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11-4-1869

### A Letter of A. C. Van Raalte to Philip Phelps

A. C. Van Raalte

George Scholten

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No. 54

New York City, November 4, 1869

A letter of A. C. Van Raalte to Philip Phelps, pressing with urgency the need to keep raising money for Hope College: "We must keep to work: constantly to work for years to come with force and perseverance, else we will make bad work. We must have buildings."

Original in the Archives of Hope College.

(Note: George Scholten make several additions to the Phelps letters. I am not sure that all of the data is them is correct.)

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work  
and the coming of a young man  
come with love and holiness, etc we must keep to work; we must have the same  
we must keep to work; we must have the same  
we must keep to work; we must have the same

for years to come; We must get  
before Synod ~~that~~ as much as is possible  
and we must have sound and solid  
plans before Synod in connection with  
guidelines. - I know in some corners  
they say yet; that we were too fast, that  
New Brunswick would have answered etc  
etc etc therefore we must be up and  
doing, we must go ahead; well humble  
not grumbling but inflexible persist-  
ent and always in the field: if  
we bring young men in the field, we  
must make them known by the In-  
telligencer: and demand this at our  
only Church papers. -

I am very anxious that our laid estate  
should be free from debt, if you  
have friends work at them for that  
purpose. - May God bless the college!

Your friend & Brother  
H. M. Kaatz  
I hope the Executive  
Committee and the Professors  
will see the necessity of your  
coming, and also of the coming of a young man as  
Donnie Ph: Oggel: You and all of mine who can  
preach the English are better fitted for the work: I myself  
have no intention to leave the work but I urge your coming

H. M. Kaatz  
Dec 13<sup>th</sup>

We must keep it  
we must build it.

Rev. Dr. Phelps

New York, N.Y.

Dear Brother,

Yesterday I was  
present at the organization of the  
New Brunswick particular Synod: it  
was all done in a hurry: no business  
was done every one wanted to go home  
the same day: the hurricane of  
business destroys business. -

as every where I found there the com-  
mittees appointed to cooperate with Dr  
Cornell to go through the churches. Therefore  
the clergymen feel themselves <sup>pressing</sup> to finish  
up that work. - So I will go on <sup>seeking openings</sup> perhaps I  
may meet an individual with pity for  
the West: at least I intend to go on  
even by making loans to defray my  
expenses as I was already obliged to do.  
Many advise to do nothing on account  
the present claims in the field: I feel not this.

posed to do so: - But I feel well inclined  
to declare it impossible to do now the  
work for the Endowment but to stay  
in the field for Hope College in general  
to keep the machinery going: -

I did put the question to Dr. Van Cleef  
What to do with the current expenses and  
the debt accrued by these contingent  
expenses: He said better keep begging  
to keep it going; till Cornell has been raised.

The same question, I did put to Dr. Lee  
and his answer was: that the counsel  
had to judge about this. and now as  
a member of the counsel: before that  
the teachers must suffer, before individuals  
must come burdened by <sup>this</sup> debt we  
will collect, and spend so far as it is  
necessary to keep alive, and give account of  
it to the General Synod. It is not neces-  
sary to do this in an offensive manner;  
but we have to do it as a Christian duty  
who are entrusted with the special care  
for that institution. -

3.  
If Mr. Suydam gives money and  
if he demands secrecy; then let the  
money if possible be used to clear  
the real estate debt. -

Further Dr. Lee thinks also that  
it is necessary not to leave the field; but  
he thought it to be good that you should  
come in the field also. - The Board  
however could not give an invitation  
on account the whole affair belongs to  
the counsel. -

The thing is this: Nobody will have pity  
on Hope College if we don't have it. Nobody  
will pick up the money if we don't do it.  
Nobody will find fault if we get money:  
We must not expect any thing than  
Synodical resolutions: and the counsel  
must do the work. - Getting the money  
is the thing to keep us alive, to make  
us respectable popular etc. etc. therefore  
come and get the money: Even  
I would like to see young dominies  
trained in the work. It will be a hard

New York Nov. 4 / 69

Revd Dr P: Phelps

Dear Brother,

Yesterday I was present at the organisation of the New Brunswick Particular Synod: it was all done in a hurry: no bussiness was done every one wanted to go home the same day: the hurricane of bussiness destroys bussiness.

