

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, July 29, 1881, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell. (Envelope postmarked Cambridge, Mass., July 29, 1881. G. H. G.) Friday. My dear Mrs. Bell,

Thank you very much for your letter the other day. I am glad that you and Mr. Bell were pleased with Alec's presents and don't believe he "opened his purse strings" any too wide. What a hot journey yours to Harpers Ferry must have been. I am sorry you could not get rooms at the Hotel, I have always heard that it was cool there. I ought to have thanked Mr. Bell before for the cherry brandy, but the fact was Chester forgot to give it to me until several days after all I think it was rather they than I who should return thanks for it. However, Lina and I got a little and liked it so much that if Mr. Bell is crowded for space, we would kindly relieve him of a bottle whenever convenient. Really we did like it, and thought it quite a treat.

Now I want you to do something for me. I have not told Alec but last Monday with the doctor's permission, I went into Boston, and while there bought Alec a study couch and large arm-chair. Now comes the question of how it shall be covered, in cloth or in leather. Leather I think decidedly the handsomer and most appropriate to a gentleman's study, but I am not sure if it is the most comfortable, so what I would like you to do is to find out from Alec without telling him why, which he himself prefers, cloth or leather for a sofa covering. I want to know immediately, as if the covering is to be leather I will have the sofa made a little differently.

We are all well here but rather longing for a little more sunshine, we have had rain nearly every day since we came here. Consequently the grass is green as English grass, but my children long for American sun. Elsie is sitting by me now, stringing watermelon seeds and has already made one bracelet and nearly finished a second. This is the first quiet

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operation I have got her interested in and I feel encouraged, before I began to think she was never going to do anything but tear papers. Daisy talks daily more and more, and is far smarter than Elsie was. Tell Alec I have had another letter from him since writing and think his letter to Dr. Bliss manly and dignified.

With very much love to you all, Affectionately, Mabel.