

choked and blinded with smoke. Willing hands rushed to the rescue—windows chopped away—women carried down ladders—prodigies of valor executed, and at last all are safe. The building must go, and the firemen bend their energies to save adjoining buildings.

Suddenly screams are heard from the third story. Every man held his breath. Amid the crackling and roaring flames can be heard a woman's voice.

"Oh, save me! For God's sake, save me! Help! Help!" Then all was still.

A man springs wildly to the building, throws off his coat, and in a hoarse voice, cries, "O, God forgive me! My child, my Milly, has perished in the flames. A ladder, curse you, a ladder here. My child, my child!"

Ladders were brought, but proved too short. Ten feet more and there was a chance. But see! It is Joe Broggs. He is up on the next building. a leap of ten feet and he is on the hotel roof (cheers from the crowd). He creeps to the edge of the roof and hacks like a madman at the overhanging part. But, O horror! he falls. No, he clings with one hand to a rafter, and with his foot is kicking in the window; he drops, but catches the ledge; the stillness of death reigns. A scramble, a struggle, and he has a better hold. Slowly he breaks the panes with one hand. Blood drips to the sidewalk. He cannot hold out much longer. But a mighty effort, and he is in the room. Hurrah for Broggs! At last—yes, he has found her. He comes to the window with Milly in his arms. He looks up—no one is there; down—no one moves. People seem transfixed. Then he points with his bloody hand to the roof, and is understood. Three men climb to the roof and a rope is handed to them. O, heavens! what a time they take. They move like snails. The beams are giving way, and soon the house will be down. Many a silent prayer is offered in their behalf by the now hopeless spectators. But the men are there, the rope lowered, and soon Milly is in the strong grasp of a fireman on the roof. Crash! Boom! The floor is down. Where is Broggs? When the smoke clears he is seen hanging on the outside of the wall, holding on for life—his hair scorched, his hands and face badly burned, and his strength failing. He cannot hold out much longer. The rope is lowered, and just in time. He slips his hand into the noose, and is hauled into comparative safety. A cry from the crowd calls the attention of the men, and they see the roof caving in. Away they go for life, and not a moment too soon, for just as the last man is off the roof, the building collapses. Flames and sparks rise up and seem to reach the very stars, but all are safe. Two hours after the excitement is over, and people ask for the cause of the fire. No one knows, until next day the town is thrown into great excitement when it became known that Broggs was arrested on suspicion.

He was imprisoned, but public opinion was on his side. Those who knew him best said, "Joe Broggs never did it."

The day following he was taken before the magistrate, and charged with burning the building. He pleaded "Not guilty," but some witnesses gave damaging evidence.

Tom Pinkney told how he was continually cursing Simes, and one day said, "I wish that hotel was burned." Simes, the hotel keeper, told how he had threatened him when he had refused to give him (Broggs) drink.

So he was remanded to prison to await his trial at the next assizes.

Poor Mrs. Broggs, when she heard this, was

frantic with grief and shame. The excitement brought on brain fever. In her delirium she prayed for her husband, spoke soothingly to her two daughters, and sometimes screamed out in terror, "Oh, Joe, don't kill us." Then getting quieter, she would cry, "Joe, dear, please try to give up gambling and drinking. Be as you once were, a loving husband and a tender father."

Broggs was allowed to see his wife. When he entered the room he heard her incoherent utterances of fear, dread, and pleading. The sweat stood on his forehead in great drops and the attending constable had to support him. He cried, "My God, forgive me," then turning to his attendant, said, "Sir, you are a witness before God and man that Joe Broggs will never drink—never gamble—any more."

Poor Joe, he could stand no more, so asked to be taken back to his dreary cell. Truly penitent, sad-hearted, Joe found how much the human heart can bear and not break.

But time moves—even though slowly—to the sad and broken-hearted. Joe's trial came on. The prisoner sat in his place pale but with a gleam of hope in his eye. To the question, "Do you plead Guilty or Not Guilty?" his clear, ringing, "Not Guilty, my lord," seemed to many sympathising listeners an evidence of his innocence.

