188. August 2, 1711. From Johann Ludwig Runckel to the Mennonite Committee at Amsterdam asking for their intercession to get support for his request from the States General for a higher salary, especially now that the States General’s commissioner, Daniel Raboulet, has died at Basel. He relates his services and financial needs.

[page 1]

Schaffhausen, August 2, 1711.

Very worthy, etc.

My especially highly honored Sirs!

I hope that by now Mr. Ritter in the company of those honest Mennonites who departed from Bern will have arrived with you happily; also that all my communications dispatched to you with their enclosures have been safely delivered; and that from them knowledge of the several events has been gained with satisfaction. The rest is to be learned [by you] from those friends who have arrived there. So these lines should in all confidence only serve to ask most urgently, but justly, after this so widely

ramified affair, for a service of love, my highly honored Sirs. Concerning which, I hope that Daniel Rychen will have already made some approach to the same, trusting in a comforting confidence that my highly honored Sirs will not want to refuse me.

This is the way it has gone, recounted briefly: I have served our most gracious, High and Mighty Lordships already for fifteen years, and indeed the first eight [page 2] years under Mr. Valckenier,[[1]](#footnote-1) who had been the envoy of their High and Mighty Lords to the illustrious [Swiss] Confederation as his secretary, but the remaining seven years as secretary for the [Dutch] government itself (I don’t mean to report boastfully) with all conceivable zeal, industry, and faith and in fact receiving very low wages, which scarcely served to provide necessary maintenance for me. And although several times I have most obediently entreated their High and Mighty Lords for a most gracious augmentation of my stipend, nevertheless on-going, unfavorable business conditions have never at any time permitted them to make a decision either pro or con, but the matter is always pushed off to a better and more convenient season.

Because God in His fathomless wisdom has so ordained that Mr. Daniel Raboulet,[[2]](#footnote-2) who is French, the Commissioner of their High and Mighty Lords for the last four years in office at Basel, who always and most of all has stood in the way of my most obedient request, on the second of the past month, and so a little before my arrival in Basel, has exchanged time for eternity. Thereupon I was advised by my good friends in the Hague, and in particular by Mr. Clerk Fagel, our versatile, lofty patron and well-wisher, that without loss of time with my most obedient request [page 3] I again approach their High and Mighty Lords and most obediently ask that they might please add my previously small stipend to[[3]](#footnote-3) the salary favorably enjoyed earlier by Mr. Raboulet, in order that my income might be that

much better in the future, etc. In consequence of this kindly advice, I have sent off the said request with today’s post to my agent in The Hague with the instruction that as soon as Mr. Clerk Fagel recommends, or when Lord de St. Saphorin[[4]](#footnote-4) approves, it be handed over to the presidents. Then [I may] know from experience how effectively the intervention and advocacy of my highly honored Sirs will turn out to my advantage, if they wish to have the benevolence so to favor me.

So I have asked for this labor of love earnestly and fervently and that they should conjointly make a request, because propriety yet requires that the friends who have come from Switzerland express their most obedient thanks to their High and Mighty Lords for the good offices and intercession employed on behalf of them and their associated brothers; that those gentlemen representatives going with the Bernese Mennonites to The Hague would among the other matters also prepare a case to recommend my concerns in the best, compelling way as opportunity comes; that above all they might confer with the often referred to Mr. Clerk Fagel and [page 4] the Lord de St. Saphorin, as those to whom this matter is equally very important, and act in concert with these two gentlemen.

This is the service of friendship and love which I earnestly ask of my highly honored Sirs, and in expectation of happy success I will make it my business to bring the accounts at hand to a complete resolution as soon as possible and so bring the whole affair to a final settlement.

Meanwhile I remain, besides a mutual commitment to God’s

strong, gracious protection, and otherwise myself and mine

to your devoted prayer with my whole heart,

My especially highly honored Sirs’

Most devoted servant,

Johann Ludwig Runckel.

1. 188 Petrus Valckenier (1641-1712), a lawyer and representative of the Dutch government at Regensburg, Frankfort, Zurich, Schaffhausen, etc. Runckel worked as a secretary for him during the years 1694-1702 and apparently replaced him in his position in 1704. O. Schutte, Repertorium der Nederlandse Vertegenwoordigers, Residerende in het Buitenland 1584-1810 (’s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), pp. 152-153. M. Bokhorst, Nederlands-Zwitserse Betrekkingen voor en na 1700. Eerste Deel (1685-1697) (Amsterdam: H. J. Paris, 1930), p. XXIII. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Daniel Raboulet was Commissioner for the Dutch government in Neuchâtel in 1706 and in Basel. Schutte, p. 467. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. or, “up to” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Baron François Louis Pesme de St-Saphorin (b. 1668), nobleman of Vaud, Swiss ambassador to Holland. See especially Document 162. He was devoted to the Protestant cause in Europe and not always favorable to the Mennonites. Müller, pp. 259-266. Gulik, DB (1909), pp. 137-141, 143-145, 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)