

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, March 10, 1896, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1331 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C. March 10th., 1896. My dear Alec:

I have to thank you for another letter this morning. It is so nice hearing from you. I am awfully sorry I kept you waiting so long for a letter but the time was not as long as you thought and I was busy and tired.

I am so glad your meeting with Mr. Rosenthal was a success. I don't know anything more delightful than the feeling that one is moving and influencing other human minds. Mind is more than matter hence a triumph over mind is greater than one over matter. No! I think there is something wrong here for it is surely better to overcome, say the inertia of nature and make a flying machine as is one than to win the mind of a boor. At all events I like power when I feel capable of exerting it and I don't know any feeling more humiliating than the possession of power you know yourself incapable of using. I don't know what constantly urges me to do these things I am not capable of doing. My lunch party today for instance. Well I think it was quite a success. The dining room was very pretty, the little tables brought forward exclamations of delight and my little silk bags with the names of the partners inside seemed to take the ladies fancy. But I felt so incapable of taking bold of the crowd and with a smile and strong cheery word directing them and commanding them as a true hostess! should, Oh dear, something was left out of my composition something that added would amalgamate all my different capabilities into a strong harmonious whole that would make of me a force to accomplish something. At present I am a lot of capabilities lying loose in a bowl, good for 2 little good or bad, weal or woe! I had five tables. At the large square one I presided with Mrs Kennan, Mrs Justice Gray, Mrs Daniel Manning, Mrs Minot, daughter of Secretary of State Olney, and Miss Henry. I had single yellow jonquills,

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yellow center-piece and yellow candles, and a tall yellow lamp behind. At the next table which was violet with embroidered cloths of violets and vases of violet were Aileen, Miss Risley Seward and two other ladies. There was a gas burner close by covered with violet shade. Further on was a pink table with pink roses from Mamma's greenhouses and a pink lamp, then there was a green table with green lamp, green chairs, green candle shades and lilies of the valley. Another table had scarlet carnations and scarlet candle shades and there was a red lamp. All the different colors blended together very nicely. Then the light was allowed to come through the La Farge window and I never admired it more. The lunch was very handsome and yes, very expensive. But it will be the last and I think it will help me. Almost all the ladies were Society people and mothers of next year's debutantes, people whom it was necessary for me to know. The ice creams were particularly pretty. They were different for each table and consisted of an ice cream and a natural flower of the same kind, with natural flower stems. I have three invitations for Thursday, to dinner, to a musicale and to the Geographic Society's reception. On Friday comes my little evening party to Mr and Mrs Kennan. That won't be expensive as I shall have only a light supper with Café frapp'e.

On Saturday I go to a lunch party. I never was invited to two lunch parties before in my life so I feel a bit encouraged. But still, I do wish I were a little bit less lazy, and more worthy 3 to be your wife my dear. I wore my rose dress. Grace was here nearly all the morning helping and until the very last moment. One of the ladies saw her running out and asked Aileen if that were not Mrs Chas. Bell and was she not coming to the party. Then when in less than ten minutes she returned all dressed up and looking as perfectly gowned as if she had taken an hour over her toilet the same lady appealed to Aileen again. Surely there was some mistake that could not have been Mrs Charles Bell that had gone out a minute or two ago. She had changed her dress put on her bonnet and gloves and looked not at all in a hurry and wasn't the last to come. I had little bags made of the colors of the tables with the ladies names written outside and inside a card bearing the name of the lady she

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was to take into dinner. In this way there was no trouble or confusion or delay in finding the seats at the different tables.

Goodnight now my own, I am ever yours,