

sistent worrying and continual badgering were put in force against the young people, to weary them out of their purpose? Offers of property, persuasions by Mrs. Hanks, coaxings by Janet, remonstrances by Mr. Adams, were brought to the front through the scheming of the colonel. But in vain. Roxy would not disobey the heavenly voice for any entreaty; and Mark also good-naturedly credited himself with much martyr-like endurance. He had gone too far to yield now. Though, indeed, lying lazily there in the quiet coolness of the old brick house, listening to the rustle of the poplar leaves, hearing the old long clock ticking slowly its sixty beats a minute, soothed by the "chook, chook!" of the red-bird under the window, and the distant music of the blue-bird on the fence-stakes, flattered by the loving devotion of the most superb woman he had ever known, there were times when he wished that he and Roxy might give over the hardness of Texas and remain in the comfort and dignity that surrounded them. He might even have proposed the matter tentatively to Roxy, had it not been for a fear of annoyance from Nancy Kirtley. He was young, active and at times zealous. Toil and hardship he could endure, but annoyance, entanglement and perplexity were grievous to him.

As for Roxy, she was in ever-deepening trouble. Her father's scoldings and persuasions disturbed, her aunt's preachment angered her. She could not look at Bobo, whose education must now be arrested entirely, without the bitterest regret. The poor fellow seemed to have caught some vague notion of the impending trouble, from words he had heard.

"What will Bobo do when Roxy's gone?" she heard him repeat dejectedly, but whether he fully understood a saying that he echoed in this way she could not tell. Sometimes a sharp pang of doubt crossed her mind whether it were her duty to leave the little garden of Bobo's mind to cultivate an unpromising patch in the great wilderness of heathendom. But then the great thought of soul-saving perplexed her logic as it has that of many another. Bobo would go to heaven anyhow, but how about the people in Texas? Then, too, there was Mark's ability of which she more and more felt herself the keeper. She must not thwart his great destiny. But in all these perplexities she had to stand alone. She could not support herself on Mark; his heroic resolutions leaned more and more for support upon her. She could not go to Twonnet. There was no one to ask.

Colonel Bonamy was restrained by his conventional gallantry from scolding Roxy, but no gallantry kept him from scolding at her. And no gallantry checked the innuendoes of Amanda, who held Roxy a sort of intruder in the family. But Amanda heartily hoped that Mark would take himself off to Texas if he wanted to go. She did not care to have either him or his wife at home to interfere with her mastery of things.