Letter from Eliza Symonds Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, March 7, 1880

Important Tutelo Heights, Brantford, Ont., Can., March 7th, 80. (No envelope) My dear Alec,

Papa came home from Boston last evening and brought me your letters dated 26th, of February. It was quite a treat to get a line from you and I take advantage of the leisure of Sunday to make some reply. I am so glad that Mabel was and is, so well and I anticipate great delight in seeing maid Marion. That is a very pretty name and as Scotch as Elsie. Mabel did not tell me of the purchase Mr. Hubbard had made for you of ground to build upon. I hope it is in a high, airy situation. We will talk over plans for ourselves when we meet. A country place near the sea, and within an easy distance of a Town is what I would prefer, but as I said before, we will discuss that when we go to see the babies, or you come here. One of the last two photographs that dear Mabel sent me, we have over our dressing table, and the likeness seems to grow upon us each day. Your letter to Papa has rather frightened me. In fact your whole career seems to us more like a story in the “Arabian Nights”than a real fact. If your grandpapa and brothers were alive now, what would they say. I wish very much however that you would for a time, turn away your thoughts altogether from the subject you have so long been poring over, and give your mind a rest, I am dreadfully afraid of 2 your overstraining it. Take up Music again for a time. I cannot grasp your new invention at all. Your Father desires much to see and hear for himself. It seems as impossible to get hold of as to grasp a sunbeam. Mrs Munro of Moffat, told me in a recent letter, that she had read in a newspaper of the 50,000 Francs awarded to you from France. It often strikes me with wonder to note how very little the subject of immortality is understood. Referring to your remark of immortality “before the beginning” of life here. The breath of life, which God breathed into the nostrils of Adam, must as a portion of Divinity, have been immortal, but it only then became a living soul.

We have no earlier record of the origin of man than that given by Moses, nor does he say how many ages before he wrote the beginning was. He said “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”. As a thousand years are with the Lord as one day, the week of creation may have been seven thousand years. Man was the first thing created and I see no more difficulty in the production of Eve as described than in the creation of Adam. With God “All things are possible”. Even you with your finite wisdom, have demonstrated that which a few years ago would have been deemed impossible, who then can limit the extent of God's power! There is great strife in the religious world on the subject of “Free will”. I think however from the Scripture statement, that man was originally created in a sort of neutral state, that is neither mortal nor immortal, but 3 with the power of becoming either according as he obeyed or disobeyed the simple commands of his Maker. He disobeyed and became subject to the penalty that was threatened—death—not of the body only (I take it) but death of the soul, called in scripture “the second death”. I conclude therefore that man is not naturally immortal, but a deliverer was promised, who came in the person of Jesus Christ, by whom life and immortality was brought to light, but only through him. A spirit of, and from God, so acted upon. (The other sheet is not here)