

Amice Rappard,

Thanks for your letter, which I had been looking forward to eagerly. Oh, I am not at all surprised to hear that you admire the sheets I sent you. Personally I cannot imagine anything more beautiful than the “Harbour of Refuge” or the “Low Lodginghouse.”

Now you must come soon to get the rest. I cannot think of a better way for you to find out which duplicates you have than to come look them over and make your selection, for making a list of the titles would be too inconvenient on all sides. If you think you won't be able to come in the near future, however, and if you would like to have them, I can make a package of all the duplicates I have and send it to you; then you can keep the ones you don't have yet and send back the rest. Remember, if you prefer it, I shall do so with the greatest of pleasure.

I have a request to make: please send me the worst print you already had of Herkomer's “Old Women's Almshouse” (from that French Illustration). I have it myself, of course, but there's somebody here I want to start a collection for, namely the painter Van der Weele, who is drawing master at the secondary school here. He himself has done some ten etchings – a bit meager but nevertheless well done – but in his studio I saw a first-rate sketch of a ploughed field in the evening, and an excellent little easel piece on wood besides, called “Loading Hay on a Wagon,” of which he has also done an etching. He is the sort of man to develop a true liking for it – at least I hope so – and it may induce him to continue to work vigorously in black and white, in lithography, etching or drawing – it doesn't matter which.

On this man's behalf I should like to ask you to let me have all the duplicates you have available – I think you have Régamey's “Gypsies,” for instance.

I hope you'll meet him someday; he is a sound kind of fellow. In order to be sure that I don't give him any sheets you may not have yourself, I'll give you herewith a list of what I've set apart for him:

Herkomer “At Death's Door”

Menzel “Siesta”
 “Hunting Field”

Renouard “Enfants assistés”
 “Boat Race”

Frère “Snowballing”

Heilbuth “Au bord de l'eau”

This week I bought a number of issues of this year's Illustration, Le Monde illustré and Univers Illustré. Now I have duplicates of the sheets “Enfants assistés,” all six of them, and I shall specify them again to be sure that you have them all:

- “L'abandon”
- “La creche”
- “Le change”
- “Le Numéro 68, 762”
- “Passe au réfectoire – Heure de la bouillie”
- “Sheet with sketches: rachitique, scrofuleux, etc.”

Should there be any number missing in your collection, I shall send it to you. I hope to be able to get Fildes's “Charles Dickens Empty Chair” for you. It has been promised to me.

I am sending you herewith a sample of that lithographic paper; I have scribbled a little on it with lithographic crayon and autographic ink and engraving ink, more to combine the various methods on the same sample than to advise you to tire out the uninitiated by applying so many methods at once under ordinary circumstances, of course. I scribbled it on a scrap I had left, and I have no time to do it better.

What can you see from it? – (1) what kind of paper it is; (2) on which side you must draw; (3) what kinds of things one can do on it – but the autographic ink is treacherous. Sometimes the transferring succeeds quite well, but at other times the ink runs (for the drawing is wetted before it is laid face down on the grained stone, and then run through the press to be printed). So it may happen that the ink starts running, and in that case you get nothing but a black blot instead of your drawing.

All the same it can be done – and the important thing is that you can retouch the drawing with ink on the stone itself.

At the same time I am sending you two samples of coarse paper which I think is very suitable for mounting the wood engravings. They show up well just because it is so rough, and its colour is lovely.

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The alterations in my studio have turned out very well indeed; the light is wonderful now, and I am delighted with it.

I have finished cutting out and mounting the wood engravings from the Graphic. Now that they are arranged in an orderly manner, they show up ever so much better.

Do you know Daziel as a black-and-white artist? I have a "Public House" by him – something like the one by Green – excellent.

Well, amice, perhaps I shall write more soon. I wanted to send you the sample of the lithographic paper without delay, but I am very busy. So goodbye, write again soon, and believe me,
Ever yours, Vincent

I have a magnificent Giacomelli, a large sheet representing a "Flight of Crows."

I know your beautiful Bodmer, "Grands Ducs," very well, but I don't have it.

There must be many fine things in that old volume of L'Illustration.