

However shall we finish all our plans in a week? The chicks are making presents for one another, and something like a thousand secrets have been whispered in my ear.

Snow last night. The boys have spent the morning in the woods, gathering evergreens and drawing them home on sleds; and twenty girls are spending the afternoon in the laundry, winding wreaths for the windows. I don't know how we are going to do our washing this week. We were planning to keep the Christmas-tree a secret, but fully fifty children have been boosted up to the carriage-house window to take a peep at it, and I am afraid the news has spread among the remaining fifty.

At your insistence, we have sedulously fostered the Santa Claus myth, but it does n't meet with much credence. "Why didn't he ever come before?" was Sadie Kate's skeptical question. But Santa Claus is undoubtedly coming this time. I asked the doctor, out of politeness, to play the chief rôle at our Christmas-tree; and being certain ahead of time that he was going to refuse. I had already engaged Percy as an understudy. But there is no counting on a Scotchman. Sandy accepted with unprecedented graciousness, and I had privately to unengage Percy!

Tuesday.

Isn't it funny, the way some inconsequential people have of pouring out whatever happens to be churning