

Secret Cull.

From Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's new Novel entitled "Dred, a Tale of the Dismal Swamp."

MILLY'S STORY.

[Milly, a favorite slave of the Gordon family, relates her 'experience' to her young mistress, Nina Gordon, the heroine of M. Stowe's new book. The story is told at Nina's request.]
'I told you I was going some time fur tell you my experience. O Lord, Lord! but is a long story.
Nina, whose quick sympathies were touched by the entreaties of her old friend, a still more aroused by the allusion to her father, answered:
'O, yes, come tell me about it!' As drawing a low ottoman, she sat down, a laid her hand on the lap of her humble friend.
'Well, well, you see, chile,' said Milly, 'large, dark eyes, fixing themselves on vacant and speaking in a low and dreamy voice, 'body's life, in dis yer world, is a mighty strange thing! You see, chile, my mother—well, dey brought her from Africa; my father, he—Heaps and heaps my mother told me about dat. Dat ar was a mighty big country, where dey had gold in de rivers, and such great, big, tall trees, with strange beautiful flowers on them you e'd see 'em. Laws, Laws! well dey brought my mother and my father into Charleston, at dere Mr. Campbell—dat was your ma's father, he—dey brought dem right out of de ship; but dey had five children and dey w all sold, and they never knowed where they went to. Father and mother couldn't speak a word of English when dey come ashore and dey had to often how she couldn't speak a word to nobody, to tell 'em how it hurt her.
'Laws, when I was a child, I remember how often, when de day's work was done, she used to come out and sit and look up at de stars and groan, and groan and groan! I was a little thing, playing round; and I used to come up to her, dancing, and saying:
'Mammy, what makes you groan so what's de matter of you?'
'Matter enough, chile!' she used to say. 'It's a talking of my poor children. I lik to look at de stars, because dey sees de same stars dat I do. 'Pears like we was one room; but I don't know where dey is! Dey don't know where I be!'
'Den she'd say to me,
'Now, chile, you may be sold away fro your mammy. Dey's no knowing what may happen to you, chile; but if you gets into any trouble, as I does, you mind, chile, ye ask God to help you.'
'Who is God, mammy,' says I, 'anyhow?'
'Why, chile,' says she, 'he made these y stars.'
'And den I wanted mammy to tell me more about it; only she says,
'He can do anything he likes; and, if y are in any kind of trouble, he can help you.'
'Well, to be sure, I didn't mind much about it—till dancing round, because prett well den I need much help. But she said ar to me so many times, I couldn't help 'member it. Chile, troubles will come; and, when dey does come, you ask God and he will help you.
'Well, sure enough, I wasn't sold from her but she was took from me, because Mr. Campbell's brother went off to live in Orleans, and parted de hands. My father and mother w took to Orleans, and I was took to Virginia. Well, you see, I grew up along with de young ladies,—your ma, Miss Harrit, Miss Loo, and de rest on 'em,—and I had heaps o fun. Dey all liked Milly. Dey couldn't no body run, nor jump, nor ride a horse, nor row a boat like Milly; and so it was Milly here, and Milly dere, and whatever de young ladies wanted, it was Milly made de way for it.
'Well, dere was a great difference among dem young ladies. Dere was Miss Loo—she was de prettiest, and she had a great many beaux; but, den, dere was your ma—everybody loved her; and den dere was Miss Harrit—she had right smart of life in her, and was always for doing something—always right busy 'tending to something or other, and she liked me because I'd always go in with her. Well, well! den der was pleasant times enough; but when I got to be about fourteen or fifteen, I began to feel kind o' bad—sort of strange and heavy. I really didn't know why, but 'peared like's when I got older, I felt I was in bondage.
'Member one day your ma come in, and seed me looking out of de window, and she says to me,
'Milly, what makes you so dull lately?'
'O, says I, 'I somehow don't have good times.'
'Why?' says she; 'why not? Don't everybody make much of you, and don't you have everything that you want?'
'O, well, says I, 'missis I's a poor slave-girl for all dat.'
'Chile, your ma was a wesy thing like

you. I remember, just how she looked dat minute. I felt sorry 'cause I thought I'd hurt her feelings. But says she,
'Milly, I don't wonder you feel so; I know I should feel so myself if I was in your place.'
'Afterwards she told Miss Loo and Miss Harrit; but dey laughed and said dey guessed der wasn't many girls who were as well off as Milly. Well den, Miss Harrit she was married de first. She married Mr. Charles Blair; and when she was married—nothing was to do but she must have me to go with her. I liked Miss Harrit; but den, honey, I'd like it much better if it had been your ma. I'd always counted dat I wanted to belong to your ma, and I think your ma wanted me, but den, she was still, and Miss Harrit she was one of de sort dat never lost nothing by not asking for it. She was one of de sort dat always got things by hook or by crook—she always had more clothes and more money and more everything, dan de rest of dem 'cause she was always wide awake, and looking out for herself.
