

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, September 10, 1884, with transcript

Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel (Hubbard) Bell. L The Continental Hotel, Philadelphia, Wednesday, September 10th, 1884. My darling little wife:

I am so glad you have received the camera etc. — and only wish I could be with you to try it. I would start right off if I could — but feel I must run down to Washington for a day if only to look after my paper on “The Formation of a Deaf Variety,” etc. The concluding portion needs my father's assistance in polishing. My two papers went off well but I have been completely prostrated by the heat. All my spirit taken out of me. My whole body and arms completely covered by heat eruption. The bath-tub my only refuge — been obliged to change my things twice a day. Have only one clean shirt left and no collars. We determined at the last moment to entertain the contributors of Science at an informal lunch to-day at the Lafayette Hotel. Invitations were printed and distributed in time by Mr. Condit. Invitations were signed by Mr. Hodges — the acting Editor as Mr. Scudder's representative and invited the Contributors to meet the Directors of the Science Co., etc. When the ice-cream came — Mr. Hodges rose and in a little speech introduced President Gilman. President Gilman and Prof. Newcomb — then stated the policy of the Journal — stating what we wanted of our Contributors — in fact — they gave it to the contributors in such a way that at first I was a little fearful as to whether the gentlemen would not feel they had come together to be scolded.

On second thoughts — I see how wisely and well the whole thing was managed. “Science” has taken a powerful stand — and has 2 appeared in organized form. I was a little afraid that some of the Contributors might have come prepared to criticise the Journal. If so — it must have been a thunderbolt — to find that instead of that — it was they who were criticised. It was a grand thing to see all these splendid men there. The greatest interest

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and good-feeling was manifested. Science appeared strong — and I am sure that the moral effect was such that each man felt that Science was a journal they would be proud to contribute to. I also made a little speech in the course of which I alluded to financial matters and spoke for your father and myself. I said we were anxious to do for Science what Science had done for us — and had no pecuniary considerations in view. I said that we believed that if a journal could not support itself — it had no reason for existence. While we were prepared to support it literally through its infancy — we had no intention of continuing its support indefinitely. Our object was to make it self-supporting — and for this purpose it was indispensable that we ascertain who our subscribers are and what sort of a journal was wanted by them. Mr. Condit had made a minute investigation concerning the subscribers which he presented and the Directors told them the general conclusions at which they had arrived. Major Powell and Prof. Barker both made complimentary speeches and the meeting then adjourned. Please excuse writing — I am sick and cannot write. I will tumble into a bicarbonate of soda bath and then to bed. I have found a whole family of deaf cats in Germantown and the woman will give me a kitten.

Your loving, Alec.