

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, November 6, 1901

1331 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, WASHINGTON, D. C. Nov. 6th 1901. My Dear Alec,

I cant bear to think of you al alone therewith your pleasant household broken up. What a nice time you four must have had together. I only wish that I could have been there too. It isnt nearly as satisfactory here. I want you all the time, and when you come, I am going to try to make sure of some time for walking with you. Didnt we have a nice time together, we two last winter at the Volta Bureau?

I havent much news to give you. Mamma Auntie Berta and Miss Scidmore dined with us last night, and Miss Scidmore said that as long as Mr Hay remined at the State Department our policy in Peking was all right, but when he was away M de Wollant went to Mr Adee, and verbally suggested to him that it would be a good idea for the American troops to leave Peking at the same time as the Russian, and he just took his pen and drew up the order therefore. M de Wollant has been promoted in consequence. The only thing is that I dont think that he has been promoted. He was Charge'd' Affaires all summer, is now, for that matter, but then he was that the summer before, and is leaving now on a leave of absence. Mme de Wollant said that they were leaving all their furniture at the American Security.

The enclosed letter from Mr Langley will interest you. I thought of writing for the volumes without saying anything to you, but was not so sure that you would care for the anatomical drawings. The others of course you must have. I hope that you will find the celluloid film useful, it cost a whole lot. I havent had a dictat?tion for ever so long, and feel forgotten. And I dont like to hear that you had a cold. I wish that I could be with you, particularly now that you are alone. I dont think that just the walk from the Laboratory is enough. What are you going to do now that Daisy and Jean have left? I hope that you wont attempt any rash

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experiments. How are your sheep getting on? I think that you might at least telegraph me oftener. I have not forgotten your request that I would telegraph you, and have therefore spent a lot of money that I would not otherwise.

I am reading Booker T. Washington's autobiography and find it very interesting. For the rest I am still trying to get my house in order, and finding it slow work. Tomorrow Mr and Mrs McGee and Klothe dine with us. Mr McKinley's cook does very well. Mark Sullivan wrote to Bert to ask him who could give him information concerning the South African giraffe. Bert replied giving it to him. I think he is growing more interested in the work all the time. He has just bought a big History Reference Dictionary, and is reading it hard.

Mr McCurdy seems at last to have come to the point where he is satisfied that he is ready to put his invention on the market. Hitherto his position has been analogous to yours with the Telephone. The Ebedec itself has been a practical working machine for more than two years, but the difficulty of using it was so great that its usefulness must have been greatly limited had he tried to force it on the market. In the same way the Telephone was a perfect instrument many months before it could be largely used for want of a call bell.

Mr McCurdy has now a very much improved Ebedec, but more important, the means by which the Kodak cartridge, or any other can easily be used in it, and a new formula by which the cartridge can be both developed and fixed at one and the same time, and in the space of five minutes. That is to say that with the present instrument and its accessories, George could take a picture of your man kite in the air, remove it from his kodak, put it in the Ebedec, on the table he has for steadying his kodak, pour in the solution, and five minutes later pull out the completed set of six pictures, ready for your examination. Inside of fifteen minutes from the time that he took your last picture, he could be ready to take another. All without stirring from the spot where he was taking the pictures. Mr McCurdy has demonstrated before the Treasury Expert in the Treasury and he and all who saw it are most enthusiastic. They told Mr McCurdy that he was ten years ahead of the profession, and that he did things that no one would have believed possible. He wrote on

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the film a most appreciative report as follows: "This film was developed at the Treasury Galery, and witnessed by Mr W. Yestman of Navy Dept. Galery, Mr Sloat and myself. It was developed and fixed in five minutes, and was perfect in every respect, being minus of finger prints and bubbles and other spots caused by the film rolling when done by hand I consider Mr McCurdy's method a great advance in photography. Respectfully E.J.Taylor, Photographer for U. S. Treasury Department, November 2nd."

What bothers poor Mr McCurdy just now is to know what is the best thing to do now. He has not gone to Rochester yet. In order to use the kodak cartridge in an ordinary kodak, and then develope it in the Ebedec, it is necessary to fasten an end piece to the kodak film. Mr McCurdy has discovered a method of doing this very easily. Any one who has a dark room can do it in a minute. And as it does not change the kodak film in any way, Eastman cannot object. But if Eastman would add the end piece himself when the cartridges are being made up it would of course facilitate matters. Mr McCurdy thinks of writing to see if he will do this. Whether he agrees or declines, his answer will be an important proof in case of a lawsuit. Anyway people in town are talking of the Ebedec, and very soon it will be decided how it is to reach the public. Meantime the inventor is of course very nervous.

As ever yours — Mabel — Nov. 7 d . 1901 —

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