'Well, Mr. Blair's place was away off in another part of Virginia, and I went dere with her. Well, she wasn't very happy, no ways, she wasn't; because Mr. Blair he was a high fellow. Laws, Miss Nina, when I tells you dis yer one you've got here is a good one, and I vise you to take him, it's because I knows what comes o' girls marrying high fellows. Don't care how good looking dey is, nor what dere manners is,—it's just de ruin of girls, dat has dem. Law, when he was a courting Miss Harrit, it was all nobody but her. She was going to be his angel, and he was going to give up all sorts of bad ways, and live such a good life! Ah! she married him; it all went to smoke! 'Fore de month was well over, he got a going in his old ways; and den it was go, go, all de time, carousing and drinking—parties at home, parties abroad—money flying like de water.
'Well, dis made a great change in Miss Harrit. She didn't laugh no more; she got sharp and cross, and she was pestered for me like what she used to be. She took to be jealous of me and her husband. She might have saved herself de trouble. I shouldn't have touched him with a pair of tongs. But he was always running after everything that came in his way; so no wonder. But 'twixt dem both, I led a bad life of it.
'Well, things dragged kind along in this way. She had three children, and at last he was killed one day, falling of his horse when he was too drunk to hold de bridle. Good riddance, too, I thought. And den, after he's dead, Miss Harrit she seemed to grow more quiet like, and set herself picking up what pieces and crumbs was left for her and de children. And I 'member she had one of her uncles dere a good many days helping her in counting up de debts. 'Well, dey was talking de day in Missis' room, and dere was a little light closet on one side, where I got set down to do some fine stitching; but dey was too busy in their 'counts to think anything 'bout me. It seemed dat de place and de people was all to be sold off to pay de debts—all 'cept a few of us who were to go off with missis, and begin again on a small place—and I heard him telling her about it.
'While your children are small, he says, 'you can live small, and keep things close, and raise enough on de place for ye all; and den you can be making de most of your property. Niggers is raising in de market—since Missouri came in de yer's worth double; and so you can just sell de increase of 'em for a good sum. Now, dere's dat black girl Milly of yours.—You may be sure now I pricked up my ears, Miss Nina.—'You don't often see a girl of finer breed than she is,' says he, 'just as if I'd been a cow, you know.'
'Have you got her a husband?'
'No,' said Miss Harrit; and then says she, 'I believe Milly is something of a coquette among de young men. She's never settled on anybody yet,' says she.
'Well,' says he, 'dat must be attended to, 'cause de girl's children will be an estate of themselves. Why I've known women to have twenty! and her children wouldn't any of 'em be worth less than eight hundred dollars. Dere's a fortune at once. If dey's like her, dey'll be as good as cash in de market, any day.—You can send out and sell one, if you happen to be in any strait, just as soon as you can draw a note on de bank.'
'O, laws, Miss Nina, I tell you dis yer fell on me like so much lead. 'Cause, you see, I'd been keeping company with a very nice young man, and I was going to ask Miss Harrit about it dat very day; but, dere—I laid down my work dat minute, and thinks, says I, 'True as de Lord's in heaven I won't never be married in this world!'—And I cried 'bout it, off and on, all day, and at night I told Paul 'bout it. He was de one, you know. But Paul he tried to make it all smooth. He guessed it wouldn't happen; he guessed missis would think better on't. At any rate, we loved each other, and why shouldn't we take as much comfort as we could? Well, I went to Miss Harrit, and told her just what I thought about it. Allers had spoke my mind to Miss Harrit 'bout everything, and I wasn't

going to stop dem. And she, laughed at me, and told me not to cry for it's hurt. Well, things went on so two or three weeks, and finally Paul he persuaded me. And so we was married. When our first child was born, Paul was so pleased, he thought strange dat I wasn't.
'Paul,' said I, 'dis yer child, an't ourn; it may be took from us, and sold any day.'
'Well, well,' says he, 'Milly, it may be God's child, any way, even if it ain't ourn.'
'Cause you see Miss Nina, Paul, he was a Christian. Ah, well, honey, I can't tell you; after dat I had a great many children, girls and boys growing up round me. Well, I had fourteen children, dear, and dey's all been sold from me, every single one of 'em. It's a heavy cross! Heavy, heavy!—Lord, Nones knows but dem dat bears it!'
