

Black and White The Misfit Marriage

By D. W. Higgins, author of "The Mystic Spring," etc.

"Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore;
To one thing constant never."
—Shakespeare.



THE story I am about to relate is one of the most remarkable that ever came under my observation. If true it presents to the reader incidents of a most heart-rending, not to say tragic, character, and stamps two of the actors as consummate fools and a third as an abandoned rogue for whom, unfortunately, the law at that time prescribed no fitting punishment, or, rather, no punishment at all. I do not vouch for its correctness. I tell the story as it was told to me, taking the precaution to substitute fictitious names for allegedly true names, lest pain should be actors who may still be alive.

I heard the skeleton of the story more than fifty years ago, while visiting at Toronto. It was then fresh in people's minds, and was narrated as a painful fact of recent occurrence.

One of the chief characters in the drama of tragedy was a mulatto whom I shall call Brewer. He had been born a slave in the Southern States, and had made his escape from bondage. He appeared at Toronto about the year 1840. His female companion was a handsome octoroon much lighter than the man. They were an exemplary couple, and Brewer having a good knowledge of horses started a small stable. He was polite and attentive, and prospered exceedingly. In the course of a few years he was regarded as rich. He built a handsome house, where he and his accomplished wife dispensed hospitality with a generous hand. His companions and guests were not all of his own race, many white persons being entertained.

The couple had one daughter—Mary Brewer. She was so light that those who had never seen her father and mother did not suspect that there was African blood in her veins. The girl was well educated and could play and sing fairly, her figure was faultless, and she had charming manners. Her hair was long, black and straight. Her complexion was a dark olive, and her lustrous eyes were as black as night and deep as a well. They had an expression of dreamy languor which proved effective in stirring the hearts of amorous young dandies to their depth, and not a few white fellows of that day were affected in like manner.

With wealth came ambition and the Brewers gave out that while it was true the father had a touch of the "tar-brush," his wife was of pure Indian stock, and their daughter was therefore entitled to associate on terms of equality with whites. Not a few accepted this idea and invited the girl to their houses. At parties she was made a good deal of, for her parents kept prudently in the background, and many a man danced with her or led her in to supper under the belief that she was a pure white.

Brewer continued to prosper. His stable grew and the balance to his credit at the bank was large. Then it became rumored about that the stableman would only consent to his daughter marrying a white man! It was given out that if a suitable white person should present himself a dower of \$10,000 would be paid him and the couple would be remembered in the old man's will. The offers were many; but for some time a candidate who possessed the qualifications which Brewer thought his future son-in-law should possess did not appear. One day a respectable dressed, well-appearing young man, who gave the name of Frank Ellard, presented himself at the stables with a letter of introduction. Brewer looked him over, questioned him, examined his papers or credentials, and ended by inviting him to his home. The girl fell in love with the stranger at first sight. At the dinner-table he was seated next her, and as he was a good talker, witty, and withal modest, he won his way into the affections of the old people. His visits were frequent, and he spent much money in entertaining the family and their friends. In the result a satisfactory arrangement was made. The man proposed and was accepted. The marriage took place shortly after, and the dower was paid into Ellard's hands. The gifts were numerous and costly. There was a grand supper, and the couple started on their honeymoon.

Such an event as a white man marrying a colored girl was a rare occurrence, and society, which turned out in full force at the Baptist church to witness the ceremony, was variously moved by the spectacle. Many favored the match, others regarded it with a feeling of languid indifference, and still others condemned it as a wicked attempt to pervert Nature by mixing the two races.

"I tell you," said an old Southerner, as he squirted tobacco-juice through his teeth, "no good will come of this 'ere transaction. There never was and there never will be any necessity for it. The young fellow is after the \$10,000 and as soon as he gets it he'll make off. Down south, do you know, what we'd do? We'd gather 'em both in and sell 'em as slaves."

The couple were followed to the station by an interested throng. Old boots and slippers were thrown and rice was showered upon

them until the car moved off, leaving the father and mother sobbing in each other's arms, while the crowd cheered. Mr. and Mrs. Ellard stopped at the best hotels, and their fare was most expensive. They visited Niagara and Saratoga, and in the course of a few days arrived at New York City. Here the bridegroom began to show an indifference which comforted badly with his pre-nuptial professions of attachment. He stayed out late at night and became impatient and irritable. Before company he was all that could be desired; but when the company had gone he was most unpleasant in his manner and remarks. He had all along boasted of his high connections in New York; but the only men whom he seemed to know there were ill-bred, vulgar-looking fellows, who wore bogus diamonds, ate with their knives, picked their teeth at the table, and drank liquor until they were helpless. He had a few "lady" acquaintances, but the least said of them the better. The bride received them with scant courtesy.

