

1923

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Hope College

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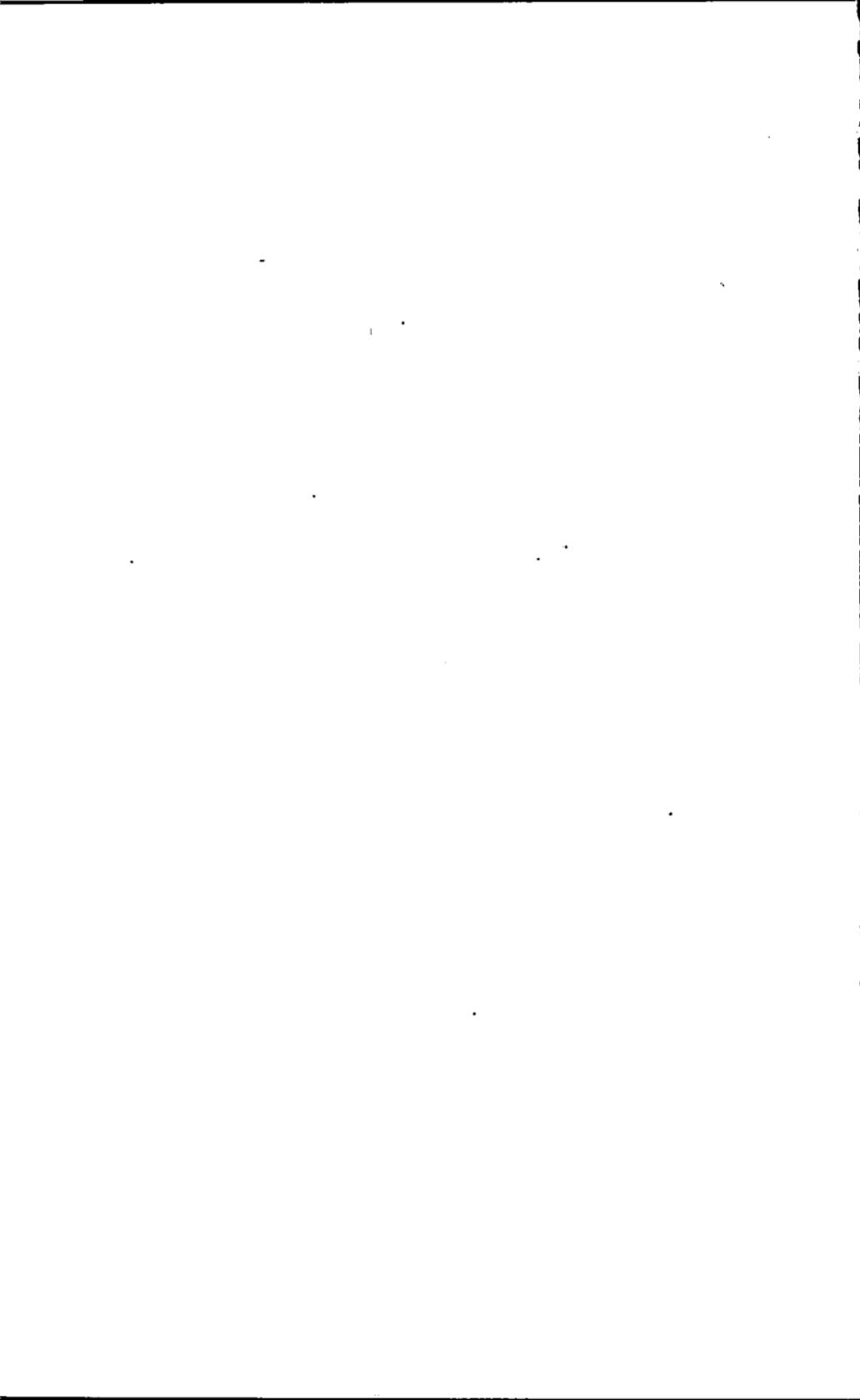
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Vol. 61 No. 3

Nov. 1923

# Hope College

## In Memoriam



## Foreword

THIS November number of the Bulletin issues as a Memorial Number and a Prospect Number. Since the close of the last school year four of the Alumni of the College have answered the last call. Since June 20, 1923, the Fifty-eighth Commencement Day, the first of a series of plans was completed looking to the modernizing of grounds and buildings. In this way a short four months commands us to take the backward look and review the annals of life the while we strain to catch the beacon glow that comes a herald of tomorrow.

All of the Alumni now living have known Rev. Peter Moerdyke, D. D., '66. He was the last of his class and for a number of years he was known as the "oldest living alumnus." Rev. Evert J. Blekkink, D. D., president of the Western Theological Seminary, has written the commemorative article.

The Class of 1922 lost its first member in the death of Jacob Schepel, a resident student of the Western Theological Seminary. Thus the first class and the last class but one unite under the shadow of the wings of Death's Angel.

