

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, May, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. V.J. May (1881)

My darling Alec:

Thank you very much for your letter which was very nice and welcome though I don't know but what a little less of the young lady and a little more of yourself would have been preferable. I don't feel as if I knew anything at all about you, how you are and where you are and what you are doing. I am rather tired of hearing that you slept every day until two or three. Why don't you tie your silk handkerchief on and escape a headache. I should be so pleased if I heard for once of your getting up in good season. Can't you give me that pleasure for once dear boy Bell.

I am so sorry you were disappointed by your performance at the Royal Societys. Perhaps other people were not, anyhow it will help you to do better next time. I am not disturbed I don't believe you did very badly. I am so glad of your good news from America. I have not sent the cablegram to Uncle Eustis because first I do not understand if you want me to send it or if you have done so and second Papa seems to think there is nothing for you to do but pay the money and get the prize since our lawyer says it is alright and if so is it not better to wait until the stock reaches par before selling. All you say about the nurse sounds nice as to the woman but makes me more than ever certain she is not what I want. I don't want a nursery governess, and I do want a nurse and that is just what she says in her letter, and you say she will not be. She will not do the dirty work and there will be a great deal of dirty work to do on the steamer more than at any other time. I am not willing to have a nursery girl because if she is to be seamstress the children must be left with the girl, and that is just equivalent to giving them to an 2 inexperienced girl, or if she is head nurse I must have a third servant as seamstress and I am not so fond of them that I want

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more than I can help. When Elsie needs a nursery governess I will have a lady or send her to school, meanwhile I want a plain nurse who will not be above the work. She will not have it all at home but there are many times in the changes of American Homes when she will have to. Then I think it a very doubtful experiment taking so old and superior a woman to America. She would want beer for instance and there would be a row in the kitchen. In Canada she would have dirty work and would have to put up with much and I don't believe this woman would. She seems a nice superior woman, but not at all what I want. I should have to increase my household just on purpose to accommodate her, and I don't like her well enough for that. I want a baby's nurse who will help with Elsie not a nursery governess and seamstress who will help with the baby. I don't want to be always objecting and I know I have a prejudice against every new nurse, but I really don't think this woman would like the situation herself if she really understood what was required. I can't take two nurses to Canada one to wait on the other, I'd do the dirty work myself first.

Now what is to be done?

Lovingly, Your May.