A two weeks' stay at New York opened the eyes of the bride, and she began to suspect that her white husband was meaner than any negro who ever lived. They had frequent quarrels, and Ellard was often in liquor. The couple went to Washington, where they saw many objects of interest. They drove to Arlington, where repose the remains of George Washington. On their way to and from Arlington they passed over the ground that before many years was destined to become sodden with the blood of thousands of men, slain in a titanic struggle for supremacy between the North and South.

Early in June the couple reached the far southern city of Jacksonville, Florida. It was a glorious day. The air was laden with the sweet fragrance of the flowers from which Florida takes its name. They strolled slowly through a beautifully laid out garden that was attached to the hotel, admiring the plants, with the names of which Mrs. Ellard was familiar, and which she translated to her husband. They wandered through the orange groves, and the girl went into raptures over the stately oleander, which attains perfection in Florida.

At dinner that evening Mrs. Ellard met with a great surprise. They occupied a private dining room and her husband informed her that their funds were running low, whereupon the bride remarked,

"You can't have got rid of all that money already."

"Well, no," he replied. "Not all, but nearly all."

"That cannot be, Frank," his wife said. "We have bought very little. To be sure, we have lived pretty well, but we have not spent one thousand dollars out of the ten thousand."

"I tell you," he said, "I have not enough money left to pay your bill here, and you will have to write to your father for more."

"That I'll not do," she returned hotly, "unless you first tell me what you have done with the \$10,000 which was my dowry."

"It's none of your business," he retorted, "and it was my money, not yours. I earned it by marrying you. I'm your white husband," he added with a sneer.

The girl rose from the table and said, "I believe I know where the money has gone—you've gambled it away!"

"Well," he replied, "I have played a little poker. All Southern gentlemen play poker."

"But you are not a Southerner, and I begin to doubt that you are a gentleman," she replied tartly.

"What?" he shouted, "you dare to hint that I'm not a gentleman? Take care! I surely did sacrifice my gentility by marrying you, but if the good Lord will forgive me for that I'll promise never to repeat the act."

"I'll write to my father," the girl said, as she burst into a flood of tears, and ask him to come and take me home."

"Your father?" "Ha, ha! That's a good one," the man replied. "Why, he's a runaway nigger. He dare not put foot anywhere in the South for fear he will be seized and sent back to his master. Your father! That's a good idea. Let him come! His old master is here and anxious to get his hands on him."

The poor girl retired to the bedroom and locked herself in. When later on that evening Ellard knocked at the door she refused to admit him, and he went away swearing vengeance.

In the morning he appeared penitent and craved forgiveness, and, after a short time spent in tears, the girl relented and the two went to breakfast quite reconciled. At the table the man's brutality showed itself again in a marked manner. When his wife asked Ellard if his mother did not reside in Jacksonville he replied, "Yes, she lives here."

"Then why don't you take me to see her—you promised me you would," she said, timidly.

"Before we were married I did promise

something of the sort. But now things are different, since I know all about your father's origin. Let us change the subject."

"No, I want an explanation. Why have you not taken me to see your mother? Can you give a good reason?"

"Do you think for one moment that I would introduce you to my mother—she's a lady."

"Well, so am I," the girl retorted bitterly. "Indeed! Do you insist upon my telling you the truth?"

"Yes, I insist—I demand!"

"Well, if you will have the truth, here it is! I do not take you to my mother because I do not want her to know that I have married a negress!"

The man spoke in slow, measured, cruel accents, but he seemed not entirely lost to shame, for he averted his face and did not allow his eyes to meet hers.