Two physicians also were summoned to the last review. The younger, Dr. John Peter Muyskens, '16, had just begun to practice. He left his internship in June, 1923, to establish himself in his chosen profession at Armour, S. D. In July he was stricken with appendicitis and died in hospital on the 3rd day of August, 1923.

Dr. Almon T. Godfrey, A. M., M. D., Professor of Chemistry at Hope College from 1906 to 1923, was operated upon for appendicitis and peritonitis August 14, 1923, and died August 25, 1923. The sketch and tribute on page 7 is contributed by Mr. Arnold Mulder, Litt. D., '07, editor of the Holland Sentinel.



# In Memoriam

\* \* \*

PETER MOERDYKE

1866

*Doctor Divinitatis 1922*

*Aet LXXVIII*

\* \* \*

ALMON TANNER GODFREY

1900

*Doctor Medicinae 1904*

*Magister Scientiae 1907*

*Aet XLVI*

\* \* \*

JOHN PETER MUYSKENS

1918

*Doctor Medicinae 1922*

*Aet XXVI*

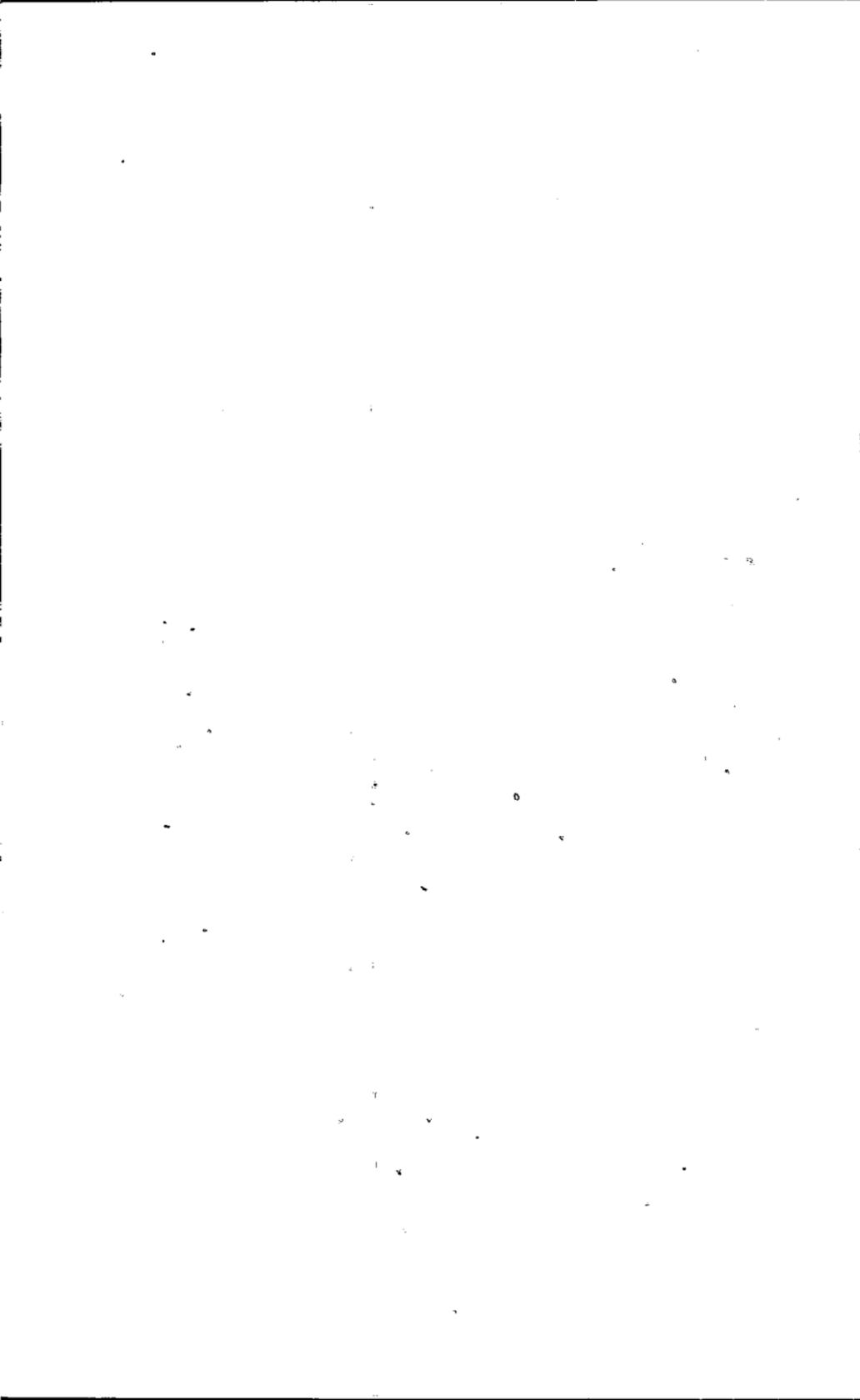
