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PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, Sr. in St. Martinville,
to his son, Paul Declouet at Brookland School in Greenwood Depot, Virginia.
St. Martinville, January 10, 1860

My dear son,

Since your departure I have not had the pleasure to talk with you and on the eve of our departure for the city I am sending you hastily a few lines to assure you again of my love and tender solicitude. If I stay long without writing to you, you must not believe that I think less about you. You should know how busy I am and moreover knowing that Ninise (Blanche, your sister) and Clouet (Alexander, your brother) often wrote to you about me, it made me postpone and postpone again the time to let you hear from me. For over two weeks we have not received any letter from you and although we worried a little, we thought it was probably due to your trip to Richmond or Washington.

Tomorrow, we are leaving for town where we expect to spend almost a month. If you write immediately we could probably receive your letter in New Orleans and if you address it "Care of Darby & Tremoulet New Orleans" those gentlemen would forward it here should it arrive after our departure. I shall spend only 2 or 3 days in town as I want to attend here the late Mr. D. Chretien's auction sale due on the 18th of this month. Then, I shall go home. Tonton (Josephine Declouet de l'Homme) was here yesterday and when I leave around the 18th I will try to bring her with me but it will be unlikely because Noemi (de l'Homme) is having a baby next month and Tonton would not want to be absent. I am in a hurry and will not give you many details surmising that Blanche and Clouet kept you informed about all that might interest you.

I bought two fine grey horses (\$300) and I want to try to sell some of the old ones at the Chretien's auction and I believe that I shall sell yours also

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(con't.)

because they are too small for you and will be too old when you need them.

Among the beautiful colts I am raising you will find some to replace them.

I am rather ahead in my cane planting and the sprouts are very good. I have planted 200 arpents and have enough left to plant 100 or 150 more. This is not enough but the canes are short and do not run over. Because of this condition, I shall have to keep more stocks than I intended to do.

I see with regret through Mr. Dinwiddie (principal of Brookland School) that you do not take enough courses. He, also, complains of it. Come on, my dear son, have more courage! I care so much! I insist so much that you cover firm and good studies that you should apply yourself to the utmost in order to give this satisfaction to your father. I was hoping that you could enter the University next year to attend classes in Anglo-Saxon, Chemistry, Natural History but to render this possible you should work this year. Give me the proof by your next bulletins that you have decided to do much more than you did in the past.

Christine and Gabi (your sisters) have made much progress and are all excited about going to the city.

Goodbye, we embrace you with all our affection and wish you could be with us during our little trip.

Your father and best friend,

Alexander Declouet

P. S. I sent to town a cask of syrup that Darby & Tremoulet will forward to you through Richmond or Baltimore.

Handwritten in French. Original on file in Dupre Library at the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette, La.