With a low cry like that of a wounded animal, the girl sprang to her feet. Her beautiful eyes burned with a fierce light and shot out rays of hatred and ferocity. The room swung swiftly round and round, and all things within the range of her vision turned red—a deep, rich, blood color. The carpets, the portieres, the walls, all seemed bathed in blood. She looked at her hands. They, too, were red! A river of blood seemed to flow through the room. On the opposite shore she could see her vile husband, regarding her with a wicked sneer on his cold lips. She raised her hand to her brow and tried to collect her wandering thoughts. She acted as if a demon possessed her and was counselling her to do murder—to murder the man who had deceived, ruined and insulted her! The demon was the savage strain in her nature that had lain dormant since her forebears were transported from an African jungle to America by man-stealers. The strain throbbed in her veins and struggled for mastery over the girl's better nature. A strange sound like the throbbing of a drum broke on her ear. It was the war tom-tom of her ancestors, that for ages had called the tribes to battle. It commanded her, almost in words, to "Kill! kill!"

The girl grasped a carving-knife from the table. Shrieking in wild delirium, she advanced toward her husband. The red river between them was flowing deep and broad. Her husband stood on the opposite shore regarding her with a mocking smile. She plunged into the gory current and swam across. With her left hand she grasped the

arm of the man, who cowered before her. Her right hand was raised to strike, when she saw the face of her dear old mother rise between them. She paused and distinctly heard her mother's voice say in soft and gentle accents: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord!"

The knife fell from her hand. The war-drum throbbed no more. The river of blood and the ruddy glow on her hands and in the room vanished as she sank fainting to the floor.

How long the girl lay there she never knew, but when her senses were recalled she was alone. She had a sense of having had a horrid dream and of battling with demons. Slowly and painfully she rose to her feet and tottered toward her bedroom. In the corridor she encountered two men. They gazed insolently at her and watched her till she reached the room and bolted the door.

That evening she waited long and anxiously for Ellard. She wanted to tell him that she would submit to his insults and embraces no longer. All was over between them for ever, she would tell him that, and then would ask her father to take her home again. She no longer wept. Her eyes were seared as with a hot iron, and tears refused to flow. As she meditated over the miserable wreck of all her ambitious plans and hopes a knock came to the door.

"Surely," she thought, "that is Ellard at last."

She saw standing on the threshold the men she had encountered in the corridor.

"You are Mrs. Ellard, I believe?" asked one of the men.

"I am," she responded. "What do you want?"

"I have a warrant for your arrest."

"A warrant for my arrest!" she cried, starting back. She was seized with an indefinite feeling of dread. Had she, then, in her delirium, slain her husband? Her heart sank within her as she asked, "In God's name, what have I done?"

"You ain't done nothing," the man replied, "but I've a paper here that says you're the property of Colonel Orcutt of this town, and he wants you. He's sworn out this warrant. I am the constable, and the other gentleman is the Colonel's agent."

"My God!" cried the terrified girl. "I'm a married woman. I am free. I was born in Canada. My husband is here, in this hotel. Call him and ask him. This is all a mistake, and he'll tell you so."

"Oh, no, he won't," replied the constable. "He's the man that gave you away."

"Gave me away! Gave me away! Great heavens, what does all this mean? Leave me, leave me! I'll kill myself before I'll go with you. Call Mr. Ellard!" she shrieked as she sank screaming to the floor.

Such scenes were common in the south in slavery days, and attracted little attention. Girls as white and beautiful as Mary Brewer were often seized and carried off into slavery on the slightest pretext. Many were never heard of again by their friends. The agent called two stout men to his aid and they carried the insensible woman out and thrust her into a cab, which was driven rapidly off.

When they were out of sight the bridegroom sneaked into the bedroom and, gathering up his wife's diamonds and pearls, and every other article of value, put them in the trunks and had them sent to the station, where they were checked to a distant part of the country. He next bought a ticket by the same train, and in a few hours he was gone.

The fate of the poor girl would have been sad indeed, but for the presence in the hotel that night of a northern man, who found a letter on the stairway addressed to Nicholas Brewer, Toronto. This letter Mrs. Ellard had intended to post, but it fell from her pocket as she was being carried out. The man telegraphed to the address and in a few days a lawyer from Toronto arrived at Jacksonville.

The lawyer placed himself in communication with Colonel Orcutt. The Colonel said he had bought the girl for \$1,000 from her traveling companion, who said she was not his wife. The Colonel said he would surrender her for \$2,000. She was worth a good bit more, and her father had run away from the Colonel; but considering all the circumstances he would let her go at that low figure. Brewer was advised to settle on that basis, which he did, and the lawyer returned to Toronto with the wretched daughter, whose ambition to marry a white man, it is to be hoped, was forever sated.

