

Amice Rappard,

I just received your letter, for which I thank you. Once again I am pleased to see from it that you enjoy the wood engravings. Furthermore I respect your point of view with regard to what I sent you now and then, something I hope to go on doing unless you should object. But I am confronted with a difficult problem, which I can't really solve, though I am going to anyway, namely telling you what I have paid for them. As you know, I have a special penchant for wood engravings. Usually I buy them very cheap, yet I spend rather much on them, considering my circumstances – although I have never regretted it. But whether I paid much or little for them is a question entirely of what I sent you, for I sent you duplicates, and not one that I did not have myself – you saw that for yourself last summer, when we sorted out the duplicates.

What I sent you I did not buy expressly for you – with a few exceptions, and I spent very little money on these few, and I only wish I could find more of them. But as you insist on it, I shall charge you, let us say, a daalder [1.50 guilders] for them, which you can remit any time, for instance in stamps, and then you need no longer have any pangs of conscience about having injured me financially.

So I think that question is settled.

Now I have asked you to let me know if you are receiving regularly magazines such as L'Illustration and the Graphic – I mean the current issues. I mention this because I am negotiating with a man who has a number of magazines from a public library for sale. I have decided to take them in any case, but I have some of the current year already, so I shall probably get some more duplicates. For example, if these are from L'Illustration and I know you have them already, I want to give them to someone else who might like them and is collecting them (although for the moment I don't know of anyone). But if I know you do not have them, they are yours of course.

Even before I received your letter I agreed to take the lot – so please let me know how you stand with regard to current magazines.

Of course I don't know whether I'll have a small or large number of duplicates, but at any rate there will be some, I think. So please let me know. If it amounts to anything, I will charge you something for it, or we can make an arrangement some time or other, but let me know if I can be of use to you in this respect. I am greatly interested in your collection, and I should like to see it become a very beautiful one. Perhaps I shall be able to send you more important things later on.

I already have forty larger and smaller sheets by Renouard. For instance, I found some time ago his “La Bourse” [The Exchange] and “Un Discours de M. Gambetta,” and also sheets called “Enfants assistés.” But I am sure you will be delighted with some large Lançons.

Caton Woodville too is very clever; the more I see of his work, the better I like it.

Do you know Monthard? – I think that at any rate you have some of his landscapes – well, a short while ago I got some sketches of his from Ireland and also from Jersey, in which there was a great deal of sentiment.

I sincerely hope you will derive pleasure from your picture at “Arti”; I don't think I shall see this exhibition.

I am very busy working on drawings of an orphan-man, as these poor old fellows from the workhouse are popularly called here. Don't you think the expressions “orphan-man” and “orphan-woman” characteristic? It is not easy to do those characters one is always meeting in the streets.

As for watercolours, I have started several, but I have not been as successful with them as I should wish, although I enjoy doing them more than formerly. Herewith another rough sketch of an orphan-man. Adieu, I am writing in haste – please let me know soon how you stand with regard to those wood engravings¹ – whether you have them or not.

With a handshake,

Ever yours, Vincent

1. Vincent regularly uses the Dutch word for “woodcuts,” but he usually means wood engravings.