

no questions could draw him, but his education went on none the less, and he could only oppose it with the conscious effort of a make-believe. She laughed at him one day when she found him engaged in a mimic war with his blocks and marbles, and he locked himself and Frankie in the playroom afterward. She was superior Science smiling tolerantly at the simplicity of Faith; he could only blush and flee from her.

However, she said no more to him about his Santa Claus, and Frankie and he, lying in bed in the mornings—with the light from the snow reflected on the ceiling, and the sound of Canadian farm sleds creaking down the road with a jingle of bells—"talked Ch'is'mas" together, and were happy. Don explained an idea he had of how Santa Claus could transport such millions of toys in one sleigh: he loaded the clouds with them, from the top windows of his towering ice palace, and sent them floating down the wind to the cities; then, with his reindeer sleigh that flew in the air, he delivered them from chimney to chimney; and when he had emptied his sacks of one cargo, he drove back to the nearest cloud for another. Frankie, blown about on high with this description, pressed his hands into the sinking sensation that took him in the middle, and gloated, round-eyed; and Don day-dreamed of Christmas in a heart-tickling content.

But, on the eve of the great mystery, his letter and the suspicion that had inspired it recurred to him; he caught the twinkle of a conspiracy in the smiles of the household; his elders repeated too often a strict injunction that when he went to bed he was to close his eyes tightly and go to sleep at once. Why? "Be-