As every where I found there the committee appointed to cooperate with Dr Cornell to go through the churches. Therefore the clergymen feel themselves pledged to finish up that work. -So I will go on seeking openings perhaps may meet an individual with pity for the West: at least I intend to go on even by making loans to defraying my expenses as I was already obliged to do:

Many advise to do nothing on account the present claims in the field: I feel not desperate to do so: -But I feel well inclined to declare it impossible to do now the work for the Endowment, both stay in the field for Hope College in general to keep, the machine going:-

I did put the question to Dr Van Cleef what to do with the current expenses and the debt acrued by the contingent expenses: He said better keep begging to keep it going; till Cornell has been around.

The same question I did put to Dr See and his answer was: that the Counsel had to judge about this. and now as a member of the Counsel, try: before that the teachers must suffer, before individuals must come burdened by this debt, we will collect and spent so far as it is necessary to keep alive and give account for it to General Synod. It is not necessary to do this in an offensive manner, but we have to do it as a Christian duty who are entrusted with the special care for that institution. -

If Mr Suydam gives money and if he demands secrecy: then let the money if possible be used to clear the real estate debt. -

Farther Dr See thinks alsoo that it is necessary not to leave the field: but he thought it to be a good thing that you should come to the field alsoo; -The Board However could not give an invitation on account of the Whole affaire belongs to the Counsel. -

The thing is this: Nobody will have pity on Hope College if we dont have it: Nobody will pick up the money if we dont do it. Nobody will find fault if we get the money: We must not expect anything than Synodical resolutions: and the Counsel must do the work. -Getting the money is the thing to keep us alive to make us respectable popular etc, etc. therefore come and get the money: Even I would like to see young dominees trained in the work: It will be a hard work for years to come: We must get before Synod as much as is possible and we must have sound and solid plans before Synod in connection with buildings. -I know in some cases they say yet: that we were too fast, that New Brunswick would have answered etc etc etc therefore we must be up and doing, we must go ahead; well humble not grumbling but inflexible persistant and always in the field: if we bring young men in the field we must make them known by the Intelligencer: and demand this as our only church paper.

I an very anxious that our real estate schould be free from debt: if you have friends work at them for that purpose. -

May God bless Hope College:

Your friend and Brother

A. C. Van Raalte

N.B. I hope the Executive Committee and the Professors will see the necessity of your coming, and also that coming of a young man as Ds Ch. Oggel: You and a domine who can preach the English are better fitted for the work: I myself have no intention to leave the work but I urge your coming and the coming of a young domine. We must keep to work: constantly to work for years to come with force and perseverance, else we will make bad work. We must have buildings.

Note: Ch Oggel was Rev. E. C. Oggel, born 1841; Hutgere C. '65:  
N.B.T. s 1866 of De Hope and Tres of Hope College '69 - '71: New Palts 1896-1908:  
died 1910.

Dr Pieter y Oggel died Dec. 15, 1869, a month after the above letter was written.  
Husband of Nina Van Raalte.

New York Nov. 4/ 69

Revd Dr P: Phelps

Dear Brother,

Yesterday I was present at the organization of the New Brunswick Particular Synod: it was all done in a hurry: no business was done every one wanted to go home the same day: the hurricane of business destroys business.

*underlined by V.R. - original.*

As every where I found there the committees appointed to cooperate with Dr Cornell to go through the churches. Therefore the clergymen feel themselves pledged to finish up that work. - So I will go on seeking openings perhaps may meet an individual with pity for the West: at least I intend to go on even by making loans to defraying my expenses as I was already obliged to do:

Many advise to do nothing on account the present claims in the field: I feel not desperate to do so: - But I feel well inclined to declare it impossible to do now the work for the Endowment, both stay in the field for Hope College in general to keep, the machine going:-

I did put the question to Dr Van Cleef what to do with the current expenses and the debt accrued by the contingent expenses: He said better keep begging to keep it going; till Cornell has been around.

