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PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, Sr. in Montgomery, Alabama, to his son, Paul Declouet at Brookland School in Greenwood Depot, Virginia.

Montgomery, February 28, 1861

My dear Paul,

A few lines only to tell you that I have received your letter from Atlanta and that I received also letters from Gabi, Christine and Blanche (your sisters) and a letter from Clouet (Alexander, your brother) sent from the house on January 28 in which he announced to me that he will leave Paris perhaps on the 15th of February but more likely at the end of this month or at the beginning of March. If he does not change his mind we could expect him between the 15th and the 20th of March and even before if he leaves on February 15. He seems extremely worried about our country's condition. But his fears are exaggerated. As for me, I shall be quite pleased to see him arriving as soon as possible. Should my absence be lengthened his presence at home is quite necessary.

Our Congress is inclined to go forward and today we are beginning to consider the Constitution as permanent and as soon as it is adopted and sent to the different States' Conventions for ratification, I hope that we can adjourn at least for some time. As you know I am anxious for such a time to come.

Everything is all right at home and Miss Laurent although still quite weak, is feeling better. I am sending you Gabi's letter. Yesterday, we had a visit from Major Beauregard of Louisiana (between us he is leaving for Charleston with a mission from President Davis.) A few days more for some kind of outcome to appear! May God grant it will not be war! But Lincoln's last speeches in Philadelphia do not foresee anything good.

Goodbye, write to me often. Stick to your studies and take care of

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yourself. I felt quite alone after your departure, but my occupations do not leave me any time to develop too much melancholy.

Affectionately yours,

Alexander Declouet