

Letter to Villiaumé

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

July 13, 1857

My dear Villiaumé, it is too warm for me to venture, with my sick head, all the way to Rue Marsollier. I am thinking instead of fleeing for ten or twelve days to some hole in Franche-Comté, where the devil may perhaps not come to torment me with his pomps and work.

But you, who are spry, come some evening after your dinner and we will have a mug at the local cabaret, which will do you as much good as an ample banquet. Friendship, and understanding as well, is surely found in a modest *to your health*.

I regret to learn of the illness of Béranger, whom I have not seen.

I had intended to pay tribute to him this year with a copy of my next book: it is an honor that will be denied me.

It occurs to me that I have known hardly any of the distinguished men of the century: Châteaubriant, P.-L. Courier, Jouffroy, Cousin, Nodier, E. Burnouf, Guizot, Thiers, Barrot, Royer-Collard, Lamartine, A. de Musset, A. de Vigny, Béranger. Lamennais, Arago, etc., etc.

With those few that I have encountered, I have had to do battle: P. Leroux, L. Blanc, V. Considérant; there will be others.

Am I not the excommunicated of the era!

Of course I will have no one at my burial. There is a proverb that says: *Væ soli!*... Woe to the loner!... thinking of it, I ask myself if I do not drag along the chains of some great culprit condemned in a former existence, as J. Reynaud teaches?

I begin to be very weary of life and seek only to speak my piece before I die. That done, I say: *To hell with me and the human race!* Regards.

P.-J. Proudhon

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