

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, June 3, 1898, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Twin Oaks, June 3rd., 1898. My dear Alec:

I did not write you last night partly because I wrote Elsie and was too tired for another letter, but chiefly because I am getting tired of writing to somebody who won't write me. I cannot help remembering that when I am with you the time when you cannot spare an hour or two to discuss matters that interest you are very few indeed, hence any excuse you may make on the score of lack of time won't hold. It isn't necessary for you to sit up any later or get up any earlier, just spend half an hour less time talking at your dinner table and give it to me. I am sure I want a little of your time much more than anyone else can, I am really beginning to feel quite unhappy at my lack of news. All I have had for two weeks and more now is two telegrams one carrying an unfulfilled promise and the other rather ungraciously worded. Exactly what good does it do me for you to think of me, if you don't let me feel it in some way?

Please write to me and write again and again.

I called on Mr. and Mrs. Kennan this evening. Mr. Kennan returned from New York this morning. He looks very tired and worn and very much occupied but he was very nice to me. Things seem in a pretty bad way from his account, on the one hand a certain amount of unnecessary suffering from lack of invalid delicacies, on the other a Society loaded down with these very things and anxious to minister to the suffering and yet red tape forbids them to help. State Department writing "by request of the President" to War Department to recognize Natl. Red Cross and permit it to carry out the objects for which it was formed and War Department acknowledging without further intimation whether it will accede to the 2 wishes of the President! This I understand is confidential now but will

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hardly be so when you get this, however don't repeat down town A letter was shown me saying that a surgeon of a regiment had been told that the only way he could get proper food for his typhoid fever patients was by establishing a canteen and when he refused was informed that he could take care of his patients himself. In strong language the War Department prefers to lose a few privates by typhoid etc. rather than accept the help offered and which it so sorely needs, and thus confess that it isn't competent to care for it's own sick alone.

If pressed into a corner the Natl. Red Cross may lay the matter before the Geneva Society of which it is a recognized branch and thus place the War Dept. in the position before the world of leaving the flag of a Society on it's own hospitals and yet refusing to acknowledge other members of the Society.

Please let me know how you are, I do feel worried. Elsie is in Morris plains,

Lovingly, yours ever, Mabel.