

## Letter from J. R. Dobyys to Alexander Graham Bell, February 17, 1891, with transcript

Copy Institution for the Deaf, Jackson, Miss., Feb. 17, 1891. Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, Washing., D.C. Dear Sir:

I am in receipt of your favor with enclosed letter to the Hon. William B. Allison, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, opposing the small appropriation of \$5,000, recommended by Dr. Gallaudet, President of the National College, for enlarging the facilities for normal instruction in that institution.

As you have honored me with this communication, and as we are both interested in this important question, I trust I will not be charged with presumption for stating my views in regard to your position in this particular matter.

Dr. Bell, you have been greatly honored by all who are interested in the education of the deaf. Indeed, your philanthropic acts have been heralded abroad, and you have been held up to the world as a benefactor to this people. The followers of every method have honored your zeal and applauded your efforts, and have rejoiced to know that you have spared neither time nor money in your labors to ameliorate their condition. Individually I have believed, and still believe, that the combined method is best adapted to the average deaf child, yet I have felt that your course has been a blessing to the cause of the education of the deaf, in that you have done so much to develop the articulation method, that it has spurred on the champions of all other methods to adopt every imaginable device.

No effort of yours has gone unappreciated; and the most conclusive evidence of this was given you at the recent convention in New York. I am glad to say I had the honor on that occasion, when it was moved that the thanks of that convention be tendered you, for the

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generous donation you had just made, to endow a normal articulation department of that convention, to move to amend, that the vote be taken standing.

Recall that scene just a moment, and you will remember that every person in that vast assembly gladly rose and bore that silent but emphatic testimony. Can it be denied that nine-tenths of them were ardent supporters of the combined method?

After all these years of earnest and faithful, but generous rivalry, I am indeed grieved that you have taken a step, the logical result of which is to build up the method which you advocate by tearing down the one which, for almost a century, has showered incalculable blessings upon the deaf of this country.

I am satisfied no such intention ever entered your mind, but the friends of the combined method cannot help feeling that your efforts to defeat this appropriation will operate in this way.

Trusting that you will receive my views in the fraternal spirit in which I write them, and that you may continue to put forth your efforts with that energy, ability and fairness which have characterized them in the past, I am,

Yours truly, (Signed) J.R.Dobyns, Superintendent.

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