The witnesses were examined. Their evidence agreed, and a good case was made against the prisoner. The judge, charging the jury, said, "Joseph Broggs, the prisoner, stableman for Simes, is charged with a grave offence. We must punish such offences severely to insure the safety of our property. Gentlemen, you have a difficult case to decide. Let not your sympathies stand between you and justice. On evidence, Broggs was shown to be a drunkard and a gambler—a dangerous man when under the influence of alcohol—a man who always laid the blame of his downfall at the door of Simes' Hotel. You will remember that he twice threatened Simes—charged him with ruining himself and family, and then refusing him a glass of whiskey. Next witness, Thomas Pinkney, testifies that the prisoner was heard to say, 'Simes should be burnt out. O, I should like to see him begging.' At the fire he was heard to cry out, 'God forgive me—my daughter—my Em.' Now, it rests with you as a jury to decide whether this is sufficient evidence to prove the prisoner guilty. It is circumstantial, but that is often the only means of bringing a criminal to justice. Remember that as judges you are to hold no prejudice against him—no favor for him. True, no one saw him do the deed. True, he was at home at eleven that night, but he had been drinking heavily. Now I leave the case with you and to aid you in coming to a conclusion you may consider, (1) Could the fire be set before 10:30, and not break out until 2; (2) Is the prisoner's character such that he would be likely to do the deed."

The jury retired and as it was the last case for that day, all waited in suspense. No one moved, but each watched the door by which the jury would re-enter the court room.

Ten minutes passed. Twenty minutes. No jury. Half an hour. No jury.

Excitement was at its height when the door opened and the jury filed in. Broggs turned to view them. Men and women bent forward to listen. The foreman arose and said, "We find the prisoner 'Not Guilty.'" Cheer after cheer echoed through the room, and even the judicial face of the judge beamed with satisfaction as Broggs went out a free man.

Happy—I guess he was—he felt like a new man, and resolved to become a new one. Next day he secured work as a fireman in a mill, where he stayed for four months. When his wife recovered, he determined to go to the North-West, as he would not have the same temptations there. Friends got up a subscription and with \$450 he started on his journey to begin life in the West. So farewell, Joe Broggs, for the present.

To be concluded in our next.

Original in MASSEY'S ILLUSTRATED.

A Lost Letter.

BY F. O. DORE.

PART II.

IT was September. Three years ago our story opened. Mr. Hewitt walked slowly along the street of a rising North-West town. He passed the door of a small saloon, about which was gathered a group of rough-looking men. Scarcely had he passed when he heard the remark, "Blackcoat looks glum to-day."

"Guess business isn't prospering," added a second gruff voice. "Don't like the idea of competition, I guess. There's another blackcoat come to town." Mr. Hewitt heard no more. His first thought was to reproach himself for allowing his gloomy feelings to master him, then one of joy. Could it be possible that he was to have a sympathizer? For four months he had labored, and now he was well nigh discouraged. The town, situated near the mines just opened, and surrounded by a wide tract of cattle and ranching country, was inhabited by a moving population of cowboys and miners, as well as by numbers of men engaged in building the railroad. Among these the saloon prospered much better than the church. What Mr. Hewitt had heard was good news, and as he walked towards home his step quickened, and he forgot his troubles in thinking of his "competitor" in "business." He even smiled at the coarse joke of his critic. When he entered, his wife looked up with a question in her eyes, but before it could reach her lips, Mr. Hewitt began to tell his news, closing with, "Tomorrow I am going to find my 'competitor.'"

Next day, Mr. Hewitt set out to find the minister who was to work with him, and to whom he looked for fellowship and sympathy. He found him at the hotel of the place just preparing to set out in search of a house. After an introduction, and a half hour's talk, Mr. Hewitt went out with the new comer to examine one or two houses which were vacant. Then they parted, and Mr. Hewitt went home to tell his wife the result of his visit. The look of pleasure and satisfaction upon his face told her more than words, and she listened patiently as her husband described the new comer, told that he was a Presbyterian, of their expedition in search of a house, and how he was most favorably impressed, before she asked eagerly,

"Has he a wife and children?"

"Ah, now," said her husband, "in my selfishness I forgot what I might have known you were most wanting to hear about. He has no wife, only a daughter. I saw her for only a few moments, but I take her to be a very interesting girl or young lady, I don't know which to call her. I feel sure you will like her."

"I am sure I shall," said Mrs. Hewitt. "How lonely she must be down at the hotel. Don't you think I ought to call on her?"

"Yes, most certainly. How thoughtless of me not to tell her that you would do so."