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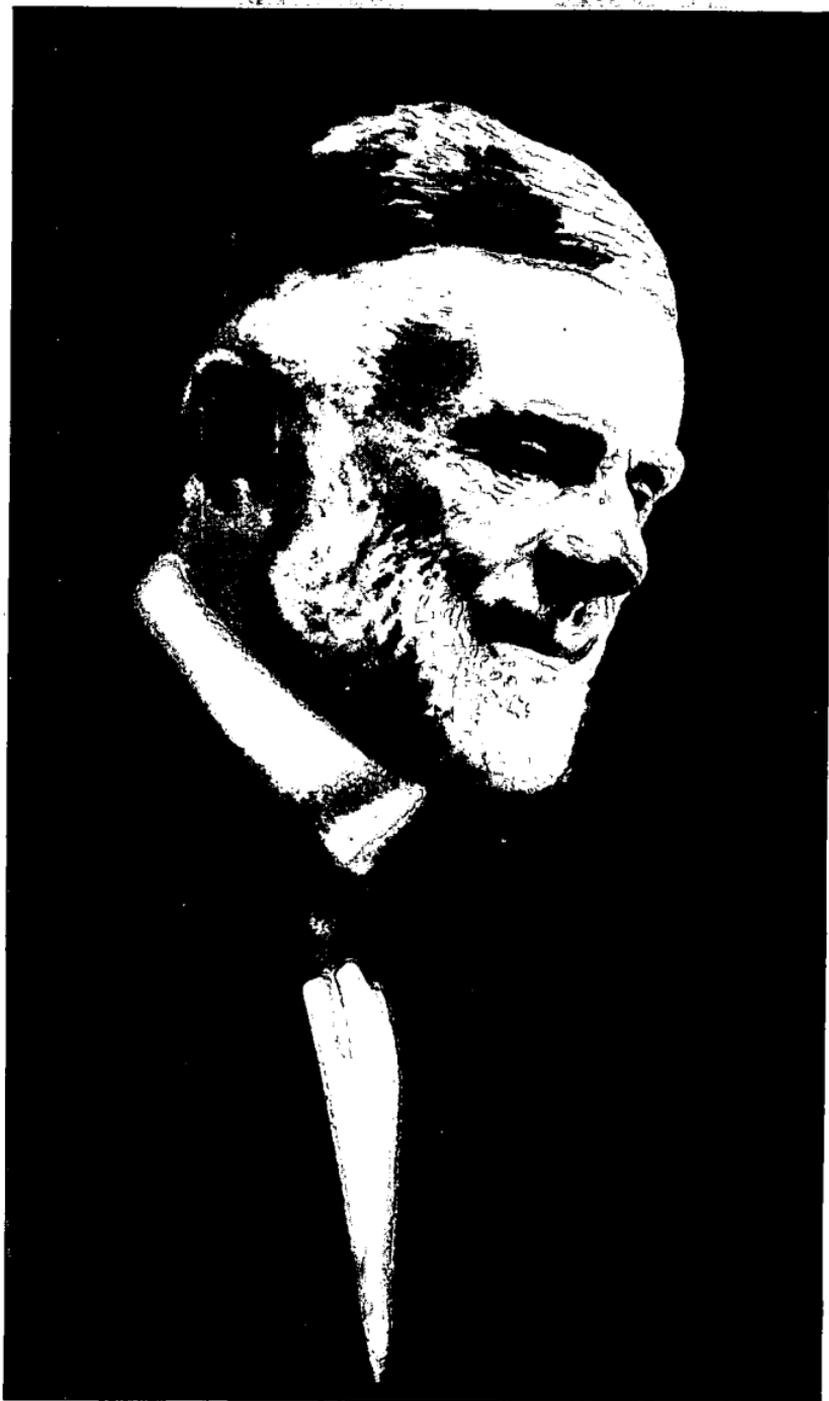
JACOB SCHEPEL

1921

*Aet XXV*

\* \* \*





REV. PETER MOERDYKE, D. D., '66



## Peter Moerdyke, '66

**I**N the death of the Rev. Peter Moerdyke, D. D., the Reformed Church in America has lost a strong preacher; the cause of religion a staunch defender of the faith; Christian education a loyal friend; HOPE COLLEGE an honored alumnus and devoted son.

He died July 18, 1923, at the home of his daughter in Toronto, Canada, in his seventy-eighth year. His grave is at South Bend, Indiana, his last pastorate.

He was born in a Christian home, reared in the Reformed Church in America and trained in her schools. He served in the ministry of this denomination for fifty-four years. He was a man widely read in theology and philosophy and possessed a fine sense of literature which he trained throughout his life.