The same question I did put to Dr See and his answer was: that the Counsel had to judge about this, and now as a member of the Counsel try: before that the teachers must suffer, before individuals must come burdened by this debt, we will collect and spend it as far as it is necessary to keep alive and give account for it to General Synod. It is not necessary to do this in an offensive manner, but we have to do it as a Christian duty who are entrusted with the special care for that institution. -

If Mr Suydam gives money and if he demands secrecy: then let the money if possible be used to clear the real estate debt. -

Farther Dr See thinks also that it is necessary not to leave the field: but he thought it to be a good thing that you should come to the field also:- The Board However could not give an invitation on account of the whole affaire belongs to the Counsel. -

The thing is this: Nobody will have pity on Hope College if we dont have it: Nobody will pick up the money if we dont do it. Nobody will find fault if we get the money: We must not expect anything than Synodical resolutions: and the Counsel must do the work. - Getting the money is the thing to keep us alive, to make us respectable popular etc, etc. therefore come and get the money: Even I would like to see young dominions trained in the work: It will be a hard work for years to come: We must get before Synod as much as is possible and we must have sound and solid plans before Synod in connection with buildings. - I know in some cases they say yet: that we were too fast, that New Brunswick would have answered etc etc etc therefore we must be up and doing, we must go ahead; well humble not grumbling but inflexible persistent and always in the field: if we bring young men in the field we must make them known by the Intelligencer: and demand this as our only church paper.

Newyork Nov. 4/69

Revd Dr P: Phelps

Dear Brother,

Yesterday I was present at the organisation of the New Brunswick Particular Synod:<sup>1</sup> it was all done in a hurry: no bussiness was done every one wanted to go home the same day: the hurricane of bussiness destrois bussiness. –

as every where I found there the committees appointed to cooperate with Dr. Cornell to go through the churches Therefore the clergymen feel themselves pledged to finish up that work. – So I will go on seeking openings perhaps I may meet an individual with pity for the West: at least I intend to go on even by making loans to defray my expenses as I was already obliged to do:<sup>2</sup>

Many advise to do nothing on account the present claims in the field: I feel not disposed to do so: - But I feel well inclined to declare it impossible to do now the work for the Endowment, but to stay in the field for Hope College in general, to keep the machine going: --<sup>3</sup>

I did put the question, to Dr Van Cleef<sup>4</sup> what to do with the current expenses and the debt ac[c]rued by these contingent expenses: He said better keep begging to keep it going; till Cornell has been around.

The same question I did put to Dr See:<sup>5</sup> and his answer was: that the Counsel<sup>6</sup> had to judge about this. and now as a member of the Counsel,<sup>7</sup> I say before that the teachers

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<sup>1</sup> See Corwin's *Digest of Synodical Legislation* for a history of the formation of Particular Synods in the Dutch Reformed Church. The Particular Synods of Albany and New York were organized in 1800. The Classes that now made up the Particular Synod of New Brunswick were formerly in the Particular Synod of New York. (485-490). The General Synod of the RCA changed the name of these synods to "regional" in 1992. *Acts and Proceedings....1992*, 39-40.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Cornell's effective fundraising on behalf of New Brunswick Seminary made Van Raalte's work very difficult.

<sup>3</sup> Even though Van Raalte was needed to be with his family at a very difficult time due to the illness of Rev. Pieter J. Oggel, he was so dedicated to Hope College that he neglected family obligations.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Paul Duryea Van Cleef was the pastor of the Second Reformed Church of Jersey City, a congregation he served from 1849 until 1896. He was elected a trustee of Rutgers College this year. He served as a member of the Board of Domestic Missions for forty-seven years. *Acts and Proceedings...*, 1903, 527-529. The prominence of Van Cleef in the ministry of the Reformed Church must have led Van Raalte to consult with him.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. John L. See, often mentioned in these letters of Van Raalte to Phelps, was the Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Education, 1861-1884. Corwin's *Manual....*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., 1902, 729.

