

## DE LA MÊME, AUX MÊMES

CHEZ M. GAUSSEN, MAISON GAUSSEN, A GENÈVE

*Étude, 5 h. 1/2, 11 janvier (1821?)*

Yesterday, my beloved children, is a day that deserves to be consigned in the annals of our family. It made me the happy possessor of the best of pictures, and spread joy and delight all over the house. What a delightful excellent person that Miss Romilly<sup>1</sup> must be, and how can I have deserved such a mark of attention and friendship from her. The likeness is everything that can be wished and is the expression of your character; my Billy's mild and sensible looks, and Adolphe's roguish and sparkling eyes speak continually to my heart. How often have I said to myself: if I had but a good likeness of those dear absent boys! But nothing was farther from my expectations than to see my hopes so quickly and fully realised.

I was standing yesterday alone in the anteroom, rummaging a parcel of things, thinking of Fred. who had left in the morning, when Munier made his appearance with my treasure in his hand. I was overwhelmed with joy, gratitude and emotion, and found no other language than my tears to express the feelings of my heart. I ran to Papa, to Adèle, to the *étude*, all over the house; from Mrs. V's. drawing-room to the porter's lodge, every living creature participated in my joy... I seldom have seen Küster so overjoyed as when I entered the *étude* and put you in your old place. You may suppose how the boys clustered round me, and what was the expression of their boisterous approval. Bébé and Eliza placed themselves before the picture and kissed and stroked it *à qui mieux mieux*... I did not lose sight of you a minute: all day you followed me, at my *bureau*, at dinner... in the drawing-room where the dear picture was alternately placed upon the chimney, leaned against the lamp, or handed about from one to another, exciting constantly fresh applause and admiration... I wish Miss Romilly could have been witness to the joy she has spread amongst us, it would, I should suppose, have been the best reward for a heart like hers. The first thing I have done this morning was to take my little lamp and run to look at you... Farewell, dear children.

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1. Amélie Romilly, de Genève, bientôt après M<sup>me</sup> Munier-Romilly, par son mariage avec un ami des Jean Monod, portraitiste connue (1788-1875), représentée aujourd'hui au Musée Rath, à Genève. Le portrait visé dans cette lettre est celui de Guillaume et Adolphe Monod.