

John ! If I could have died for him ! If it had been possible ! ”

“ One died for him nineteen hundred years ago. ”

“ I know, I know. ”

“ See, where before the throne He stands,
And pours the all-prevailing prayer. ”

Day was dawning when the two men parted, but John had told all his perplexities and sorrows, and been strengthened and comforted.

Mary Denby, also, had passed a wakeful night ; but, finding thought master of sleep, she made up her fire, and sat sewing all through its long hours. The monotony of the action helped to quiet her restlessness, and while there were thousands of garments to be made, the time was well employed. Luke Bradley's return was the one event which she had ceased to expect, even to think of. Six years had passed since it was a possibility, and nothing had been heard of him. To have him open her door, and drop suddenly again into her life, was a thing so astounding that she hardly dared to look at the consequences ; and yet she felt it impossible to put him out of her consideration.

They had loved each other when children, gone to Sunday-school and chapel together ; for three years she had looked upon Luke as her future husband ; and without doubt he had been tenderly attached to her. Their lives had been parted by one of those tragedies whose anguish is really deepened by their vulgarity. Luke, in order to extend his father's business, had begun to travel for it. Then he had fallen in with men who taught him to drink, and the man who drinks is never safe, night or day.

In an hour which began with brandy-punches, and singing, and fancied good-fellowship, Luke quarrelled with the man next to him. It was about the most trivial matter—a half-penny more or less on a bundle of yarn—but ill words followed doubtful words, and the man struck Luke. The next moment Luke felled him to the ground, and he died within an hour.

Luke never saw his home again. As he had been struck first, he escaped the full penalty of murder ; but he was sent to Norfolk Island for fourteen years. His father had mortgaged everything to defend him ; he became listless and despairing, and in two years he was in the grave. The mother quickly followed. A glass of brandy, a drunken brawl, a desolate home, a young man working out in chains and misery the price of all—that was the common, every-day tragedy which had broken Mary Denby's life in two. Soon afterward John inherited some money, and bought the house on Garsby Fell ; then he built his mill, and removed his sister from associations so full of sorrow and shame.

And time cures all griefs. She had forgotten. She had been