<sup>6</sup> Van Raalte was never able to master the correct spelling of 'council.' Prior to its incorporation in 1866, the governing board of the Holland Academy and Hope College was the Board of Superintendents. After 1866, the governing board was the Council of Hope College of which Van Raalte was a member and the



must suffer, before individuals must come burdened by this debt, we will collect and spent so far as it is necessary to keep alive, and give account of it to the General Synod. It is not necessary to do this in an offensive manner, but we have to do it as a Christian duty Who are entrusted with the special care for that institution. —

If Mr Suydam gives money and if he demands secrecy: then let the money if possible be used to clear the real estate debt. —

Farther Dr See thinks also that it is necessary not to leave the field: but He thought it to be good that you should come in the field also: - The Board However could not give an invitation on account of the Whole affaire belongs to the Counsel.—

The thing is this “Nobody will have pity on Hope College if we don’t have it: Nobody will pick up the money if we don’t do it.[“] Nobody will find fault if we get the money: We must not expect anything than Synodical resolutions: and the Counsel must do the work. — Getting the money is the thing to keep us alive, to make us respectable popular etc. etc. therefore come and get the money: Even I would like to see young dominees trained in the work: It will be a hard work for years to come: We must get before Synod as much as is possible and we must have sound and solid plans before Synod in connection with buildings. — I know in some corners they say yet: that we were too fast, that New Brunswick would have answered etc etc etc the[re]fore we must be up and doing, we must go ahead; well humble not grumbling but inflexible persistant and always in the field: if we bring young men in the field, we must make them known by the [Christian] Intelligencer:<sup>8</sup> and demand this as our only church paper. —

I am very anxious that our real estate should be free from debt: if you have friends work at them for that purpose. - May God bless Hope College!

Your friend & Brother

A. C. Van Raalte

N. B. I Hope the Executive Committee and the Professors will see the necessity of your coming, and also that coming of a young man as Domine Ch. Oggel:<sup>9</sup> You and a domine who can preach the English are better fitted for the work: I myself have no intention to leave the work but I urge your coming and the coming of a young Domine. We must keep to work: constantly to work for years to come with force and perseverance, else we will make bad work. We must have buildings.

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first president of the Council. Preston J. Stegenga, in his history of Hope College, *Anchor of Hope, ...*, (1954), discusses the early administrative system of Hope College, 73-76.

<sup>7</sup> As far as it can be determined, Van Raalte was a member of the Council of Hope College and served as its first president. *First Catalogue and Circular of HOPE COLLEGE...*, 1865-66 (1866), 5.

<sup>8</sup> The denominational weekly.

<sup>9</sup> Rev. Engelbert Christian Oggel was at this time serving the college as editor of *De Hope* and treasurer of the college. Corwin’s *Manual...*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., (1902), 442. He was the younger brother of Rev. Pieter J. Oggel

I am very anxious that our real estate should be free from debt: if you have friends work at them for that purpose. \*

May God bless Hope College!

Your friend and brother

A.C. Van Rualte

H.B. I hope the Executive Committee and the Professors will see the necessity of your coming, and also the coming of a young man as Dr. G. Gogel. You and a Semine who can preach the English are better fitted for the work: I myself have no intention to leave the work but I urge your coming and the coming of a young Semine. We must keep to work constantly to work for years to come with force and perseverance, also we will make hard work. We must have buildings. \*

Note: Dr. Gogel was Rev. E. G. Gogel, born 1841; Rutgers '65; N. Y. T. & 1866 Ed of De Hope & Treas of Hope College '69-'71; New Falls 1870-1888; died 1910.

Dr. Pieter J Gogel died Dec. 15, 1889, a month after the above letter was written. Husband of Miss Van Rualte.