

Letter from Gilbert Grosvenor to Alexander Graham Bell, December 1, 1905, with transcript

WRITTEN BY GILBERT GROSVENOR TO HIS FATHER-IN-LAW ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL (Mrs. Taft and Secretary Taft accept for National Geographic dinner) Dec. 1, '05 My dear Father:

I am much delighted to receive your letter regarding notes of current geographic interest and at once telegraphed you that I would be glad to receive any notes which H.A.L. A & B's de plume could send. Your idea is excellent and I hope we can carry it out. I have another idea regarding which I should like your judgment, i.e. the advisability of starting a funny column in the Geographic Magazine. I would include only jokes of a geographic tendency somewhat like the following. Teacher asks boy which is the farther away, England or the moon. Boy answers "England because he can see the moon and he can't see England." My idea was to try and have 3 or 4 or even one good story a month. It would liven things up and now that we are so large, we must appeal to every proper sentiment among our constituents. By the time this reaches you our membership will have passed the 10,000 mark. Thank goodness GHG didn't take this suggestion! VC We are going to start the custom of an annual dinner this year; the dinner will be December 20. Secretary and Mrs. Taft will be the principal guests. The duty of managing the dinner has been delegated to me and I had been trying for 10 days to arrange for a Geographic Society delegation to call on Mr. Taft and invite him, and had been unsuccessful, when we are invited to a family dinner at Mrs. Tafts. Remembering your advice of some years previous, and occasionally repeated, to pay special attention to the ladies, I invited Mrs. Taft. She was delighted, accepted on the spot and made her husband do likewise. He is so prominent just now and in every way is such a great man, that his acceptance will give momentum to the dinner which will need a great deal of pushing, particularly as the price will be \$5.00 per plate. It was thought best to have the dinner the week before Christmas

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and Wednesday the 20th was the only day we could get. Mr. Moore is particularly anxious that you attend. I do not know you will feel about it, but we want you to know that everyone particularly hopes that you will be here. Mr. Samuel Langley of Smithsonian is progressing but so very slowly that the improvement is hardly appreciable. We had a big wind night before last and hoped it reached you in the day time. The babies are all well and thriving and Elsie ditto. I was delighted to receive your letter and if you can spare the time to send notes as outlined, I shall be very grateful.

Love to Little Mother.

Your loving son, Bert