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

St. Martinville, October 18, 1860

My dear Paul,

Yours of the 7th inst. was received yesterday and read with much pleasure and interest. I was pained to learn that you had on your arrival given way to feelings of discouragement and dispondency. That must not be! A man must be a man and fight through the troubles of this life with a brave and cheerful heart - "Like the good Dutchman who broke his leg and thanked God that he did'nt break his neck" - little troubles should never dishearten when God in his mercy spares us serious misfortunes. I was glad to see however that your good sense had the advantage of your spleen - by the by - the very best cure for spleen is occupation, and from the details which you give me of the classes which you have undertaken you have such a fine and rich field for occupation and instruction as well as delightful study, that I cannot see any justification for you in giving up to any thing of the kind. Keep up strictly with your classes (I approve the plan you have adopted). Don't lose time in the conversations. If you make it a rule to be ahead of your time instead of procrastinating and being behind you will soon see how smoothly and nice you will get along. I regret not having time today to write to you at any length but I have several letters to write and it is nearly time to send to the post office.

We received by last mail a letter from Clouet (Alexander Declouet, Jr.) from Bordeaux (19th Sept.). He was then putting up with our bon parents (grandparents), Alexander Declouet Sr. and appeared delighted with the

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welcome which he met at their hands. He was to return to Paris by the 1st October supposing that he has by this time written to you - I'll not enter into any further particulars.

Your mother (Marie Louise Benoit) and sisters are all well, but Miss L. has been quite unwell since day before yesterday. She is somewhat better today. Our dear little Corinne (his sister) is improving slowly but gradually. She is the great attraction of all the family, and when awake has a little air of seeing and hearing, of turning her head about to listen and see while as you may suppose, elicits the and admiration of all around. Your good mother does hardly any thing else but fondle her.

We have no rain since the storm of the 1 and 2. On the 14, 15 and 16 white frosts and a little ice but nothing to hurt the cane. I have not layed over 400 arpents for seed and will start the sugar house in about a week with about 300 arpents to roll.

I write by today's mail to Darby & Tremoulet to send you a check of one hundred and twenty dollars.

In haste your father and best friend,

Alexander Declouet

P. S. I sent you two St. Martinville papers.