

1st April 1808

Mr G Van Crombrughe, Brewer in Grammont, Dept. Escaut
Montdidier, 1st April 1808

Very dear Father

You must have received two letters from me in answer to yours. In the first you spoke to me about the impossibility of the project which I had written to you about; in the second you told me in few words, but in a manner which made me very happy, that my brother had surpassed himself that day in drawing¹ for me. I hope that we can flatter ourselves on being calm in that matter. I am astonished that you didn't speak to me about François; I am sure, however, that you are hardly happy to see him still in the same class, almost at the same point where he was three years ago. For some time Fr De la Marche has wanted to investigate the reasons for it. It seems that François doesn't have a taste for Latin, and that it will be necessary for him to drop it if you want him to come out of this sort of nonchalance that he has. It is not that he does not work at all; he does what he can, but he does it with a certain apathy, I would almost say disgust, which prevents him from making progress. If you agree that he should drop Latin, Mr De la Farche will be good enough to look after him personally, and to push him in French. If I may take the liberty of telling you my opinion, I believe that this is the best means of getting him back to work; I can tell you that he would spend his time uselessly in the study of Latin. If he is destined for trade, as seems likely, he will know enough with French, a little History and a little Mathematics. This, dear Father, is what strikes me about François, but this is only my opinion and it is up to you to decide. I will await your answer with impatience, so that I can arrange things in consequence of your decision. It would be a pity for François to remain in this idleness; he is a good child, but laziness is the mother of all vices.

I have a great desire to know how my Uncle, the Regent, is. It would be a joy to hear that he is well! I would also like to know if you are decided on the School where you will place my sister. In short there are a thousand things which I would like to know about. I don't know if you have been sent our account? I had said that I would send it myself.

Please present my respects to all the family. I would want to converse a little more with you but time does not allow. I embrace my dear sisters; tell my brother that he must send me another letter.

Adieu, very dear Father, I finish by asking you for your blessing.

Your very devoted and submissive son

C Van Crombrughe

PS: Please give my warmest good wishes to my dear Mother.



¹ The lottery