

January 11.

*Dear Judy:*

I hope my two cablegrams did n't give you too terrible a shock. I would have waited to let the first news come by letter, with a chance for details, but I was so afraid you might hear it in some indirect way. The whole thing is dreadful enough, but no lives were lost, and only one serious accident. We can't help shuddering at the thought of how much worse it might have been, with over a hundred sleeping children in this fire-trap of a building. That new fire-escape was absolutely useless. The wind was blowing toward it, and the flames simply enveloped it. We saved them all by the center stairs — but I'll begin at the beginning, and tell the whole story.

It had rained all day Friday, thanks to a merciful Providence, and the roofs were thoroughly soaked. Toward night it began to freeze, and the rain turned to sleet. By ten o'clock, when I went to bed, the wind was blowing a terrible gale from the northwest, and everything loose about the building was banging and rattling. About two o'clock I suddenly started wide awake, with a bright light in my eyes. I jumped out of bed and ran to the window. The carriage-house was a mass of flames, and a shower of sparks was sweeping over our eastern wing. I ran to the bath-