

DURAND-RUEL,

16 RUE LAFFITTE

AND

11 RUE LE PELETIER

PARIS.

NEW YORK OFFICE,

315 FIFTH AVENUE (COR. 32D STREET).

Jan. 10th, 1893.

Jas. J. Hill Esq.,
Great Northern Railway,
St. Paul, Minn.

Dear Sir:-

I beg to confirm my telegram of Saturday last, in which I announced to you that my father had just cabled us about the celebrated picture of Courbet, "Woman Bathing," better known under the title "La Vague," and which is reproduced in our Catalogue of 1873.

This picture was offered to my father for \$5000., and he wanted to know whether you would be willing to have it, this picture being of a superb quality and worth much over the price asked for it. Yesterday I received your telegram saying you did not care to buy it, and I sent your answer off to Paris. I believe my father will have no difficulty of disposing of it over there, as many persons consider that it is the finest example of figures painted by Courbet.

I wish to tell you, though I have no details whatever, that the Collection of Mr. Van Praet has been sold lately and that my father was the buyer. I have no information yet about that transaction, and wish you would keep it secret for the present. I do not know what the exact figure was, but can state that an offer of 2,600,000francs, which we sent from New York, was absolutely declined. The price must consequently be about 3,000,000francs.

As you saw in the New York Herald, Mr. Chauchard bought immediately afterwards the Millet, "La Bergère," and the Meissonnier, "L'

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Homme à l'Epée," the price being according to the Herald 750,000francs for the two pictures.

I send you a new valuation which my father made before he decided to buy the collection. You will see that the pictures are valued much higher than in the previous list made several years ago, before the great increase in the paintings of the French School.

Of course I do not feel at liberty to offer any of these pictures at the prices named, as I have no idea of the final disposition to be made of the paintings. I understand that my father felt sure of disposing at once of part of the Collection to French amateurs; this is the reason that induced him to transact that deal.

I expect to get all the details in a few days, and will let you know at once what has been decided, but until then I wish you would keep that matter secret, as no one has heard of it except you.

I may have occasion to go West next week, and in that case will stop in St. Paul for a day or two, and hope I will have the pleasure of seeing you.

Yours very truly,

J Durand Ruel