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become  
July 17. 1871

Dearest William,

I received your welcome letter, after it had been opened, as usual by our namesakes the other Dawson's written on the torn cover was "opened by Miss M. Dawson"; I am persuaded the girl's name is Maria (or Martha Ann) but that does not excuse the deed, 'taint help thinking that they open our epistles simply for the pleasure of seeing the contents, at any rate do put some distinctive address on the next, as it is aggravating to get one's own letters second hand. I am much obliged for your successful mission to Hattie, but to use a figurative expression, I felt inclined

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to choke you, far from letting me  
a word about home, you did  
not even say she was at home  
or when she returned, far less  
tell me her response to the message  
I sent. However the style of the  
letter was a great improvement  
on the last one I received from  
you, so I must not complain.

Our lives flow on in the  
even tenor of their way, nothing  
particular happens, I do very  
little of anything useful, so much  
time is taken up in going to  
the post, & repaying people's visits  
I have tried <sup>up to</sup> two sunsets, but  
not very successfully, however  
intend to persevere till I get  
understand how to paint them,  
the great trouble is to paint so  
quickly, for if a wrong color is  
put on there is no time to care-  
fully remove it, I at attempt to  
put something else over it destroy

the effect entirely -  
The great diversion of Lacrosse  
appears to consist of perpetual tea  
parties, the extent to which this  
is carried is quite alarming,  
I regret to say that it is by  
no means confined to the young  
people, old ladies may be seen  
every evening, cap in hand, hur-  
rying along to the jovial tea-  
board of some cronny, we ourselves  
attempted to get six ladies to  
come & cheer us, but none of them  
could come, as four other parties  
were on the tapis for tonight, so  
we had ignominiously to promise  
to join one of the rival gatherings,  
after much thought, I have  
come to the conclusion, that this  
is entirely owing to the man  
who sells such nice cakes, for  
the people can't help buying  
them & then do not like to eat  
them alone -

If you see Mr Roland Fitzgibbon  
be sure & give me a full true  
& particular account, of him &  
his sayings, for the sweet sound  
of his euphonious name, still  
lingers in my ears -

But I must fly & put  
on a fresh collar for the  
rival tea-party, - you need  
not mention it - but I have  
just received an invitation  
to another for tomorrow -

Jessie & Hannie are going  
to Halifax after all, so you  
may chance to meet them or  
hear of them, they leave next  
Saturday.

Excuse haste, tea-  
parties! admit of no delay!  
Your loving sister  
Anna