Spanish Master with whom I laugh over my old friend Don Quixote, and whom (being also a classical scholar) I can consult on the doubtful passages of Horace: With these and the noble science which

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Hooker passes so highly, I occupy my hours at home until I
come at six; and after ^{dinner} being then somewhat tired of my own com-
pany, spend the evening at the opera, where I meet my diplomatic
colleagues and ~~hear~~ tolerably good music - This is the general outline
of each and every day varied occasionally by official dinners &
visits.

My health has been improving since my return and
my friends congratulate me generally on my appearance - living and
dining alone, one is not tempted to indulge in the good things of life,
with a cellar well stocked, I rarely drink wine at home, and can
thus get through the important event of the day in 15 or 20 minutes,
thrice saving much time and discomfort - I confess this mode of
life, is not altogether to my taste and would become irksome in
a few months more, Mr Irving is such excellent company that
you are independent of other resources and his absence makes a
gap which here beyond all other places it is difficult to fill -

This morning I rec^d a letter from Lasher living still at Bayonne;
~~he~~ will be here in two or three days, and as he is attached to the
Legation gentlemanlike, well informed, and the only "compatriote" within
300 miles, I suppose we shall see a good deal of each other.

I have no letters from Paris lately: at the last
accounts Uncle Geoffrey was confined to the house, or at all events could
only drive out, and was living, ~~hardly~~ in the little apartment
in the rue de la Vierge, seeing nobody except a few Americans,
he has placed himself under the best medical advice, and I hope

will remain quietly where he is until an established cure has been
effected: The insurrection against the Provisional Government, is confined
chiefly to the ~~three~~ principal cities where it broke out several weeks since,
viz. Barcelona, Saragossa, & Gerona: From the Commanding officer of the
government has assaulted this last town, which has been always remar-
kable for its defences, without success: At the last advice a truce had been
agreed upon between him and the leader of the rebels, in order that an
envoy from the latter should visit Barcelona, and other parts of Catalonia
and report to his friends the true condition of the province: Neither at
Saragossa nor Barcelona has any general attack been made the reinforce-
ments are constantly arriving to the besieging forces: The reports in regard
to the situation of these two cities are very various: the government papers
represent them as being under the dominion of mobs and the lowest classes,
and given up to pillage and disorder, while other statements announce
that order is tolerably well preserved, that they are well supplied with
arms & money, especially in Barcelona where there is a mint, and the
Santa are said to be coming 100,000 dollars in a week: This last
circumstance would tend to prolong the defence, as it is notorious that
the members of these revolutionary committees generally avail themselves
of the confusion and their "little brief authority" to fill their pockets,
trusting either to make their ~~peace~~ or their escape when the row is
over: The legislative bodies are meanwhile, proceeding with the examina-
tion of "las actas", or the certificates of elections: as soon as they are con-
stituted, the important question of the Queen's majority will be taken up,
and intrigues on this point, ^{are carried on} with all of Spanish activity, which
unfortunately for the Country, in this way alone, is ever exhibited:

There is already a marked division as to the mode of adopting
this measure: one party, the moderados, wishing that the gov^t
should declare the Queen of age, without consulting the Cortes, and
as one of the consequences of the late revolution; the other in favor
of a discussion and declaration by the legislature as giving the
act something of the sanction of constitutional forms. all is doubt
and uncertainty, and he is a bold man who ventures to predict the
events of the coming week: to shew the ^{feeling of} insecurity of the present ~~state~~ ^{rulers}
and that there is by no means a ~~bed~~ bed of roses I will mention a
little incident of last evening: There was a dull & tedious dinner at the
Dutch Ministers' given to the "chefs de mission" at which the Spanish
Secretary of State was present: about 8. a thunder storm ~~came up~~, while
we were at table, with a heavy clap which sounded like cannon or the
explosion of a mine a month ago: my eyes happened to be turned towards the
secretary and I have rarely seen such an expression of horror as appeared
upon his face: his mouth opened as if he would have swallowed the stout
dutchman at his side, and he staid vacantly round during the few
moments of silence which followed; fortunately another reel soon
came to interrupt this fine stage effect, and prove that the distur-
bance was not at all event upon the solid earth. - There has been
an abundance of evidence to ~~show~~ ^{show} that their official existence during
the last three months has been a continual state of alarm; and there
are the hosts, in which it appears they can neither benefit their country
nor themselves, ~~they are~~ ^{they are} plotting and intriguing to obtain!

Goodbye. I send a thousand kisses to Mame and the girls
who are enjoying. I hope this glorious season at Revis, as much as
any of the former. Your affectionate son: Alex. Hamilton. [H896]