

2nd March 1808

Mr G Van Crombrugghe, in Grammont, Dept. Escaut
Montdidier, 2nd March 1808

Very dear Father and Mother

I received with great pleasure the letter that you wrote to me in answer to my letter on the question of the orphanage. I see, not without a certain pain, that the project cannot take place at present, but God knows better than we do what is to His greater glory. I bless His unfathomable intentions and submit myself to His holy will. I will conform, very dear Father, to what you tell me, and put this business aside till a more suitable time; besides, God who holds all between His hands will sustain this shelter for the orphan poor.

It appears more and more to you that verse will not be of any great use to me, and therefore you do not wish me to apply myself too much to it. If it were not a rule of the School to do it you would not have to tell me. The difficulty that I continually find in making verses would make me abandon this subject, but you will understand, very dear Father, that it is not possible for me to follow your wishes and my personal inclination since the rules do not permit it. You probably believe that Latin poetry occupies all my time and that I do anything else than verse, like in Flanders! No, it only takes a small amount of my time and is simply to give me an idea of what is called Poetry. We see in second Virgil and in Horatio that to discover the beauty of these authors one needs at least to be able to put a verse together. The other Latin authors that we are studying in my class are Cicero and Titus Livius.

The lottery for conscription was done here today, and I suppose that if it has not been done in Grammont it will be before long. I don't know how I will come out of it: I wrote some time ago to my Aunt De Scheppere so that she could find out and write about it to you. I don't think that there is anything to fear; however I would be very happy to know something, the more so since my Uncle Huleu wrote to me that the person for whom His Eminence had asked for exemption had already got it.

Please, I pray you, present my respects to all the family, and embrace my dear sisters for me. The time is not far off when Rosalie will be obliged to leave you for some time; please tell me if you are decided on where you will send her. My good wishes as well to my dear brother, and I would be very happy to receive him. I embrace cordially, while asking you for your blessing. François is well and commends himself, as do I, to your prayers. While waiting for your news I finish by calling myself forever

Your very obedient and devoted son

C Van Crombrugghe

