

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, 1876, with transcript

From Miss Mabel G. Hubbard to Mr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1876? Dear Alec:

I had no news from you this morning and was disappointed. I hope you received my note of yesterday, for though it did not contain much, judging from my own feelings a little is better than nothing.

I have taken advantage of your absence to shun your "fresh air" like poison, and am feeling the consequences, as I suppose you would say.

We have been very busy all day on those black dresses. What an immense amount of work a death in this large family makes. It is however a blessing I suppose keeping head and hands busy, and leaving little time for vain sorrow. I should think one would utterly break down if given time to dwell on this great loss. But I don't see when I ever can get away, there are dresses to be made for every one of us and until they are done I can't go much as I may want to. It's no case of luxury, but of actual need. We have none of us proper morning clothes.

What have you done about your overcoat would it be worth dyeing? It would hardly look well wearing mourning hat and gloves and a brown coat, and it is especially important you should look well this winter, when you are meeting so many gentlemen and ladies. You must ask the dyers. I know nothing about it, perhaps the expense would be more than the coat is worth.

Are you going home this year? It seems to me it would be no more expensive than having your father and mother with you, rather less so.

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Aunti Berta has brought a little Xmas present for you, you must begin to think of something for her. I have no idea what to give her, perhaps you might like to join with me in giving her something. How are you going on, in every way. I hope your visit here rested you. I am afraid I was very cross about going to walk with you. I really wanted to go, and enjoyed myself exceedingly, when I did go, I only felt as if it were selfish in me to go off and have a good time, while Mamma worked and vented my discomfort on you.

With very much love, Ever your, own, Mabel.