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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St
Mar 16th 1902

My darling Sam,

Today is dark & dreary & tends to make one's thoughts of the very gloomiest kind – it is pouring rain & we came back from church as wet as could be. My mind, unfortunately is such that it would be far more cheerful for you if I spared you, but not knowing the very many reasons I have for being in this way, I must continue. O! how I wish from the very bottom of my heart that this hard, cruel separation

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was over! Time has passed & the little ones are growing & need your hand to help me in the hard task I have now had for several years, alone, of bringing them up in the way they should go. I tell you once more, if we ever are together again I do not think I shall ever consent to let you leave me to go anywhere for an indefinite time again. I have had enough of it! my heart is so desolate & lonely, that I feel at times as if I shall have to give up my task unfinished – my heart just feels as if it were breaking. How hard it is to try & keep up one's

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spirits under these circumstances – my nerves are tried to such an extent at times – you cannot realize or believe having been absent so long – a woman should have no nerves & I cannot see why we are not constituted as men are, as we always have so many trials to bear in our daily home life – a man can go to an office & leave home-cares behind him! but a poor slave of a woman can never get rid of them..... Things would be so different were we together—mais, que voulez vous? it is the will of God, so I must bow my head & submit – only I cannot take it in the right way I fear, &, consequently lose all the merit I could derive from my troubles.

I have yours of the 6th of Feb open before me, the only letter I have to acknowledge today, having reserved it from those I answered on Wednesday. In it you say Major Dixon says your parcel is at Beaufortwest I hope it reached you safely & that its contents were not too stale for use. It had been so long on the way! I have been trying to get at the story re Mrs. Cole & Greenshields – so far, have heard very little

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so cannot say if there is any truth in the story, but will find out sure. Yes, her husband is the Col. of the Gar. Art. I only heard of one man in the case – as I told you before, many, very many say it was started out of revenge, before the Cooke versus Cole case came off – the outcome of the arrest re Valleyfield riots & refusal to turn out when ordered. I will surely do my best to learn particulars as I want to right her, if she is an innocent woman! Anyway, you need not fear that being in the same society

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will do me any harm. Perhaps instead of moping at home so much, it would be better for me if I was a little more frisky! - my trials & troubles would not then appear such terrible mountains to me! Essie has sent in an application re teaching in S. Africa. She wrote me asking to help her so I wrote Hon. R. W. Scott & Mr Fred White just as nice letters as I possibly could, & hope they will do what they can in the matter. The S. African fever is increasing in the family & your poor little wife will be the last to go.

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Lieut. René Doucet leaves today & has never even called on me – if he ever comes under your notice or that he says he ever saw me (except for a moment in the street) you can call him to order & tell him as scornfully as you know how, that fact of his not doing so. Considering that you were troubled with a trunk for him, he might have inquired if I had a parcel for you – such is life! I will not forget it though if ever I reside in S. Africa, my door will be too narrow to let him through. He used to go to Vaudreuil, hang up his hat & stay as long as he wished. His sisters are very intimate with Louise & Alice & stayed at the old home often too. I will not fail to remember & it will not lose by keeping. Before he knows where he is, he may want a favor from you – be sure & grant it(?) He is a nephew of Emile Doucet, you know & has a brother there Claude – he is somewhere near Johannesburg, I believe & René says he came on very important private musings for some prominent military men out there.

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You will enjoy “The man from Glengarry” - there is not much plot in the story, but it is well told & you feel as if you were living with them, breathing the same air & leave them with regret. The other is written about “Dorion” I am told – that is the new name they gave Vaudreuil Station when they changed it from “Harvard”. The Grits did that you know, for it was a Liberal nest there. I will read “The Right of Way” as soon as I can & hope you will enjoy it too.

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Strange to say, Uncle John has not yet acknowledged money sent him on or about the 20th of Feb, so I am going to write him again today concerning it. It is

queer of him, I must confess. Mrs. [Moon] wrote me a long letter a week ago. They have had whooping cough, Rachel & Clarke being the victims. James had escaped so far, but will likely get it too. She asked my plan for the summer, but I have formed none as yet – will answer her soon – she had letters from you & was

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so pleased with your news. Tillie wrote that Reg. had your letters – they will likely come East as soon as Mabel is well again, which will be sometime about the middle of May, I fancy. They cannot stand the people any longer. Hewittson [sic], the Dr. who is there now, cut down fees & did all in his power to harm Reg. The people do not know he is leaving & a friend of his, Dr. [illegible], a Protestant is to replace him – they will be flabbergasted when the event is sprung on them, especially Hewittson who thinks he is going to have everything his own way from now on. He will miss the climate which he likes & suits him. They will come here for six weeks or so, until they get a house – fancy the nice time in store when there are three more added to our numerous household. They are going to give Louise & her boy a home – thank Heaven for that. The nursing, like the rest has gone [up spent] – the New York Hospitals will not take her, as she is not legally divorced or separated – Mamma has spent

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ever so much money on her for lectures & she cannot go in for a diploma as she could not stand Dr. Reddy's hospital here – Reggie will give her cases for she can nurse "maternity" ones all right: but just think of the awful mess she has made of her life & of all the worry her foolish marriage has given other people!! The children are enjoying good health & are very lively at times. There is not much news. Antoine's exams are going on & he is much excited over them, fearing the most disastrous

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results; he is much better posted in every way than he was a year ago of course & I sincerely hope he gets through all right. No word of the Pension bill in the House yet – I watch the papers attentively I assure you. Well dear I have written a long, uninteresting letter, but I will endeavor to do better next time. All join in kind regards. The children are busy writing you, an effort! they are trying to do their best, Flora & Gertrude write their own without help. Dubbie's speaks for itself. They all send many sweet kisses. With much love, hoping God will keep you safe until we meet, believe me,

Your own true-hearted, loving wifie, Maye.

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