

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, August 31, 1884, with transcript

Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel (Hubbard) Bell. L Stewart House, Island Pond, Vt., August 31st, 1884. My dear little “better-half.”

In spite of all my resolves here it is Sunday before I write you my second epistle. The moment I reached Montreal I came in contact with friends — and as I intended to leave early Saturday morning I felt it my duty to cultivate everybody especially the British Members — Result — I did not get to bed till 2 o'clock a.m.(too tired to write) nor did I waken till too late for my train. After breakfast Friday morning I was just going downstairs when the words “Hoy hoy” attracted my attention and there was Dr. Ker of Winnipeg with Laurie. Dr. Ker had come on to attend a Medical Convention and he thought the trip would do Laurie good as she has been ill for a long time past. Cause . She is now quite well and looks prettier and better than I have seen her before. The first Englishman I met who knew me was Sir Frederick Bramwell — hale and hearty as usual. He was sitting in the dining-room with a party of ladies and gentlemen and my attention was directed to his table by the continuous laughter a merriment he caused by his humorous remarks.

Sir William and Lady Thomson I found in section A as cordial and nice as of old. I found your note to Lady Thomson in my pocket and on reading it saw it was as suitable now as before the meeting and so gave it to Lady Thomson who will write to you. I have invited Lord Rayleigh to Manchester also. He will write to us. I saw Mr. Carpenter in the distance but had no opportunity of talking to him. Prof. Sylvanus Thomson was quite conspicuous in section A — and in spite of 2 his book on the Telephone — giving the credit to Reis — and in spite of the way his book was reviewed in Science — which review he I presume attributes to me — we had a very pleasant little chat. I was introduced to a large number of English Members — I can only remember the names of a few of

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the most prominent. Sir James Douglas and Lady Douglas were very pleasant. Scotch I think by their appearance and name. They had been in the west and met Laurie and Dr. Ker in Winnipeg. In the evening I made up a party consisting of Sir James and Lady Douglas, Laurie, Prof. Rowland, and an English gentlemen — a friend of Sir James — to attend a Scientific meeting of a light and entertaining character. The principal speakers were Paul and Virginia and a certain gentleman of the name of “Mephistophilles.” The subjects treated of were “Sound” and “Motion” — both subjects properly belonging to section A of the British Asso. All were pleased with the addresses made but I suffered the usual penalty of a crowded hall — headache. I must not forget to say that among other distinguished “furriners” I met Captain Bedford Kimm — the Arctic Explorer — to whom belongs the credit of overcoming the inertia of the British Asso. and giving it sufficient momentum to cross the Atlantic. He is a wonderful old man — full of vigorous health. I was in the hotel yesterday evening (Sat.) when he came in puffing and blowing and red in the face. He could scarcely breathe from excitement and laughter as he tried to explain matters to a crowd of friends. He said he thought he wasn't quite done for yet — if he at his time of life could run a race and win the medal! If he hadn't entered for a foot-race and won it too! He cannot be far short of sixty years of age — certainly 3 over 50 — weighs 230 pounds — has 2 bullets in his right leg — and one in his left and has lost the knee-cap of one knee! And this was the man who dared to run a race and who went in to win too. He showed me the medal of which he was very proud. A fine gold medal. Capt. Kimm has Lieut. Greely in his charge — has him locked up. Won't allow people to see him just now as he is very weak and he wants him to be quiet and unbothered till Tuesday when he is to have a grand reception in his honor. As I was to leave Saturday night and could not attend the reception he allowed me to see Greely. Prof. Rowland and I went to his room and had a short chat with Lieutenant Greely and his wife about the electrical phenomena in the Arctic Regions. He certainly looks very frail and feeble — and I hope they won't upset him with the grand dinner they are to give him Tuesday. He told me he was present at the Centennial when I exhibited the Telephone to Sir William Thomson and Dom Pedro. Mrs. Greely is most interesting looking and pleasant. Looks as if she would make warm

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friends. Beautiful dark eyes etc. — won't go too much into detail for fear of making you jealous. A large number of Americans were in attendance — but I have been surprised not to see Dr. Sterry Hunt. You know he is a resident of Montreal and when the American Association was there he was the most prominent man in all the Montreal arrangements. I believe he has been prominent in facilitating the arrangements here too — but personally keeps much more out of the way than formerly. Your Cousin Sam tells me that he is just now under a cloud in Montreal on account of his treatment of his wife. People seem to think he married her for her money and are indignant over his attempt to send her to an insane asylum. Failing in this a Separation was resorted to and he tried — I understand — to get a good settlement on himself.

Whatever the truth may be — he is permanently separated from his wife and has had some small settlement effected upon himself and is now under a cloud in Montreal Society. They won't admit him to the St. James' Club.

Supper bell — supper bell — supper bell — have been starving myself all day — as — as — as I have not been feeling very well — and am now ravenous.

Good bye my dear little wife.

Your loving husband, Alec. Elsie Daisy Kiss from Papa.