Some eight or nine years later there arrived at Victoria a man who was always referred to as the bridegroom in this extraordinary marriage. Several Torontonians recognized him here and openly asserted that he was the villain who sold his wife into slavery. I heard the charge made to his face and he made no reply. When he arrived here he had a white wife and two or three small children. He had some money and bought an interest in a saloon that stood on the corner of Government and Pandora streets, where he died of pneumonia. What became of his wife and children I never heard. The Brewer family and all the other actors in this drama must have passed away long since, and I have given the story as it was told to me—only suppressing names.

Interview With Sir Robert Hart



EUTER's representative, who met Sir Robert Hart on his return to Southampton, had an interview with the Inspector-General shortly after his arrival in London. Sir Robert said that he was none the worse for his long journey, and that as a matter of fact he had had more sleep during his first night in London than he had enjoyed since his attack of insomnia, which set in suddenly last November. Owing to his official position there were naturally no questions connected with the Far East on which he did not feel that he had no objection to discussing. Informally some of the questions connected with China which were attracting general attention.

Missionaries in China. Asked for his views on the important question of foreign missionary enterprise in China, and particularly of the Chinese Government to organize a position of missionaries, Sir Robert Hart said: "I may state, in the first place, that I know of no friendly feeling on the part of the Chinese Government towards missionaries, and as a matter of fact mission work is being carried on peacefully in the country without apprehension of danger of any kind. Of course owing to the nature of things some local indiscretion or outbreak of local feeling sort it is often quite impossible to apportion the act responsibility. It is obvious that the existence of this kind may occasion results of which one cannot always see the end, but that there is any hostility towards the missionaries in China is a mistaken idea. By an imperial edict issued a few years ago the Roman Catholic missionaries were recognized by the Imperial Government in a very special way. Their chaplains had red buttons and other honors conferred upon them, so that the recognition of the Roman Catholics by the Chinese Government is of a very complete character. As regards the Protestants, they have never sought the same official recognition, but prefer to rely on their own merits. They are doing very excellent work. I am a Protestant myself, but I have the greatest admiration for the work carried on by the Roman Catholics, who are much beloved by the people. The Roman Catholic method of working is different from that pursued by the Protestants. The former, without endeavouring to convert the adults, rather aim at getting hold of and training children. They are literally propagating Roman Catholic Christianity, which shows how by religion the best can be made of both worlds, and they are regarded with great love and veneration by their people. Generally speaking, the attitude of the Chinese towards the missions may be summed up in the remark made to me when I first went to China by Wen Hsiang, one of the greatest Chinese statesmen, who, in discussing missionaries, said, 'We like them, as they better than they are.'"

Opium Smoking. Turning next to the attitude of the Chinese Government with regard to opium smoking and the effects, present and future, of the recent imperial edict against opium, Sir Robert said: "I am quite sure that China really desires to see the use of opium stopped, but this is not so easy as it may appear to the confirmed opium smoker who always seeks means to escape the habit. This is the real difficulty, and it is therefore obvious that time must be given to see how the edict will work. That it will be effective in the end I am certain, but it will not stop smoking in the present generation. Generally speaking, the central authorities are loyally working with the provincial government to carry out the provisions of the recent edict, and this connection I should like to add that China greatly appreciates the sympathy and assistance she is now receiving from the British Government in this matter. There are great financial difficulties to be overcome in the case of China as well as in that of India. The tendency

of revenue generally in China during the past few years has been to increase, and the increased revenue from goods will probably make up in a short time what is being lost on opium."

With regard to the introduction and spread of Western educational methods in the empire, Sir Robert said: "A few years ago the old system of examination was abolished by imperial edict, and education on Western lines is now being attempted all over the country. It is of course only in certain parts but a real beginning has been made, and no doubt the movement will spread, for the Chinese are a very free people, and worship intellect more than brute strength. Time must be given for natural development. The same Chinese statesman to whom I have already referred was once discussing the question of electricity with me, and he admitted that as we know electricity was very interesting, but significantly remarked that even we had not got to the bottom of the subject yet. He added, 'We shall get to the bottom of the subject and teach you.' The same or any other use such an expression of prophetic determination. Referring to the question of extra-territoriality, Sir Robert said that the matter was being taken up when the time is ripe for it. So long, however, as the Chinese laws are in their present condition extra-territoriality cannot be given up, but China is seeking to reform her laws and procedure in the new situation."

