

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

Letter from Mabel G. Hubbard to Mr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1876? My darling Alec:

I am looking forward anxiously to seeing you again. There, don't be flattered, it's only because [??] and [??] are too many for me and I want to throw them at your head. I never said them in my life as a child I showed a most prophetic dislike to them and I believe I shall never master them to the end of the chapter. Is my tongue too long? Give me other and you may cut it off, it can't be any worse than the perpetual asses I make and which never are ses. [??] [??] and I hate each other like poison I give the [??] and [??] , a side berth and we have not come to blows yet.

What a lovely Sabbath like day this is. I sit by the side open window and rejoice in the soft warm air and sunshine stressing in and long for you to be with me though I fear your greater enthusiasm would freeze me into denial of all beauty. I do think that today at least you would not have the heart to deny Sunday's greater holiness than the other days. It is so still and peaceful, a hushed and solemn silence after the hurry and noise, the ceaseless bustle and strife of the week. All nature is subdued as if feeling the presence of a God. It is wrong to wear religion like a "go-to-meeting-gown" demand only on Sundays, but if we had not a day set aside to the memory of our Maker we should never think of him. Does not this show our need of it? This seems a poor kind of homage but I think the more one honors the Sabbath the less ours becomes simply a Sunday religion, the more it's influence is felt through the week. I think Sunday is like a birthday a birthday is devoted to the memory of the friend the Anniversary of whose birth it is. We think of his on other days too, but today above all others. If he is absent we write to his, if dead we read his old letters and recall his many virtues. Just so on Sundays we recall the love and goodness of God Our Father, read His letters, in the Bible and in Nature and like to read

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the impressions of other men of him and about the faithful servants who have followed in His way. I do not think it wrong to read novels on this day but I do think the Lord's Day is above all days the day on which to read "good books" books telling of His goodness and helping us to a fuller understanding of Him. I include not only religious books but also all telling of his creations around us. If you have none such and have nothing better to do take up a novel by all means. This is my Idea of Sunday, I do not live up to it in any way. I try sometimes feebly and uncertainly. All I mean to say is there are two sides to the question of making Sunday simply a holiday. Those old New Orleans people Papa writes about made Sundays simply a holiday. They rested from the honest work of the week and spent the day racing, gambling etc., etc. Do you think they came nearer your idea of good men, that they were nobler and better than those who go to Church Sundays. This is an extreme case and I know you are the last person to countenance such things but I think there is always danger of our getting in the way of doing so. I think there is more safety and hope for those who make Sunday a day of quiet reflection, and who listen to the words of warning spoken by their pastors. I am presumptuous in preaching this long sermon to you who have thought so much more than I and who feel so much more deeply, but it is possible that from this very fact you may be mistaken in your ideas.

Mamma and indeed everyone else is lying down. She is quite exhausted by her hard week's work and I don't wonder for besides everything else the weather has been dreadfully prostrating. I have not been feeling quite well and strong all the week and Auntie spends half her time on the 3 sofa. I am glad Lina and Augusta have gone, a few weeks more and she would have been ill I think I only wonder she did not grow crazy and I think Mamma is of the same opinion.

We heard from Papa yesterday, from New Orleans and a telegram came from Augusta Georgia saying they would be in Charlotte Virginia Tuesday. I still hope so may all come to Cambridge but don't expect us until you see us. I am getting a new grenadine dress ready

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for Saturday, you must bring your dress coat. I think Cousin Evelyn means to have quite a number of gentlemen to meet you.

In India Dr. Field staid a week among the Himalayas in the "lovely Vale of Dehra Doon". "His last day was spent in a visit to tea plantations and he met a Mr. Bell who owned a tea plantation". "He had the engagement to shoot a tiger who was troubling the natives." "He is a brave Scot very fond of sport and had a room full of stuffed birds, which he was going to send off to Australia" Mamma points this out to me in "The Evangelist" of April 12th. and wonders if Mr. Bell is any relation of yours, you told me you had Cousins in India and we thought the birds might be going to your Uncle.

It is after one mail, I must send this by the second,

I have a new hat trimmed with black silk black feather and jet buckle. Are you better satisfied?

With much love, Yours ever, Mabel.