

cence whenever she passed the looking glass in her weary plod up and down the room with about 40 lbs. of hot teething baby in her arms. After half an hour's march she dropped into a rocking chair and set herself to sing down the fractious wailing chatter of the child. She sang pretty loudly for that purpose and in the hope of drowning the noises which drifted in every now and then from the other children. The only things which occurred to her were her brother's college songs and she swung these ribald ditties off with a vigour that held the ear of the infant above the creak of the crazy rocking chair, which would somehow always drift over on to a loose board in the bare flooring. She was furtively watching the infant's eyelids the while, and thanking her stars that her husband was away and that as soon as the children had supped, she, with them, might seek oblivion in sleep. The house was untidy and dirty. Each child was a perfect little pickle, she herself not fit to be seen, and the sooner the day was over the better. She would have the entire household in bed by eight o'clock.

Eight o'clock! If Mary had not gone off on the absurd plea of "lonesomeness" Mrs. Chittick might have gone to the missionary meeting and have seen her old pastor and asked after his daughter Mabel, once her closest school friend. But no—after all she had not a stitch fit to wear. What a good thing her old willow china tea set was complete enough to lend to Mrs. Prendergast to supplement her own for to-night. The children had their mugs and as for herself, anything would do. A fresh bawl from baby.

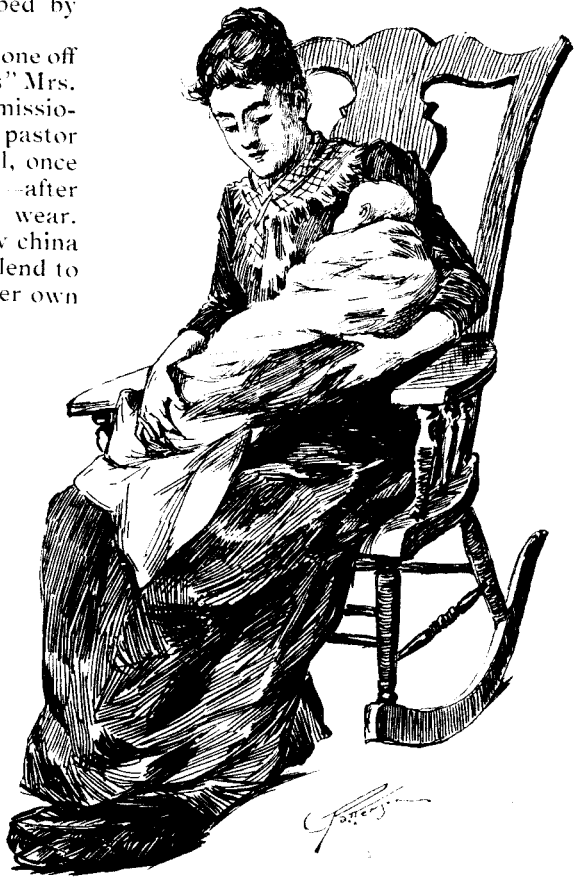
"Bother Cutty!" she here exclaimed.

Cutty, a snappish little Scotch-terrier, acted as guardian to the family in the absence of his master. In that capacity he saw fit to assume all the evil humors of the entire family and was more nervous than Mrs. Chittick, starting at the least sign of any disturbing influence, more cranky than Baby Chittick, biting and snarling on innocent provocation and more noisy than all the other little Chitticks put together, for he would fly through the bars of the front gate and bark outrageously at every passing cow, horse, or man.

There! He was at it now, and of course the baby had to wake up. Then, too, there was a sound of footsteps in the lower hall. Mrs. Chittick suddenly ceased singing "These bones shall rise again," and walked in a white heat of exasperation to the head of the stairs, calling down with fierce distinctness, "You young imps! if you don't clear out in two winks, I'll give you the greatest paddy-whacking you ever got in your lives!"

Having delivered herself of this dire threat, she became aware that the group in the hall were standing very quietly. Patting the now squalling baby violently she descended a few steps to see why the figures did not disperse at command, when, lo and behold! there stood the Bishop, Mr. Wilkinson, and another. With a sort of fascinated horror she went on down stairs and while conscious of a sickly grin on her countenance, felt as if the next minute she must burst into tears.

"Well, well, Mrs. Chittick," began Mr.



"She dropped into a rocking chair."