

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, 1876, with transcript

Letter from Miss Mabel G. Hubbard to Alexander Graham Bell. 1875 or 1876. My dear Alec:

I have just brushed my hair and washed my hands (in ice water) for the second or third time today and feel so good and clean that I feel like writing to you. Do you know it is curious but true that when I am good I am very fond of you and glad you like me, but when I am naughty I feel quite mad with you for liking such a horrid creature. When other people like me, I remember your affection with complacency, when they don't I pity your bad taste and think you must be fearfully deceived. Isn't it funny I always thought people were gladest of one's love when they had none other, with me it is just the contrary, the more I have the more glad I am of yours. What a long tirade. Lack of news is my excuse, now I've begun my letter I find I haven't anything to say. We left Ogden at five and I was awake before that. Sister and Papa went at once to the engine cab to see better the magnificent scenery through which we were about to pass. Through Echo Canyon we were slowly making our way, stopping every now and then the better to impress upon our minds and memories the wild bare beauty of Devils Gate, Devils Slide and others through which we passed in the darkness on our way West. My dear be sure you get very distinguished as soon as possible and have special trains placed at your disposal, they are great fun beside being very cheap! Devils Slide is a narrow straight slide down a mountain side between two high narrow slices of rock jutting abruptly up from the earth covering. It is a most remarkable contortion of rock, I never saw 2 anything so queer. A little ways beyond is pulpit rock of which I wrote you. The rocks are huge boulders of red sandstone piled on top of each other, inexpressibly wild and grand in their look of terrible power. Can you imagine their towering for several feet bare and precipitous above our heads, with not a handful of earth to nourish the hardy clinging mountain grass or a foothold for the sure-

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footed goat. A handful of men up there would be a match for armies below. But all I can say can give no idea of them. I can only say they are only on the right hand side going West. On the left the mountains are steeply sloping and covered with the sage-bush.

Sister has a bad cold in her head, having gone out this morning to the engine without her cape and riding there for hours. We are now on the broad undulating planes, snow covered. Our engine, its head protected by the queer high snow-plough has passed us. We miss our hotel car very much, this morning we did not have anything to eat from five the day before until after ten this morning though we were up at six. The railroad people we met and village postmasters are not gentlemen usually and so far from regretting my inability to talk to them, I am glad of it. I've about come to the end of my reading resources. I wish you were here to provide me with some more. Our porter, though grave and sober as befits his age, is obliging. Mr. Kraft writes from morning until night and from his handwriting you would not know he was not stationary. We got some fossils at Echo Canyon, tiny inch long fishes and delicate moss. We got them for nothing when at Ogden they asked 3 \$1.00 or 1.50 for them.

Send me an English Weekly review, like those we have in the book club and containing an article on the situation here, the papers of both parties say just the same thing, only each calls the other the perpetrators of the frauds and I should much like to know what our outsider thinks of the situation.

Saturday.

Today is Saturday, though I don't realize it, and have just asked Mr. Kraft if it is not Wednesday. I haven't anything more to say. We reach Cheyenne in a few hours where I leave this, for the overland train behind is to pick up and carry onward while we turn out of our way to Denver. Sister's cold remains the same, but now Mrs. Palmer keeps her company I don't feel so troubled. We changed novels with a young man at Rock Creek and I have been happy all this morning over "Maid of Kelleena and other stories". We

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have been passing over the Rocky Mountains but have not seen any points, "because we are so high up". Mr. Fox informs me one has just appeared and looks lovely, but mountains should be seen from their base to be appreciated not on the high table-land of their summits. None of the very high ones are visible though the day is clear and warm.

I must mail my letter now. With much love.

Ever yours lovingly, Mabel G. Hubbard. Mr. Kraft's handwriting has grown familiar.