He was prominent in the work of the denomination. For years he was a member of the Council of HOPE COLLEGE and served on the Board of Superintendents of the Western Theological Seminary. He had been a member of the Board of Foreign Missions, R. C. A., was Stated Clerk of the Particular Synod of Chicago for a long term of years and in 1916 was chosen as President of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America. He served on interdenominational committees as well and was an effective member in bringing about a growing interdenominational comity. He was appointed frequently to represent the Reformed Church and her institutions at annual and anniversary gatherings of sister denominations. He was honored with the degree of doctor of divinity by two institutions,—his Alma Mater and Heidelberg University.

His intellectual strength remained unabated to

the end. Although advanced in years he was in constant demand as pulpit supply by churches during the summer months when he was at his cottage at Virginia Park. He loved to preach. He understood the art of building a sermon. He had a rich vocabulary and he knew how to use it. At times he seemed severe but his severity sprang from the deep consciousness of the distance that exists between what is and what ought to be in the practice of the Christian faith.

He believed in denominational academies and colleges in which to lay the foundations for the learned professions and particularly for an efficient and godly ministry, a service which the republic is unable to render but of which it stands in the greatest need. He regarded the public school as a thoroughly American institution which the Christian public must imbue with the Christian spirit.

It is fifty-seven years since Peter Moerdyke graduated from Hope College. He was of the first fruits of the institution—the Class of Eighteen Hundred Sixty-six.

“By their fruits ye shall know them” is as true of institutions as it is of trees and of men. In this saying of our Lord we have the infallible test. It is as impossible for an institution to deceive as to its character and worth as it is for a tree to hide its nature when it comes to bearing fruit.

He was a loyal son of HOPE. He acknowledged his indebtedness to the institution on public occasions and endeavored to meet it. He published her good name abroad and was jealous of her reputation. He advised young people to go to HOPE and with pleasure saw many follow his advice.

The glory of the College is not in her buildings and physical equipment, valuable as these are; nor

in the faculty, excellent as this may be. Her glory is chiefly and supremely in the product,—her graduates, the men and women that have passed through college walls and are out in the service of their fellow-men in numerous callings and pursuits in the spirit of the Master who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. Dr. Moerdyke held a most honorable place in this list increasing in number and range of profession and location from year to year.

*E. J. Blekkink.*



## Almon T. Godfrey, '00

**G**REAT poets who can transmute grief into art possess a means of softening the pain that comes to all men when they must face the hard fact of seeing their "precious friends hid in death's dateless night." But most of us are necessarily without that resource and the death of a friend and comrade like Dr. Almon T. Godfrey makes us feel defenseless against sorrow. Whatever anyone of us can say about the blotting out of a life so full of achievement and promise is so feeble that it seems only a pale reflection of what we feel. But even if such a death makes many of us inarticulate, some attempt may be made to appraise the life that is ended.

I wish very much to remain free from sentimentality in casting a backward look on the life of a man the memory of whose friendship I shall always cherish as one of life's rich possessions. He himself would not have desired the maudlin praise, because he was at heart a true scientist and he lived his life, in so far as this can ever be done, in the scientific spirit—the spirit of an honest facing of facts and a refusal to let mere meaningless words that sound like truth take the place of truth.

And he proved by his daily life that fidelity to fact does not necessarily mean a stoic austerity such as is frequently associated with the personality of the scientist but that it may be accompanied by a rich gift for friendship. For he was respected by those of us who knew him well because of the honesty with which he faced life, but he was loved by those of us who were now and again admitted to the inner shrine of his nature because he had a gift for



PROF. ALMON T. GODFREY, A. M., M. D., '00



genial camaraderie that made association with him a delight.

As is the case with many a fine nature, he suffered from a fundamental inability to dramatize himself to the general public and for that reason his native qualities and very substantial ability did not always receive their just recognition. Very probably also he scorned to use the arts that must almost of necessity be employed by those who strive to gain mere popular applause, again preferring, in the spirit of the true scientist, to let facts speak for themselves and to let his unemphasized daily life be its own justification. But a life so lived often gains an emphasis as the year's pass that those who strive for it can never attain, because it is the fruit of a genuineness so true that it is wholly unconscious. And this emphasis was his, in the college and in the community, although the general public could perhaps never feel the full force of his personality or know him as his friends had known him for many years before death put a period to his career in midcourse.

He gave much to HOPE COLLEGE and he received much from it—the opportunity to do the work he loved and to place upon the lives of many young men the indelible imprint of his zeal for his profession so that his life is vitally operative to-day, and will be for a long time to come, in the lives of others.

For all of that we can feel grateful but—

The hurt of his going remains, and some of us will continue to listen for a voice, to look for a gleam of humor in an eye, almost to expect the touch of a hand.

*Arnold Mulder.*

# The Faculty

1923-1924

REV. AME VENNEMA, D. D., *President Emeritus.*

EDWARD D. DIMNENT, Litt D., *President.*

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R. R. 4. Tel., 4108-6r.

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*Professor of Biblical Literature.*

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MAGDALENE M. DE PREE  
*Librarian.*  
Voorhees Hall. Tel., 2378.