Foreigners in China. Dealing with the employment of foreigners in China, Sir Robert said: "The events of 1900 brought a great change in the country, and there had been a new order of procedure since that period. So far as I am aware, there are no British engaged in training either the navy or the army. There are, however, some Japanese employed in connection with military schools, and also a number of Germans. In the Imperial customs service subjects of some fourteen or fifteen countries are employed—that is to say, representatives from every treaty Power, about one-half of the customs officials being British. Among the 1900 is that of sending Chinese abroad for educational purposes. After a period of study these young men should be able to speak a number of foreign languages and fitted for responsible work in their own country in a way that was not possible before. In addition to the training abroad, real technical preparation for the customs service is required, in view of the fact that the Chinese Government has in connection with the Customs. The Customs board therefore is establishing a board of education for training young men for the higher positions of the customs service. In four or five years these should be in a position to be admitted to the service, so that as time goes on the foreign element will gradually disappear. But of course during the currency of the loans the customs service will remain much as it is now, under an Inspector-General."

The Far East. Asked for his views on the situation created in the Far East as the result of the awakening of China, Sir Robert said: "The position of Japan, particularly with regard to what is popularly called the 'yellow peril,' Inspector-General said: 'Frankly, I do not believe in what you call the yellow peril. In my book I referred to the rising power of China, and I must take in the history of the world, and my object was to show that China should be treated with sympathy and consideration. One must not ignore the fact that China has a great future before her, and when China becomes a world Power it will be all the pleasanter to realize that she is popularly called the 'yellow peril,' for I do not see what can possibly prevent the China from becoming a world Power. China has a great future before her, and in all departments of life, but she cannot go quickly. The power will come

slowly, but that it must come, later perhaps rather than sooner, is certain, and it is not very likely that this slow and gradual growth will change a friendly into an aggressive Government. Japan has taken such a position in the world that she will probably be pressed during the last decade or two, and she is advancing during the last decade or two, and she is not alone. Japan and China will be competing with the rest of the world very successfully in commercial matters, and both will be in a better position for their own defence against Western attack than they were before. Asked if there were still any general anti-foreign feeling in China, Sir Robert Hart said: "There is no such thing as anti-foreign feeling in the country. It is always easy by the practice of injudicious methods to bring about local trouble, and the wonder is that there has been so little of it rather than that there has been any."

British Trade. Turning to the question of British trade, the Inspector-General said: "British merchants have not lost anything of the trade they already possessed, but in the matter of the increased business this is largely in the hands of new men—Germans chiefly. I have heard people say that the British merchant is very conservative, and that his attitude is that of 'if you like my goods take them,' while the German trader is more ready to find out what is required and to adapt his goods to the requirements of the prospective customer. Naturally the latter is more successful. With regard to Japan, there are Japanese traders in a small way all over the country, and they are making a bid for business in every direction. But at present this seems to apply more to small traders than to big merchants."

China and Tibet. Discussing the relations of China with Tibet and the provisions of the treaty recently signed in India, Sir Robert said: "I know that the Chinese Government has seriously in view the question of Tibet, and that it is considering arrangements for developing Tibet on commercial lines, and also for the establishment of a postal system. In fact, China means to do something in Tibet, where her position has been strengthened as a result of the events of the last few years."

In conclusion, Sir Robert Hart said: "It is of course quite impossible in the course of a brief and informal conversation like this to give an adequate idea of my impressions of over fifty years of China. I would only say that the changes which have been brought about in that vast empire during the period since 1900 form perhaps the most interesting and extraordinary epoch of the many years I have spent in that country."

Once on a time several birds noticed what a fine strong nest a magpie had, so they went to ask her how she built it. "Well, I'll show you," said the magpie. First lay two sticks across so.

"Then put a few more like this," said the crow. "Who doesn't know that?" said another bird. "Then get a little more mud and wool."

"Of course, why any bird could do that," said the robin. "Oh, well," said the magpie, "it seems you can all build nests as well as I can, so I will say good-morning. And away she flew. The magpie never told the other birds how to make a nest. That is the reason why the other birds have never learned how to put a roof over their nests. Primary Education.

The students of an Eastern college grew so reckless in their behavior that the professor thought to reprove their conduct by a lecture on morality. They listened with due submission and humility. The course of his lecture he said: "My young friends, the doors of hell are paved with champagne, automobiles and thorough girls. He was horrified to hear one of the students say in a sepulchral tone: "Oh, Death, where is thy sting?"