

Letter 064
Ramsgate, 1 May 1876

Dear Theo,

Thanks for your letter and for placing the advertisement. Did you find the postal order in the letter? Yesterday afternoon, the wind was so strong that Mr. Stokes wouldn't let the boys go out. I asked his permission, for six of the biggest and myself, to go for a short walk. We went down to the beach, the sea was very rough, and it was not very easy to walk against the wind. We saw the lifeboat towed by a tug, returning from a mission to a ship that had run aground on a sandbank; but it didn't bring it off. I know that picture by Willems very well; the drawing by Mauve which you write about must be very beautiful. Do you ever go to his studio?

You ask me what I teach the boys. Mainly French basics; only one student is starting the study of German. For the rest, a little of everything, mainly sums, examinations, their dictation, etc. So for the present, there is nothing too complicated in all this, but it is not easy to see that what they are learning is what we are teaching them.

And now today is your birthday; in thought I give you a firm handshake and send you my very best wishes once more.

Obviously, I have hours of supervision after school, so my time is pretty well taken up, perhaps it will get more in the future. Last Saturday evening, I gave a bath to a half dozen of these young gentlemen, not because I was obliged to, but because that allowed us to be ready on time. I also try to make them read. I have some books that are well suited for boys, *The Wide, Wide World*¹, etc.

And now goodbye. Thanks for your letter, for placing the advertisement and for sending the paper. Always
Your loving brother, Vincent

One of these days you will receive some English hymnbooks; I shall mark a few poems in them. There are so many beautiful ones, and especially when heard often, one grows so fond of them.

1. By Elizabeth Wetherell (Susan Warner).