

My dear brother,

Thanks for your letter of today and the 50-fr. note it contained.

I should try, perhaps, to write to you about a lot of things, but to begin with I have completely lost the inclination, and then, it seems useless to me.

I hope that you found those worthy gentlemen favourably disposed toward you.

As far as the peace of your household is concerned, I am as much convinced that it can be preserved as I am that it is threatened by storms.

I would rather not forget the little French I know, and am certainly unable to see the sense in delving deeper into the rights or wrongs of one side or the other in any discussion. It wouldn't be my concern anyway.

Things move quickly here. Aren't Dries, you and I rather more convinced of that, don't we understand that rather better than those ladies? So much the better for them – but in the long run we can't even count on talking coolly about it.

As far as I'm concerned, I am giving my canvases my undivided attention. I am trying to do as well as certain painters whom I have greatly loved and admired.

Now I have returned, my feeling is that the painters themselves are fighting more and more with their backs to the wall.

Very well...but hasn't the moment for trying to make them understand the usefulness of an association already passed? On the other hand an association, should it come about, would go under if the rest were to go under. In that case, you might say, the dealers could throw their lot in with the impressionists – but that would be very short-lived. Altogether, it seems to me that personal initiative is of no avail, and given the experience we've had, should we really be starting all over again?

I noted with pleasure that the Gauguin from Brittany I saw is very beautiful, and it seems to me that the others he has done will probably be so as well.

Perhaps you will take a look at this sketch of Daubigny's garden – it is one of my most carefully thought-out canvases. I am adding a sketch of some old thatched roofs and the sketches of two size 30 canvases representing vast fields of wheat after the rain. Hirschig has asked if you to be kind enough to order for him the list of paints enclosed from the same dealer where you buy my paints.

Tasset could send them to him direct, cash on delivery, but then he would have to give him the 20 per cent discount, which would be the simplest. Or else you could put them in with the package of paints for me, adding the bill, or telling me how much the total amount comes to, and then he would send the money to you. You cannot get anything good in the way of paints here. I have cut my own order to the barest minimum.

Hirschig is beginning to get a better idea of things, it seems to me. He has done a portrait of the old schoolmaster, who has given him a "well done." And then he has some landscape studies which are almost the same colour as the Konings at your place. They may turn out to be quite like these, or like the things by Voerman which we saw together.

Goodbye for now, keep well and good luck in business, etc., remember me to Jo and handshakes in thought.

Ever yours,

Vincent