

1858
Jan. 12

PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, in St. Martinville,
to his son, Alexandre Declouet at Brookland Academy in Greenwood Depot,
Virginia.

St. Martinville, January 12, 1858

My dear Clouet,

T. B. FAVROT
COLLECTION

I hasten to reply in a few lines to your letter of December 31st and I am writing to Darby and Tremoulet at the same time to ask them to send you a check for fifty five piastres. You should have let me know sooner of your needs, as I thought that with what you should have had left of the \$400, you would have enough for some time. I think I have already asked you to let me know in advance when you need money and I don't know why you do not do it. That keeps you from buying on credit, which I hope you do not like any more than I do. While we are on this subject I want to let you know that having incurred great expenses, and with poor crops and the price of sugar down, I will be a little short this year, and we all have to practice the strictest economies, and restrict ourselves to the absolute necessities. You have probably heard of the crisis in business affairs. Everybody is feeling it, and those who are unfortunately obliged to borrow money find they can do so only with difficulty, and with exorbitant interest, and ruinous sacrifice. As far as we are concerned therefore, you must come to our aid by practicing the greatest economy. I wrote you not long ago and sent you a plan of the sugar refinery and gave you details about the cane harvest which ended on the 3rd of this month at 3 p.m. As the last sugar canes were put on the ramp and at the last cooking, the heat was informal, and then the whistles blew so that we had to stop up our ears. The noise could be heard several miles around. The negroes celebrated

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but not as much as usual on account of the deaths of those poor children we lost during the cane harvest. I made about 355 barrels and lots of molasses Your mother (Marie Louise Benoit) and your little sisters went to spend New Year's at Grand Coteau, and came back on January 3rd. She has passed by Lafayette to go, and not to scare Noemi, aunt, Tonton and Mimi, on account of the whooping cough which we have here. She found the road so bad that she came back by the Pont des Moutons and visited dear little uncle she found all alone. Ninise (Blanche) was in good health. The whooping cough here is a little better, and I believe Christine and Gabrielle (your sisters) will escape it. These dear little girls are always so sweet and are our best pastime. Milami is here and gets along well with Christine. They play cards together all the time, Old Maid, and the last few nights I have taught them Twenty-One. Petite is crazy about gambling. She is so proud when she makes me "old Maid" and asks for a (burnt) cork to smear me (as forfeit). That will teach them how to count. Gaby teaches Douboune and promises to show her and explain pictures if she does her lessons well. Well I see that my pen is about to give out, but I think it will write a few more lines to give you news of Cairo. He spent several months with Mr. Jo. Canarve who succeeded pretty well in giving him an education. The negroes had a week's vacation during this time. I went hunting with him, but there was not much game. I killed a few terrapins, pheasants and turtle dove and the dog is a good retriever. I taught him not to go after the rabbits and was successful. I believe he will be an excellent dog. He is still thin, but we have another little one (his brother) which is very pretty and intelligent. The little girls call him Marquis and are crazy about him.

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He goes into their room every morning to play with them. There are not many dogs like him.

Goodbye goodbye! Write often, it will have to be something very important to keep me from coming to see you one of these days, so in the meantime, courage and application!

F. B. FAVROT
COLLECTION

Your father who loves you,

Alexandre Declouet