

Letter R50
Nuenen, late May 1884

Amice Rappard,

I congratulate you with all my heart on the silver medal you received in London. It is a satisfaction to me to know that I said what I did about that picture at the time. And I repeated it only a short while ago, I mean during that conversation on Friday when I said, "I have found something in the colour of that picture of the 'Woman Spinning' that seems better and sounder to me than what I have seen you paint here."

Yet the "Little Weaver" is another exception to this, which I also stipulated at the time.

Starting a picture in a low pitch, and then trying to elevate it from this low key upward – I found this system in the "Woman Spinning" at the time, although it was a very original method of doing things. I reminded you of that picture that Friday. "There are prodigious forces in it," I said. And that is what I have missed now and then in your later work.

I think of your visit here with great pleasure, and I don't doubt that the more you come here the more you will feel attracted to nature.

Since your departure I have been working on a water mill [F 048a, JH 488] – the one I inquired about in that little bar near the station, where we sat chatting with that man who I told you seemed to labour under a chronic shortage of small change in his pocket.

It is the same motif as the other two water mills we went to look at together, but this one has two red roofs, and you see it right from the front – with poplars around it. Even in autumn it will be superb.

Thanks for sending off the books.

Perhaps my brother Theo will come here during Whitsuntide, but not for longer than that, and only if he can manage to have the two days off. He will be delighted to hear you have been awarded a prize, as we all are.

Adieu. Write soon. Believe me, with a handshake,
Ever yours, Vincent