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## The School of Music

### GRACE MARGUERITE BROWNING STUDIO

MR. JOHN B. NYKERK, Litt. D.  
*Secretary.* Tel. 5371.

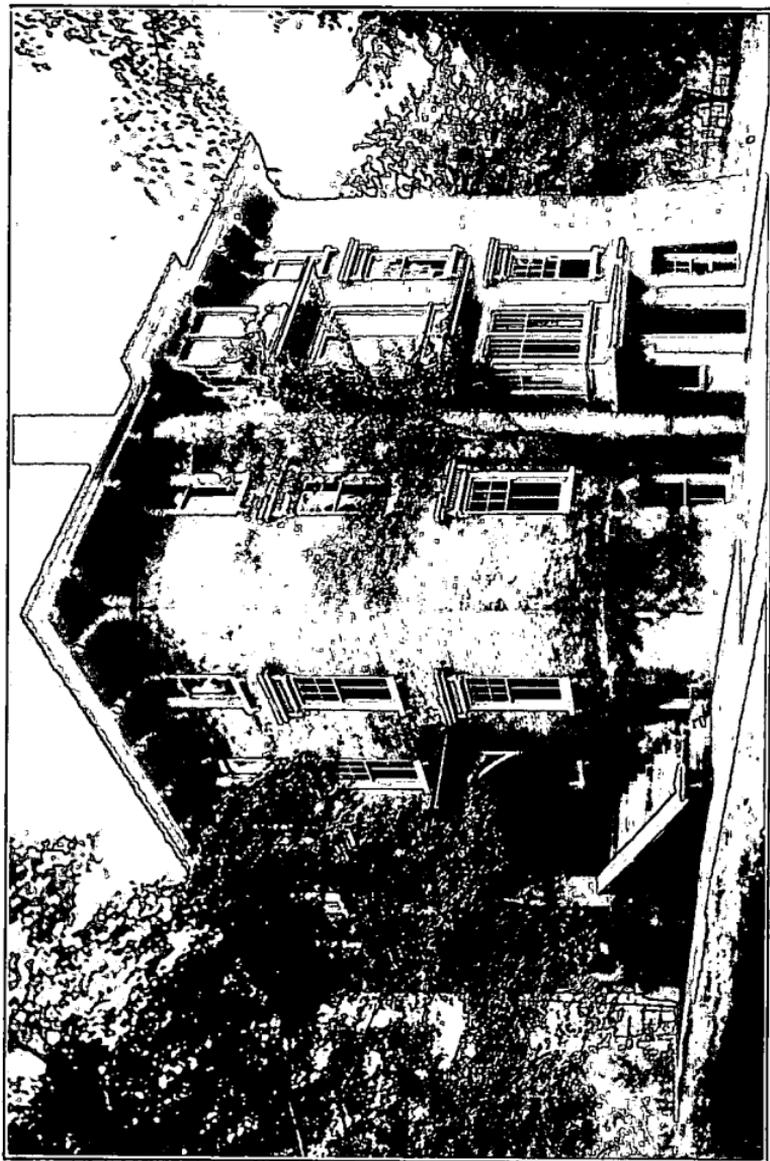
MR. OSCAR CRESS  
*Piano and Harmony.*

MRS. GRACE DUDLEY FENTON.  
*Voice and Singing.*

MR. CARL WECKER  
*Violin and Director of Orchestra.*

MR. J. FRANCIS CAMPBELL.  
*Director of Oratorio.*

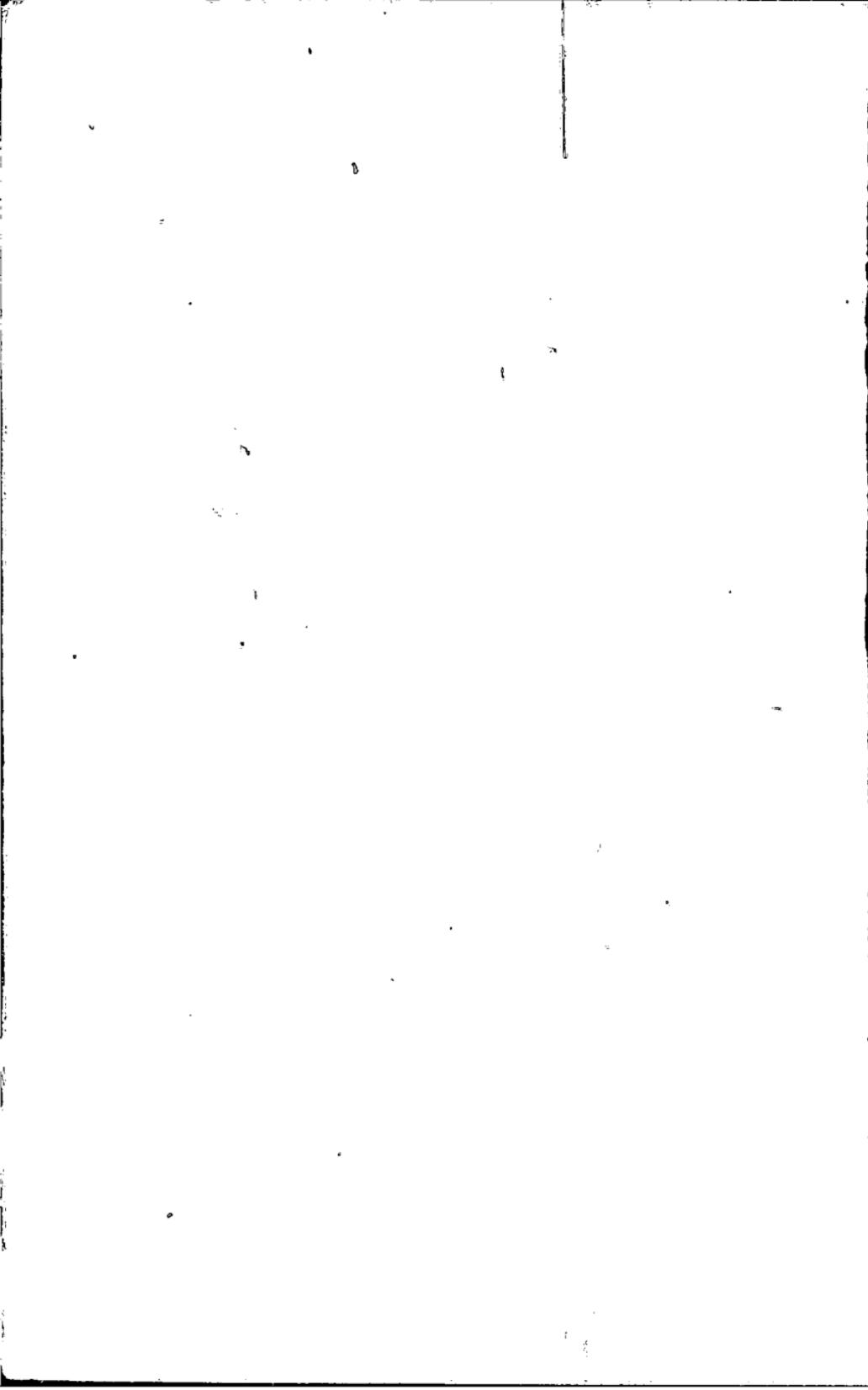
MR. GEORGE LE MERE  
*Cello.*



Built 1854-1857

VAN VLECK HALL

Reconstructed 1923



## Van Vleck Hall

THE building of Van Vleck Hall marked an epoch in the history of HOPE COLLEGE. The Pioneer School had been begun in 1851 but it was conducted jointly with the public school of the village and this connection continued until the organization of HOLLAND ACADEMY in 1855. Up to this latter date the work which had been done was of a tentative character for the school might be discontinued or removed to another location. The colony was only four years old when the PIONEER SCHOOL was opened and was without means to maintain it. The School was without property except the "five acre" plot which Rev. A. C. Van Raalte had donated as a site for an academy. Nothing had been done to improve the plot or to construct a building upon it. While the PIONEER SCHOOL had developed into an academy during these years and had been separated from the public school under the administration of Principal Van Vleck, this separation had deprived it of a home. But General Synod had also during this time become more and more convinced that the logical location for a western institution of higher Christian education was the center of a successful colony exclusively composed of its own people albeit a people without resources that would enable them to meet the expenses connected with such an undertaking. General Synod well knew that the burden of its support would fall upon the churches for some years, but it also understood that these immigrants yearned for the advantages which the academy would offer them; it understood, too, that the missionary enterprise in the west would depend for its success largely upon an educational center that would in time to come supply the immi-

grant churches with a ministry trained wholly or in part in the west.

The erection of Van Vleck Hall was authorized by the General Synod in 1857. The following resolutions were then adopted: "That the General Synod approve the erection of the new edifice for the benefit of this Literary Institution; and that the Rev. A. C. Van Raalte be commended to the churches in his efforts to collect funds for the new buildings for the Academy."

Dr. Van Raalte went east and in three successive journeys succeeded in raising about \$12,000.00 for this purpose. Little was contributed in the west except in the form of labor that could be employed in gathering materials and in actual construction work.

