

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, September 29, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell. Paris Hotel Metropolitan B Rue Cambon September 29th., 1880. My dear Mrs. Bell:

Alec sends the enclosed cuttings from London with the request that I shall send them to you and I cannot let them go without a few lines of my own, though I am ashamed to say we have been here a week and have not been inside a single public building. Unless indeed you except "The Louvre" which certainly is very fascinating and in which we have already made some purchases. Artist though you are I fear you would not be very much interested in them however, so I forbear a description!

It was delightful indeed to see my precious father and Mother again. They had come up all the way from Zurich to meet us and were waiting on the tug boat as we steamed up into the magnificent harbor of Cherbourg, Berta and Grace joined us in Paris from Spa, and we had a nice time together for one night, then Papa and Alec had to go off and have not since returned. We have a pleasant apartment here and are surrounded by a sort of hale of Aristocracy for except another family of Americans in the reams above we believe we are the only untitled people here. Next door is a Count and Countess, below a Marquis, still further on the entresol the Duc d' Alba uncle of the Empress Eugenie. We tried to find an apartment somewhere but though we put no limit to the price we were shown nothing but dark, dirty rooms and were glad to come here where for a comparatively moderate sum we rejoice in the knowledge of having Aristocratic neighbors. For that is all we see of them. We have our own parlor and dining room and our hall door shuts us in almost as privately as if we were in a house alone.

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There are so many lovely things in the shop windows, we are never tired of standing and looking in and now and then investing in some of the prettiest.

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I think very likely Alec and I will go to Switzerland next week, thence to Italy for a month, returning here where Alec will receive his price and receive his friends, afterwards I suppose we shall return. Mamma and Papa will remain until Spring at all events. Mamma says very likely Berta will be married in June but she does not know it herself, meanwhile each day sees an addition to her store of housekeeping treasures and she is perfectly happy. She had no less than three letters from Charlie yesterday but that is hardly her regular average.

My babies are lovely and have stood the voyage splendidly and seem enjoying themselves. Elsie says a few french words already. But Mamma, dear little Mamma is calling me to go to bed for the third or fourth time so I must close.

With much love, Berta's and mine to you all in Melville House and Brantford.

Affectionately, May Bell.