

The brethren had heard of the call to the mission, and most touching prayers were offered for his welfare and success. Mark himself prayed with deep and genuine pathos. Toward the last the minister called on Roxy to pray, and she who had been born full of the missionary spirit, who would have rejoiced to lay down her life for the lost sheep in the wilderness, who had been the source of most of Mark's inspiration, began to pray, not with her accustomed directness and fervour, but with a faltering voice. Twonnet's fortune-telling had awakened in Roxy a sense of the strength of her own feeling for Mark, and with this came a maidenly delicacy. She faltered, hesitated, picked her words, prayed in platitudes, until at last, after mentioning Mark only in the most general way, she proceeded to pray for those to whom he was sent. All the force of her strong nature found utterance in the cry of the lost, and when she ceased everybody was weeping. And when the brethren and sisters rose from their knees, the old schoolmaster in the amen corner started to sing :

"From Greenland's icy mountains ;"

and as everybody sang it with feeling, Mark felt ashamed that he should ever have thought of any other life than that of a missionary. It were better to die of malarial fever among the rowdies and rattlesnakes of the Brazos River, than to live a thousand years in ease and plenty. And when at the close of the meeting the military notes of "Am I a Soldier of the Cross ?" resounded through the old meeting-house, Mark regretted that so much time would intervene before he could reach the field of battle.

In this state of enthusiasm he walked home with Roxy. And this enthusiasm lifted him almost to the height of Roxy's perpetual exaltation. They talked of that in which they both were interested, and is it strange that they were drawn the one to the other by their community of feeling ? Mark did not even now distrust himself ; he did not once imagine that there was any difference between his flush of zeal, and the life-long glow of eager unselfishness and devoutness that was the very essence of the character of Roxy. He could not distinguish between himself—thin comet that he was, renewing his ever-waning heat, first by the fire of this sun and then by the radiance of that—and Roxy, the ever-burning fixed star whose fire of worship and charity was within herself. But taking himself at the estimate she put upon him, he rejoiced in having a friend worthy to sympathize with him, and when he parted with her, he pressed Roxy's hand and said :

"Oh, Roxy ! if you were only going with me ! You make me brave. I am better when I am with you. Think of the good we might do together. Some day I shall come back for you if you'll let me."

He held her hand in both of his, and he could feel her trembling.

His voice was full of pleading, and Roxy was in a flutter of mingled admiration, pity, and love. That this brave servant of the Lord, taking his life in hand, casting ambition, friends, and property beehind him should appeal to her ! She dared not speak and she could not pray. In a moment Bonamy had kissed her hand. A maidenly recoil seized her, she withdrew her hand, opened the gate and ran up the walk between the rows of pretty-by-nights and touch-me-nots. It was not un-