

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, July 7, 1895, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 10, rue Nitot, July 7, 1895. My darling Alec:

It's rather discouraging work writing you as I don't know where you are or whether this will ever reach you. Why don't you tell me your plans. You have never told me whether you are coming over or not, except by copying your telegram to Grace and that was very vague. I don't know now where to address this or whether to write at all. I will compromise with a short note I have been as busy as possible all this week, so that I could not write except after midnight and by that time I was tired enough to believe that tomorrow would do just as well.

We have been very gay and lessons have suffered, but I could not help it. I could not decline Mr. Pollok's invitation to dinner one day and Mr. Langley's the next and the American Consul's wife's to tea the third. Then we went with Mr. and Mrs. Pollok to call on Bartholdi, the sculptor, one day and to see Mrs. Nauro's infant prodigy another. This afternoon we go with Mr. and Mrs. Pollok to Benjamin Constant's studio. Tuesday we are going to Brabizow with Mr. Mauro again and will then decide our future plans until you arrive.

Mademoiselle Fillipy goes out of town tomorrow so we have to make some change. I want to go into the country, it seems a hardship to spend a whole year in a city or cities away from green fields and wild flowers.

I hope Michigan is not quite killing you. I do wish you 2 didn't have to make these long journeys in the heat of the summer. I think they are a waste of your life and strength.

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Mr. Langley was very good to us, taking us for a drive to St. Cloud and around the Bois and afterwards giving us a swell dinner in one of the restaurants on the Champs Elysees. I am glad I did not know what an epicure he is before, or no, I am sorry I didn't for he must have found our meals nearly unendurable and his goodness in submitting to them great. Or perhaps he wanted to see for himself what you were doing. If I were sure you'd get this I would tell you all about it, but my sleeves are tight and tire my arms and what's the use when you wouldn't see it. Only I am glad to have seen this side of Mr. Langley's character. It always does one good to see people take pains to have things just so, if it is only the proper amount of ice to put around a bottle of champagne frappe.

Life consists in making each day perfect in itself, not in preparation for another day or the future, therefore, everything in each day should be perfect, your dress, your dinner, the way you sit in your armchair. Don't give up everything to your work and live simply for it, for you are yourself more than your work. The world exists for you and every other ego. Why subordinate yourself by your work which in it's ultimate result simply renders it possible for another ego to sit in his armchair in a more comfortable position or order his dinner with less discomfort.

Ever your own.