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PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet in St. Martinville, to
his son, Paul Declouet at Brookland School in Greenwood Depot, Virginia.
St. Martinville, January 1, 1861

My dear Paul,

I received your letter of the 19th the day before yesterday and it pleased me so much more because your ideas and mine on the grave questions which preoccupy everybody are almost identical. I have already sent you a copy of my address to the People with a request (as I was about to leave) to insert a copy in English in the envelope. As I don't know if this was done, I am joining one to the few lines I am writing. As a candidate, I just took a tour of the Vermillion Parish in a miserable weather, able to give you a pneumonia. Alcibiade and I left Saturday and went to Abbeville where we spent the night and we came back Sunday, passing through New Iberia in a freezing wind and rain! We felt very cold. You have to be a candidate (or a wild goose) to be outside in such a weather. Finally, the bosses seemed delighted to see us and they would be quite unwise not to recognize such an exemplary devotion and zeal! Moreover, if we continue to run without any competitors we should not fail to reach the Convention by an easy way! Up to now, there are no competitors. But as a jockey-sportsman would say, there is no fun in such a race.

My principle aim in writing to you is to inform you that I have just written to D. & T. (Darby & Tremoulet) asking them to send you \$100. Be sensible and thrifty. I am financially embarrassed in my business and had to borrow money at 11 per cent.

Clouet (Alexander, your brother) seems crazy about travelling. He dreams to go to the Orient and with sorrow I tried to make him change his mind.

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(con't.)

Besides the money question (which is important) I believe it is his duty to remain within reach (in Paris) to receive promptly my advices should events become disquieting enough to make me judge as necessary his return home. Every one is well here except for Miss Laurent, who is a little better after a rather serious sickness, and our dear little Corinne (your sister) who has a bad little cold.

Goodbye, my dear son, write often and believe in the strongest affection of your father and friend,

Alexander Declouet