

3rd November 1808

To Mr G Van Crombrugghe, Brewer in Grammont, Dept of the Escaut

Very dear Father and Mother

I told you in my last letter that Rosalie had had an extraordinary crisis. On Monday in the evening she recovered her speech and all other uses of her body. On Tuesday morning I saw her and she spoke to me. Since this time she is well enough, but the doctor insists that she should travel and be physically occupied. I spoke with Sister De Beaudemont and Fr De Sambucy; it will hurt them to see my sister leave, but they consulted other doctors and all say the same thing. They even insisted that she will not recover otherwise, and that after she has tired her body she will be completely healed. Having sought the opinions of the two people that I have just mentioned, and having had a long conference with the doctor who knows my sister and her illness extremely well, I realise that I must bring her back to you as it is a matter of life and death. It is a rude blow, very dear Parents, I know, but be sure that God will provide.

Last Monday I did not think that I would be able to give you any good news; she has recovered against the expectations of the doctor, the surgeon and all the Sisters who surround her. Even Sister Beaudemont, who was looking after her that day, appeared to me to have the greatest concern, and that in someone who does not become afraid easily. We must therefore take advantage of the only means available to save my sister's life, and consequently next Monday I will leave here with Rosalie and her carers who want to come with her; the doctor will give me a list of all that will be necessary; not for the journey, because the movement of the carriage will be the first remedy and will even prevent her from relapsing, but to inform you as to how you will have to treat her at home - my sister will be healed without you worrying about it. Do not get any more worried. There is only one thing that pains me for Rosalie, and that is being forced to interrupt her studies for a time. The doctor pities the young Sisters of Flanders because we make them study too late, and indeed this is a big defect in our country. After all, is it not better to enjoy a child's presence at the age of fifteen rather than to send them to boarding school at this age? It is not rare to see here with the Sisters girls who at the age of fifteen or sixteen would be ready to render the greatest services to their Parents. And I will observe to you, not according to my own judgement (although I know this School perfectly well), but rather according to the judgement of people who know about these things, that this establishment of Sisters is one of the premier Schools in Europe for the formation of young girls. I go there often and seldom leave without wishing to see one of my sisters there again.

Please, very dear Father and Mother, be calm and believe me with all my respect and love to be,

Your devoted son

Amiens, 3rd November 1808.

C Van Crombrugghe

PS: Please assure all the family of my love. We will leave here on Monday at the latest, because the moon is advancing and this has a great effect on the sick, and we will be in Grammont on Wednesday or Thursday.