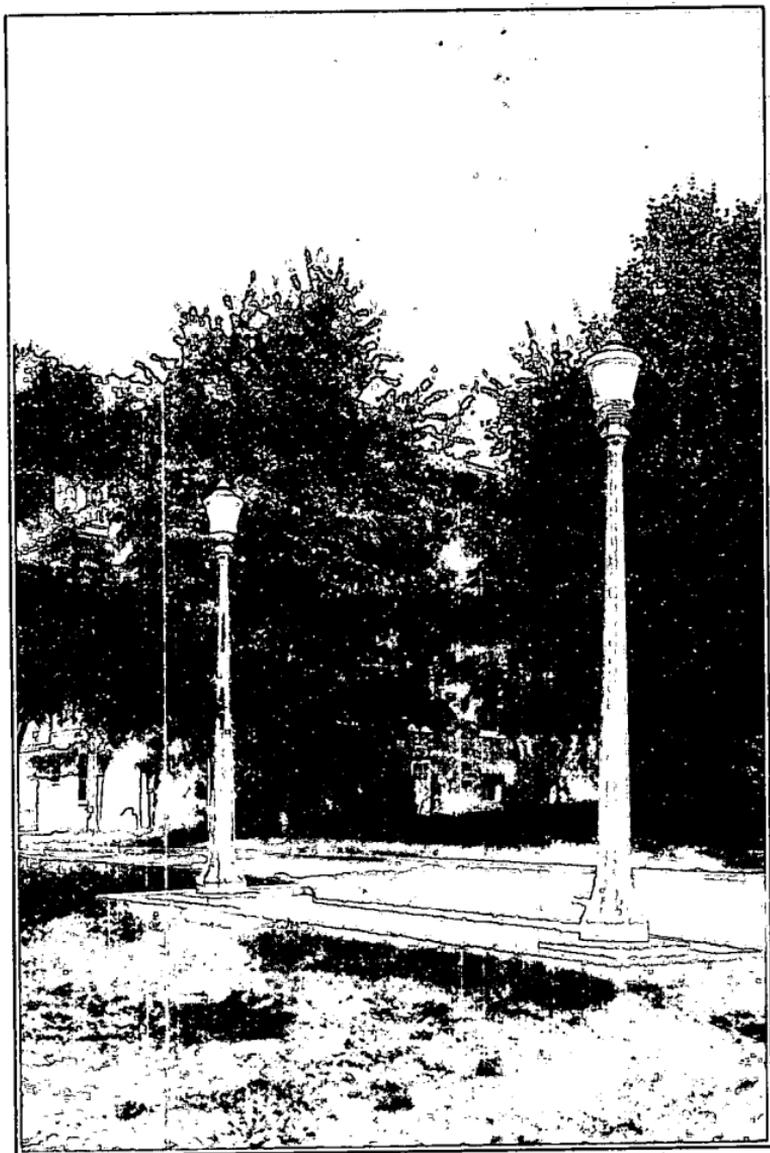
The work was begun under the supervision of Principal Van Vleck, who was indeed the architect and the director of all the work on the grounds. The next year the report on the Academy states that the building was not yet finished and that a part only was then fit for use. The following action therefore was taken: "In view of the commanding importance of this Institution to the growth of our church in the west your committee recommend the adoption of the following resolution: Resolved, that any effort that may be made to complete and furnish Holland Academy so that it may accomplish the full measure of its usefulness be commended to the earnest sympathy and liberality of the Churches."

The erection of Van Vleck Hall accomplished two things for HOPE COLLEGE—it settled the question of its location and it furnished a home for the school.

Van Vleck Hall is a building of 40 x 50 feet, three stories high with basement, constructed of red brick on a stone foundation. At the time of its completion and for many years thereafter it was not only the sole permanent building on the campus but it was

also the most imposing structure in the city of Holland. For sixty-five years it has served its purpose and during that time underwent little alteration or repairs. In these early days it was the only building and served many different purposes. It was the residence of the Principal, later of the President of the College. It housed the library of the College and also contained the recitation rooms. In the basement the chapel was located while the third floor and part of the second floor were used for dormitory purposes. Temporary frame structures were erected on other parts of the campus to provide recitation halls but no other permanent building was erected until 1886 when the President's House was built. In 1892 Winants Chapel and Graves Hall with stack room, reading room and four recitation rooms was begun and in 1903 Van Raalte Memorial Hall was built. From this time on Van Vleck Hall became a dormitory exclusively but the erection of Voorhees Hall with all its conveniences in 1906 so far eclipsed it in every way that old Van Vleck seemed to have outlived its usefulness. Like other things that have become obsolete because of the introduction of modern improvements the old Hall lost its value except as a reminder of bygone days, those days of small beginnings. Dear indeed to the older graduates because of the happy memories that clustered around but inadequate for present-day usage, it seemed that its days were numbered and it would have to be torn down and replaced by another. But today Old Van Vleck has renewed its youth. It has not been rebuilt; the old lines are still there. But complete renovation in the interior has given the Hall a new lease of life and usefulness. For exterior, it is to the alumnus of former days "VAN VLECK" still but when he enters its doors he finds himself in modern surroundings, offering all the conveniences of a modern structure,—a NEW VAN VLECK.