'What a shame!' said Nina. 'How could Aunt Harrit be such a wicked woman?—an aunt of mine do so!'
'Chile,' said Milly, 'we doesn't none of us know what's in us. When Miss Harrit and I was gals, together, hunting hen's eggs and rowing de boat in de river,—well I wouldn't have thought it would have been so,—and she wouldn't have thought so, neither. But, den, what little's bad in girls, when dey's young and handsome, and all de world smiling on 'em—O, honey, it gets drefful strong when dey gets grown women, and de wrinkles come in 'der faces! Always, when she was a girl,—whether it was eggs, or berries, or chineapins, or what,—it was always Miss Harrit's nature to get and to keep; and when she got old, dat all turned to money.'
'But,' said Nina, 'it does seem impossible dat a woman—a lady born, too, and my aunt—could do such a thing!'
'Ah, ah, honey! ladies-born have some bad stuff in dem, sometimes, like de rest of us.—But, den, honey, it was de most natural thing in de world, come to look on't; for now see here, honey, dere was your aunt—she was poor and, and she was pestered for money. Dere was Mrs. George's bills and Peter's bills to pay, and Miss Susy's; and every one of 'em must have everything, and dey was all calling for money, money; and dere has been times she didn't know which way to turn.—Now, you see, when a woman is pestered to pay two hundred here and four hundred dere, and tree hundred dere, and when she has got more niggers on her place than she can keep, and den a man calls in and lays down eight hundred dollars in gold and bills before her; and says, 'I want dat 'er Lucy or George of yours,' why, don't you see? Dese yer soul-drivers is always round, tempting folks dey know is poor; and dey always have dere money as handy as de devil has his. But, den, I oughtn't fur to be hard upon dem poor soul-drivers neither, 'cause dey an't taught no better. It's dese yer Christians, dat profess Christ, dat makes great talk 'bout religion, dat has der bibles, and turns their backs upon swearing soul-drivers, and links dey an't fit to speak too—it's dem, honey, dat's de root of de whole business.—New, dere was dat uncle of hern, mighty great Christian he was, with his prayer-meetings, and all dat—he was always a putting her up to it. O, dere's been times—dere was times long first, Miss Nina, when my first children was sold—dat, I tell you, I poured out my soul to Miss Harrit, and I've seen that woman cry so dat I was sorry for her. And she said to me, 'Milly, I'll never do it again.' But Lord! I didn't trust her,—not a word on't,—'cause I knowed she would. I know'd dere was dat in her heart dat de devil wouldn't let go. I knowed he'd no kind of objection to her 'musing herself with meeting and prayers, and all—that; but he'd no notion to let go his grip on her heart.
'But, Lord! she wasn't quite a bad woman, poor Miss Harrit wasn't,—and she wouldn't have done so bad if it had'n't been for him.—But he'd come and give prayers, and exhort, and den come prowling round my place like a wolf, looking at my child.'
'And Milly, he'd say, 'how do you do now? Lucy is getting to be a right smart girl, Milly. How old is she? Dere's a lady in Washington has advertised for a maid—a nice woman, a pious lady. I suppose you wouldn't object, Milly? Your poor mistress is in great trouble for money.'
'I never said nothing to that man.—Only once, when he asked me what I thought my Lucy would be worth, when she was fifteen years old, says I to him:
'Sir she is worth to me just what your daughter is worth to you.'
'Den I went in and shut de door. I didn't stay to see how he took it. Den he'd go up to de house, and talk to Miss Harrit. 'Twas her duty, he'd tell her, to take proper care of her goods.—And dat ar meant selling my child!—I 'member, when Miss Susy came home from boarding school, she was a pretty girl; but I didn't look on her very kind, I tell you, 'cause three of my child'en had been sold to keep her at school. My Lucy,—ah, honey!—she went for a lady's maid. I knowed what dat ar meant, well enough. De lady had a son grown, and he took Lucy wid him to Orleans and dere was an end of dat. Dere don't no letters go 'twixt us. Once gone, we can't

write, and it's good as being dead. Ah, no, chile, not so good! Paul used to teach Lucy little hymns, nights before she went to sleep, and if she died right off after one of dem, it would have been better for her. O, honey, den times, I used to rave and toss like a bull in a net—I did so!
