

## MELISSA AND MARGARET

avenue, the cedars in the yard, the sweep of lawn overspread with springing bluegrass. At the yard gate she stopped, leaning over it—her eyes fixed on the stately white house, with its mighty pillars. Margaret was standing on the steps now, motionless and waiting, and, knowing that she was seen, the woman opened the gate and walked up the gravelled path—never taking her eyes from the figure on the porch. Straight she walked to the foot of the steps, and there she stopped, and, pushing her bonnet back, she said, simply:

“Are you Mar-ga-ret?” pronouncing the name slowly and with great distinctness.

Margaret started.

“Yes,” she said.

The girl merely looked at her—long and hard. Once her lips moved:

“Mar-ga-ret,” and still she looked. “Do you know whar Chad is?”

Margaret flushed.

“Who are you?”

“Melissy.”

Melissa! The two girls looked deep into each other's eyes and, for one flashing moment, each saw the other's heart—bared and beating—and Margaret saw, too, a strange light ebb slowly from the other's face and a strange shadow follow slowly after.

“You mean Major Buford?”