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6-12-1869

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

A. C. Van Raalte

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Amelia C. H., Va., June 12, 1869

No. 50

A letter of A. C. Van Raalte to Philip Phelps, a very brief note but indicating that he is not feeling at all well.

Original in the Archives of Hope College.

50.

Amelia C H Va
June 12/ 1869

Rev'd Dr P Phelps.

Dear Brother.

Since I left Philadelphia I got the fever again and again: Bowel Rhumatic troubles and general disorder especially weakness or exhaustion stops me. I must stop! My absence is by no means withdrawal or uninterestedness.

May God inspire the Counsel with wisdom and a will to do the work: now the future is placed at her door. A general system for the financial interest and for the collection of the endowment is now the great want of the moment. My hearts prayer is with you.

Your friend and Brother

A.C. Van Raalte

50.

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June 12/1879

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Your friend and Brother

A.C. Van Raalte

69-06-12

[GD50]

Dr. Albertus C. Van Raalte and Dr. Philip Phelps Jr, had been delegates from the Classis of Holland at the annual meeting of the General Synod in Philadelphia, June 2-9, 1869. Van Raalte then traveled back to Amelia Court House, Virginia, where he and his family were now living.

The General Synod of 1869 at Philadelphia took decisive action on the "university idea." It ruled: "...your committee [on the Professorate] cannot approve, at present, the *University scheme*; though the Western Classes look with favor upon it. We are of the opinion that, unless under State control, or with the prestige of large endowments, a *university* is a thing of time and growth. A university of fifty students, no funds, and paper Professorships, can command no respect, and does not meet the proper idea of that term." Among the many stipulations how the college should be governed and administered, the synod approved the appointment of professors of Evangelistic Theology and Exegetical Theology. Van Raalte was then elected professor of Evangelistic Theology and Phelps of Exegetical Theology. Phelps accepted the appointment but there is no mention of Van Raalte accepting his.¹ The university idea was dealt with decisively and the synod ordered that theological education would be at Hope College and both would be governed by one board.

This letter is no longer extant and exists only in transcription made by Rev. George Scholten.

Amelia C[ourt] H[ouse] Va
June 12/18~~7~~9
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Your friend and Brother

A. C. Van Raalte

¹ *Acts and Proceedings...*, 1869, 647-48.

² The Dutch immigrant congregations would have to be satisfied that the General Synod had ruled and now the crucial work of building endowment and support of the college and education were vital.