'Well, honey, I wasn't wat I was. I got cross and ugly. Miss Harrit, she grew a great Christian and joined de church, and used to have heaps of ministers and elders at her house; and some on 'em used to try and talk to me. I told 'em I'd seen enough of der old religion, and I didn't want to hear no more.—But Paul, he was a christian, and when de folks talked to me, I was quiet, like, though I could not be like what he was. Well, last my mistress promised me one. She'd give me, my youngest child, sure and certain. His name was Alfred. Well, dat boy—I loved dat child better dan any of de rest of 'em. He was all I got left to love; for when he was a year old, Paul's master moved down to Louisiana, and took him off, and I never heard no more of him. So it 'peared as if dis yer child was all I had left.—Well, he was a bright boy. O, he was most uncommon! He was so handy to anything, and saved me so many steps! O, honey, he had such ways with him—dat boy!—wouldn't almost make me laugh. He took after learning mighty, and he learned himself to read; and he would read de bible to me sometimes. I just brought him up and taught him de best way I could. All dat made me 'fraid for him, and dat he was so spry. I's 'fraid 'twould get him into trouble.
'He wasn't no more spry dan white folks would like their children fur to be. When white child'en holds up their heads, and answers back; den de parents laugh, and say, 'He's got it in him! He's a bright one!'—But, if one of ourn does so, it's a dreadful thing. I was allers talking to Alfred 'bout it, and told him to keep humbly.—It 'peared like dere was so much in him, you couldn't keep it down.—Laws, Miss Nina, folks may say what dey like 'bout de black folks; dey'll never beat it out of my head;—dere's some on 'em can be as smart as any white folks, if dey could have de same chance. How many white boys did you ever see would take de trouble for to teach themselves to read? And dat's what Alfred did.—Laws, I had a mighty heap of comfort in him, 'cause I was thinkin' to get my missis to let me hire my time; den I was going to work over hours, and get money, and buy him; because, you see, chile, I knowed he was too spry for a slave. You see he couldn't learn to stoop; he wouldn't let nobody impose on him; and he always had a word back again to give anybody as good as dey sent. Yet, for all dat, he was a dear good boy to me; and when I used to talk to him, and tell him dese things was dangerous, he'd always promise fur to be careful. Well, things went on pretty well while he was little, and I kept him with me till he got to be about twelve or thirteen years old. He used to wipe de dishes, and scour de knives, and black de shoes and such like work. But, by and by, dey said it was time dat he should go to de reg-lar work; an dat ar was de time I felt fear. Misses had an overseer, and he was real aggravating, and I felt feared dere'd be trouble; and sure enough dere was, too.—Dere was always somethin' brewing 'twixt him and Alfred; and he was always running to Missis with tales, and I was talking to Alfred. But 'peared like he aggravated de boy so, dat he couldn't do right. Well, one day, when I had been up to town for an errand, I come home at night, and I wondered Alfred did not come home to supper. I thought something was wrong and I went up to de house, and dere sat Miss Harrit by a table covered with rolls of money, and dere she was counting it.
'Miss Harrit,' says I, 'I can't find Alfred. An't you seen him?' says I.
'At first she didn't answer, but went on counting—fifty-one, fifty-two, fifty-three. Finally I spoke again.
'I hope dere an't nothing happened to Alfred, Miss Harrit?'
'She looked up, and says she to me,
'Milly,' says she, 'de fact is, Alfred has got too much for me to manage, and I had a great deal of money offered for him; and I sold him.'
'I felt something strong coming up in my throat, and I just went up and took hold of her shoulders, and said I,
'Miss Harrit, you took de money for thirteen of my child'en, and you promised me, sure enough, I should have dis yer one.—You call dat being a Christian?' says I.
'Why,' says she, 'Milly, he an't a great way off; you can see 't'm about as much. It's only over to Mr. Jones's plantation. You can go and see him, and he can come and see you. And you know you didn't like de man who had de care of him here, and thought he was always getting him into trouble.'
'Miss Harrit,' says I, 'you may o'ert yourself saying dem things; but you don't cheat me, nor de Lord neither. You folks have de say all on your side, with your ministers preaching us down out of de bible; you won't teach us to read. But I'm going straight to de Lord with dis yer case. I tell you, if de

Lord is to be found, I'll find him; and I'll ask him to look on't,—de way you've been treating me,—selling my child'en, all de way long, to pay for your child'en, and now breaking your word to me, and taking dis yer boy, de last drop of blood in my heart! I'll pray to de Lord to curse every cent of dat ar money to you and your child'en!'
