

Letters from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Mr. MacKinnon, August 16, 1922, with transcript

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Copy for Miss Peck RE. ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL'S Copied March 1960 RELIGIOUS BELIEFS Copy from the files of The Alexander Graham Bell Club, Baddeck, Nova Scotia Beinn Bhreagh Near Baddeck, Nova Scotia Dear Mr. MacKinnon —

The enclosed letter is for you. Somehow I do not feel that this Dr. Steele is a man to whom I would say what I have written. Perhaps it is sufficient to reply that Dr. Graham Bell belonged to no particular church, but that his attitude towards Christianity was very reverent. It is not a question I think that can be answered by a simple yes or no.

/s/ Mabel G. Bell

August 16, 1922

So many very orthodox church members will march recklessly in front of kneeling worshippers in a European Cathedral guide book in hand. That always outraged Mr. Bell who held that however mistaken their beliefs might be their prayers were sacred — the expression of their best feelings.

Dear Mr. MacKinnon

Mr. Bell belonged to no sect or creed — and rarely discussed religious matters.

But he was by nature deeply religious and his attitude was always very reverent.

He never denied God — and indeed on more than one occasion told me with awe and wonder that it seemed as if some higher Providence must have guided him to do what he

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had done — from which good had come — since the doing of it had been against every personal wish and natural inclination and apparent reason. 9 For the rest he would say “There was work to be done in the world, — we had evidently been sent into it to do it to the best of our ability.” By so doing he thought — “We could best serve Him who had sent us and do His will.”

This surely is the attitude of Jesus Himself expressed in the words “I must be going about My Father's business.”

He thought it more important to do that than to spend time speculating about His exact nature & attributes. These, he held, would be revealed to each human soul in His own good time.

It was with this in mind that we asked that you repeat the words “Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace.” To the last moment of his life Alexander Graham Bell struggled to use the “Talent” given him in the service of his fellow men. Literally not merely figuratively — for even after the pulse could not be felt his fingers kept moving in the last feeble effort to comfort & encourage his wife.

/s/ Mabel G. Bell August 16, 1922