

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, June 7, 1895, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Paris, 10 rue Nitot, June 7th 1895. My darling Alec:

Your cable came last night saying you could come now if advisable, and I have just sent Charles with my answer. "Glad to see you always, but not advisable now."

It seems to me our position is a hard one however we look at it. If you come on now it would be a great delight to have you with us, but as far as the children's learning French is concerned we might as well go back to Baddeck if you were with us. The only thing to do would be for you and me to go off travelling and leave the children here alone, which would be a melancholy thing all around, and I do not think one calculated to help matters much. On the other hand it is dreadfully hard to have you all alone at Beinn Bhreagh, and be away from you so long. But if we are in earnest in the object for which we crossed the ocean I can't see anything for it but to continue as we are. Mr. Ostheimer says we can be perfectly comfortable in Paris all through the summer, people go away for a change, not because of the heat. I think I will stay here quietly as long as the school is open which is until the middle of July, and then go to Fontainebleau or St. Germain which is within half an hour's car ride of the city, and stay there until you come. In this way you will know exactly where we are, and not have to imagine us wandering about country exposed to all sorts of unknown perils. Then when you come we will all have such a good time together that it will pay for our temporary separation now, and you will not be harassed with the feeling that you have run away from the Convention and I will not feel I have needlessly interfered with your experiments. Please remember that I am more interested in them than anything you have done for years, and should feel half my joy in our reunion spoilt if you left them. You are fresh and well now, by the end of July you will be tired and glad of the rest.

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Thank you so much for letting me know you think I have done well coming here, I am sure of it but it is a great comfort to have the assurance of your approval.

What an exciting chase you had after that wild ewe. I do hope the lamb will live and be all you hope. I am sorry it is not a ram, you don't say if there are any twins. Tell me all about your reading and anything that interests you. I am not so sure of the infallibility of your dogma that what you impart to others whether by writing or talking is by that means made your own forever. I believe this giving out does help to fix a thing more firmly in ones own memory, but it does not thereby prevent your losing it all the same. For I think it is true as I have seen somewhere remarked, that the brain is only capable of holding a certain amount of information greater in some brains and smaller in others, but in all strictly limited. Consequently something must be pushed out when a new fact is pushed in.

The children and I dined with Mme. Ostheimer last night, and had a beautiful dinner and a very good time. They are very pleasant people and most friendly. They advise me to take the children to the matinees at the theatre as the best way of learning French, and I think I will do it. But what the children need most 3 now is practice in speaking. They hear a good deal all the time, but do not speak much themselves. I am going to change and get Mademoiselle to come three times a week and stay all day long instead of every day for two hours. Of course the children won't be with her all the time but between their studies they will see her and have more to say than in a formal two hours interview. I have let Elsie take singing lessons after all, it seemed a pity to wait while she was so big and strong and had the chance. She says her teacher tires her much less than the one she had at school and that she tells her just what you do. The teacher is a young and vivacious lady, a friend of Mme. Blanc's who cannot speak English, but talks French at a great rate.

Can't you send me my camera by express? I would like it very much.

I hope you won't forget what I asked you about the bills of Mrs. Sowers, Mrs. Trumbull and Mme Chapins, also Mr. McCurdy's cottage. My bill here for the month will be about a

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thousand francs, \$200.00 don't you think that is pretty reasonable? I think it would cost us more living at Baddeck. Mademoiselle is two dollars a day, Elsie's singing two dollars three times a week and Daisy's a dollar and a quarter three times a week. Elsie likes Daisy's music teacher very much, she says "she plays more like you, and a hundred times better than Cousin Aileen."

I have nothing more to say now and a big pile of mending to do. Don't worry about us, we are in an atmosphere of peace and joy and security, and Daisy is much stronger than in Washington and 4 Elsie very well and I have an enormous appetite.

Loving you dearly, Yours ever,