

Letter 012
London, 19 November 1873

Dear Theo,

I want to be sure you hear from me soon after your arrival at The Hague. I am eager to hear what your first impressions were of your new position and home. I heard that Mr. Schmidt gave you such a beautiful souvenir. That proves you have been very satisfactory in every respect. I am glad that we now work in the same house of Goupil. Lately we have had many pictures and drawings here; we sold a great many, but not enough yet – it must become something more established and solid. I think there is still much work to do in England, but it will not be successful at once. Of course, the first thing necessary is to have good pictures, and that will be very difficult. Well, we must take things as they are and make the best of it.

How is business in Holland? Here the ordinary engravings after Brochard do not sell at all, the good burin engravings sell pretty well. From the “Venus Anadyomene” after Ingres we have already sold twenty épreuves d’artiste. It is a pleasure to see how well the photographs sell, especially the coloured ones, and there is a big profit in them. We sell the Musée Goupil & Co. photographs only en papillottes, on an average of a hundred a day.

I think you will like the work at the house at The Hague as soon as you have got used to it. I am sure you will like your home with the Roos family. Walk as much as your time will allow. Give my best love to everybody at Roos’s.

You must write me sometime whom you like best among the older painters as well as among the moderns. Don’t forget, as I am curious to know. Go to the museum as often as you can; it is a good thing to know the old painters also. If you have the chance, read about art, especially art magazines, Gazette des Beaux-Arts, etc. As soon as I have the opportunity, I will send you a book by Burger about the museums at The Hague and Amsterdam. Please send it back when you have read it.

Ask Iterson to write me when he has time, and especially to send me a list of the painters who have won awards at the Paris exhibition. Is Somerwill still in the office or did he leave when you arrived?

I am all right. I have a pleasant home, and although the house here is not so interesting as the one in The Hague, it is perhaps well that I am here. Later on, especially when the sale of pictures grows more important, I shall perhaps be of use. And then, I cannot tell you how interesting it is to see London and English business and the way of life, which differs so much from ours.

You must have had pleasant days at home; how I should like to see them all again. Give my compliments to everybody who inquires after me, especially at Tersteeg’s, Haanebeek, Auntie Fie, Stockum and Roos; and tell Betsy Tersteeg something about me when you see her. And now, boy, good luck to you, write to me soon.

Vincent

Do you have my room at Roos’s or the one you slept in last summer?