'Dat ar was de way I spoke to her, chile. I was poor, ignorant creature, and didn't know God, and my heart was like a red hot coal. I turned and walked right straight out from her, I didn't speak no more to her, and she didn't speak no more to me. And when I went to bed at night, dar, sure 'nough, was Alfred's bed in de corner, and his Sunday coat hanging up over it, and his Sunday shoes I had bought for him with my own money, 'cause he was a handsome boy, and I wanted him always to look nice. Well, so, come Sunday morning, I took his coat and shoes, and made a bundle of 'em, and I took my stick, and says I, 'I'll just go over to Jones' place and see what has come of Alfred. All de time I hadn't said a word to missis, nor she a word to me. Well, I got about half-way over to de place; and dere I stopped under a big hickory tree to rest me a bit, and I looked along and seed some one a coming; and pretty soon I knowed it was Huldah. She was de one dat married Paul's cousin, and she lived on Jones' place. And so I got up and went to meet her, and told her I was going over to see 'bout Alfred.
'Lord!' says she, 'Milly, hav'n't you heard dat Alfred's dead?'
'Well, Miss Nina, it seemed as if my heart and every thing in it stopped still.—And said I, 'Huldah, has dey killed him?'
'And said she, 'Yes.' And she told me it was dis yer way; dat Stiles—he dat was Jones' overseer—had heard dat Alfred was dreadful spry; and when boys is so, sometimes dey aggravate 'em to get 'em riled, and den dey whips 'em to break 'em in. So Stiles was laying off Alfred's task, was real aggravating to him; and dat boy—well, he answered back, just as he allers would be a doing, 'cause he was smart, and it 'peared like he couldn't keep it in. And den dey n' laughed round dere, and den Stiles was mad, and swore he'd whip 'em; and den Alfred he cut and run.—And den Stiles he swore awful at him, and he told him to 'come here, and he'd give him hell, and pay him de cash.' Dem is de very words he said to my boy. And Alfred said he wouldn't come back; he wasn't going to be whipped.—And just den young Master Bill come along, and wanted to know what was de matter. So Stiles told him, and he took out his pistol and said,—'Here you young dog, if you don't come back before I count five I'll fire!'
'Fire ahead,' says Alfred; 'cause you see dat boy never knowed what fear was. And so he fired. And Huldah said he just jumped up and give one scream and fell flat. And dey run up to him and he was dead; 'cause you see de bullet went right through his heart. Well, dey took off his jacket and looked; but it wau't of no use: his face settled down still. And Huldah said dat dey just dug a hole and put him in. Nothing on him—nothing round him—no coffin—like he'd been a dog. Huldah showed me de jacket. Dere was de hole, cut right round in it like it was stamped, and his blood running out on it. I didn't say a word. I took up de jacket and wrapped it up with his Sunday clothes, and I walked straight—straight home. I walked up in Missis' room, and she was dressed for church, sure enough, and sat dere reading her Bible. I laid it right down under her face, dat jacket. 'You see dat hole?' said I; 'you see dat blood! Alfred's killed! You killed him, his blood be on you and your children! O, Lord God in heaven, hear me, and render unto her double!'
Nina drew in her breath hard, with an instinctive shudder. Milly had drawn herself up, in de vebement of her narration, and sat leaning forward, her black eyes dilated, her strong arms clenched before her, and her powerful frame expanding and working with the violence of her emotion. She might have looked, to one with mythological associations, like the figure of a black marble Nemesis in a trance of wrath.
B. J. KIEFFER, DRUGGIST,
has moved his store from the former stand to his new building immediately opposite, and adjoining Mr. C. J. Hoff's Store. Having made every arrangement to preserve his Medicines fresh and pure, and having replenished his assortment of carefully selected drugs, he is now again prepared to attend to business with care and promptness. His assortment will furnish almost every thing that may be called for, either by the physician, or the family, for domestic use. The greatest care and precaution will be observed in the compounding of prescriptions and dispensing of medicines. His assortment of Confectionaries and Fancy Goods is very general, and will enable purchasers to suit themselves.
May 28, 1856.
DRUGS AND CHEMICALS,
With a Splendid variety of CONFECTIONARY AND FANCY GOODS:
The undersigned has just replenished his stock of goods; and as his Drugs and Chemicals, have been selected with great care, he is prepared to fill all orders promptly. His friends may rely upon the genuineness and purity of every article.
His stock of CONFECTIONARY is large and selected with special reference to the Holiday's. It will afford any variety persons may desire in that line. He has a large assortment of French, German and domestic Fancy Candles, all fresh and of the very best quality. His assortment of FANCY GOODS is large and embraces almost every thing necessary for the Toilet and Family. He invites special attention to his Fancy Work Boxes, Ladies' Bags, Cologne bottles, Watch and Card Trays, Port Folios, Portmonies, &c., &c.
Quick sales, small profits, and strict consistency in trade shall characterize our business.
Dec. 19, '55. B. J. KIEFFER.