*G. De Jonge.*



ELECTRIC PLAZA  
*Donated by the Class of 1919*

## The Prospect.

THE article contributed in this issue by Rev. Gerhard De Jonge, D. D., on Van Vleck Hall may serve as a fit setting for the brief statement of plans which are maturing for the improvement of the physical property of the College. A fiery orator of another day did not hesitate to tell his country that it was not they who called for haste and impelled to immediate and detailed results who wrought the most complete success. This is axiomatic. Yet it is most obviously human to clamor for "direct action" and our present-day attitude toward all of life is emphatically one of "direct action." Institutions of all sorts have been urged on to increase in buildings and equipment of a nature that is now beginning to astound even ourselves. Time was when appreciation of a great need gave birth to a powerful faith in God's providential supply of means and men, but as the quiet observer views things today, he is impelled to conclude that faith has suffered an inflation almost as pronounced as economic commodities. Institutions have incurred debts that rival national budgets and some are as a result strained to the point of bankruptcy. With keen foresight for dominating needs President Kollen and President Vellema built up the academic and endowment bases of the College. There was little time and less money for the development of the externals. The first of these sturdy and wise builders knew the need of proper housing and equipment and few, even of the alumni of the College, realize that from an institution of six or seven teachers and one brick building (four almost hopeless frame buildings that were a heritage of local emergency and student labor) and a permanent fund of scarce \$50,000.00 in 1892, two

decades saw the erection of buildings which could not be replaced today for half a million dollars and an endowment that reached the \$300,000.00 mark. In the seven years of his presidency Dr. Vennema followed this achievement with an increase in the permanent funds which brought them to the \$500,000.00 mark and strengthened the academic standards all along the line. The scientific departments were brought to a position where they were second to none in institutions of like aims and foundations. The minions of haste would have followed the "epochal urge" of the early nineties (just as insistent then as its twin of today, "the dynamic of a new world") and builded "imposing structures" for the bankruptcy courts of a decade later. On the wise constructive foundation of these two men the College is now ready for other developments. The earlier construction is also in need of rehabilitation after the twenty-five years of its existence and use.

Through the zeal and generosity of business men in Grand Rapids, Grandville, Kalamazoo and Muskegon funds are being supplied to carry on the work of improvement. An Advisory Committee composed of Mr. C. Dosker, Mr. James Buys, Mr. A. Van Stensel, Mr. H. Leenhouts, and Mr. John Boter of Grand Rapids, Michigan, have been making appeals to the business men of the Reformed Churches in Kent, Muskegon, Kalamazoo and Ottawa Counties to underwrite the necessary budget for these improvements. The accompanying picture of VAN VLECK HALL gives adequate proof of the success of their work. Yet the largest improvement is in the interior as Dr. De Jonge's article indicates. "Old Van Vleck" is to-day a "modern College Dormitory." The Athletic Grounds are being built up along the most approved lines and before another Commencement Day rolls around "PHELPS FIELD" will be in condition to command the regard and praise of alumni and towns-

men. The Class of 1919 have donated an "Electric Plaza" in front of Carnegie Hall and to this will be added Light Pedestals directly in the entranceway to the Hall. A year earlier commodious housing in Van Raalte Memorial Hall had been prepared for the Museum at a cost of upwards of \$5,000.00. President Charles Scott was the man who provided the modest beginnings of this museum in the old "Laboratory" on the hill to the east of Van Vleck and the Museum is to be known in the future as the Scott Museum. There is ample room for a large increase in the articles of natural, historical, and racial interest which are now properly cared for, but in "The Prospect" there are plans for a building which ultimately should be known as the Scott Museum.

Educational developments in the next decade are quite sure to be extraordinary in their range and influence and tentative plans are ready to meet these developments, but of necessity details will depend upon needs, upon funds, upon friends, and upon permanent income which can care for all the improvements and keep them in adequate condition for highest results. Any day may bring changes in public opinion or in academic and scientific realizations that will spell upheaval for many a system and practice that is at its height to-day. Any "Prospect" that is wise must regard this fact and the stuff of which dreams are made must always be material stuff,—that is, more than the whilom vagaries of fleeting impulses. Future issues of this Bulletin will record accomplishments as they are realized. The outstanding impression of one who saw Old Van Vleck dismantled of its interior was that of "Building for Endurance." Sometime students who roomed there and felt during the stormy nights that the winds were howling their requiem could never have known of the truss beams and the iron rods and bolts that tied the building together in such a way that polar

gales or volcanic quakes could have left little effect upon it. Nor could they have been aware that the double ceilings of all three stories—the basement included—were absolute assurance that no “fellow in the room above” could ever drop through no matter how he raved over “Excelsior” or declaimed the words of Milton’s Satan or an English Pitt and a Greek Demosthenes. As one of the workmen remarked as he looked upon the naked joists and timbers,—“Sure, if a hurrican had bowled it over, the old box would have rolled down hill and turned up smilin.” Even the “fathers” of the late fifties “buildéd better than they knew” and “Old Van Vleck” stands again with its renewed life as a monitor for the future,—“Prospice” it may well be saying to all who come to it but, endowed with a stability that almost rivals the granite rocks, it may also be heralding the words,—Aeternitas in tempore.

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