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(con't.)

shall be luckier the next day. I could write to you very seldom - a letter to your Mother (Louise Benoit Declouet) from Knoxville and one to Clouet (Alexander, your brother) a few days ago, and that is all, but I hope they will be enough to keep you from worrying about me. I think that before long I shall receive a letter from Clouet with a few details about our endless grinding season. The weather must have been bad after my departure since they had to grind the canes cut down in front of the house, according to what Christine told me. But let us see what will come out. With my two young pilotes and my factotum everything will be for the best. I insist upon the sugar's quality and I think that Clouet will tell me what happens with the broken down canes.

I still call upon Mr. McFarland from time to time and his son is much better. Yesterday, I spent the evening with my colleague, Mr. Perkins. Mrs. Perkins is very amiable, she receives very well and with an easy-going manner which makes her visitors feel comfortable. From day to day, I postpone writing to Mrs. Gay and I did not hear from her, but it will be for tomorrow at the latest.

It is uncertain whether General Beauregard is going to Columbus, Kentucky. The Virginians are displeased by this move, but there is nothing to do on the Potomac for 2 or 3 months and the prestige of the Beauregard name (besides his great efficiency) can do a great deal of good in Kentucky. By the way, I received today a letter from Alcibiade who is greatly interested in Paul (your brother), and he told me that he will recommend him to Beauregard. I was sorry to see in his letter that he had practically given up the idea to apply for a furlow.

Goodbye, give me some news of Tonton (Josephine Declouet de

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PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, Sr. in Richmond,
Virginia, to his daughter, Blanche Declouet in St. Martinville.
Richmond, January 30, 1862

My dear daughter,

A few days ago, I received a letter dated December 1862. It is the freshest piece of news I have received and since you know so much about the future you should have kept me informed about what will happen during ten or eleven months of a year which appears wrapped up in the somber mystery of so many uncertain and sad previsions! Even if we let us have the greatest confidence in the success of our cause, we cannot avoid thinking that a triumph can be accomplished only at the cost of the most painful and cruel sacrifices! How many fortunes will be sunk, how many plans upset, how many illusions withered, how many tears, how much blood! We want to avoid looking at all that and we must thank Heaven for having limited our feeble intelligence to the past and the present: the display of the future unfolding before us would be too much for human strength.

So, there is a little page about an error and I would be tempted to tear it if paper was not so rare and so expensive and besides I thought that this would serve you later reminding you of the necessity to be more precise when dating your letters. Christine's (your sister) letter is not quite as good as yours, it is not dated at all. I regret not to have anything interesting to communicate to you if such had been the case, I would have done without commenting so much about your little mistake.

I have been away from you for two weeks and your letter is the only one I received from home. Every monrning, on my way to the Capitol I am thinking of my little letter box and finding it empty, I console myself thinking I

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l'Homme, your aunt) and all the relatives. I shall answer Christine another time. Embracing you with all my tenderness, I remain your affectionate father and friend,

Alexander Declouet

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