

HE IS OF THY PEOPLE.



THE RESURRECTION OF FELIX DYMOND.

BY L. G. MOBERLY.
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"DID I hear you say you were going to India, my dear?" To the frontier? I envy you—ah! how I envy you. I looked in amazement at the speaker. She was an old lady, whose white hair and lined face gave her the appearance of being even older than she really was. Her faded eyes had lighted up at my words, there was an almost youthful excitement in her face and manner as she leaned forward and touched my hand.

"She was a stranger to me. We were merely fellow guests at the house of a mutual acquaintance, but she had overheard a remark I had made to a friend, and her trembling voice had asked that eager question. "Did you say you were going to India?" "Yes," I answered, "I am starting almost at once. I am a medical woman, you know, and I have had an excellent post offered me on the frontier. My listeners gave a little gasp, and I saw that her dim eyes filled with tears. My work will especially lie among some of the friendly tribes who come under our sphere of influence."

"I envy you," she repeated her first words. "I envy you. I would give the life left to me to go to the frontier too." "I am afraid it is a rough journey, and a rougher life when one gets there," I answered gently. "I am fortunately exceptionally strong, and—"

"And you are young," she exclaimed vehemently; "young is everything. You are young—and so pretty," she added gently, looking at me kindly, while the blood mounted to my forehead at her compliment. "Almost too pretty for a frontier post," she said. "One does not think of looks," I said with a little laugh, "when there is so much work to be done. I was chosen chiefly because I was strong and healthy—and I have always longed to go to India."

"So have I," the old lady chimed in eagerly. "I have never ceased to long for it. My boy—my only boy—lies on the frontier—one of its guardians—one of the frontier men of the empire."

"Her voice shook, but there was a ring of pride in it nevertheless, and she looked at me with eyes that had suddenly grown brighter. "I do not grudge him—for England—but I would give the world to see the place where he fell," I began, and she said quickly: "Yes, they left him there—it was one of the frontier raids—one of our little wars—and—and," her brave old voice quivered afresh, "they were not able to find his body—afterwards. But they put up a memorial to him where he fell, and if I could see that—if I could only see that! But," she broke off abruptly, and with a sigh, "an old woman of seventy cannot—it is out of the question."

"I sat for quite a long time after that talking to the gentle old lady, whose name I learned was Mrs. Dymond, and during the days that followed before I started for India, I went to see her as often as I could. She was so lonely, my heart went out to her—a widow, and childless. I longed to be able to do something to comfort her, and we had become great friends before I finally left England. She was one of the last people to whom I went to say good-bye, and it was when I was sitting with her in her cozy old-fashioned drawing-room that she said suddenly: "Promise me something, Cynthia."

"Yes, of course," I answered, "if it is anything I can do." "Promise you will send me a photograph of the memorial they put up to my boy—even if it is only a heap of stones. Promise me that. Let me have it to remind me of Felix. We called him Felix because we were so happy when he was born—so happy—my husband and I! And Felix was always a happy soul. This," she added after a pause, "is his portrait," and she opened a folding case.

"The eyes of the man in the picture looked straight into mine. They were eyes blue as the summer skies, very keen, and bright and steadfast, and the face with its mingling of strength and gentleness made my heart throb with pride to think that I, too, belonged to the nation that could produce such a man as this!" "Dead? This man with the strong face and keen eyes—dead? Oh, the pity of it. As I laid the portrait down my own eyes were dim with tears, and I could not speak."

"It was hard to lose him," Mrs. Dymond said very gently, "but—it was the death he would have chosen! He is guarding the frontier still."

mountains whose grandeur and unspokeable height made me feel breathless with awe every time my eyes fell upon them; before me a wide plain that stretched up to the foot of those mighty hills which rose from it with an almost startling abruptness.

"That was my first view of the wall of the world, and I shall never forget it to my dying day. But to describe a journey to the far frontier of India is nowadays a work of supererogation. Suffice it then to say that after many days and nights of traveling I finally reached the little place by courtesy called a town, where a handful of Englishmen and another handful of native troops watched over that troublesome borderland which is so seldom really quiet."

"The few English I found pleasant and friendly, with no especially noticeable characteristics good or bad, but the native women and children, who were my particular care, were an unending source of pleasure and interest to me. "They called me the 'doctor lady,' and—dear, friendly souls—they made me welcome and did their utmost to show me how grateful they were for what little I could do to help them."

"Every day saw my little surgery more and more packed with a strange, miscellaneous crowd of women, some of whom had traveled miles to come and see the white lady who was to bring them health and strength, and their faith in me was truly pathetic. I had begun studying the language before I left England, and though at first I needed an interpreter with my patients, I was soon able to converse with them on my own account."

"I had not forgotten my dear old friend, Mrs. Dymond, and one of my earliest pilgrimages had been to the rude cross which marked the spot where her son had fought and died. The major in charge of the fort rode there with me himself, and there was a troubled look on his face as we stood looking down at the roughly hewn stone bearing the name in somewhat uncouth carving: "..... FELIX DYMOND."

"For chop," he said, "I wish those brutes had left us his body. Their treatment of the dead is not—he pulled himself up short and sighed as he gazed out into the rocky distance where lived the strange wild tribes who raided and harried the frontier, but his significant words made me shudder. I was glad the mother of the dead man had not heard them, and that the photograph I sent her of the rude cross in the mountain valley would only speak of hope and peace."

"I had been in Ternabad for the best part of a year, and we were all rejoicing over the ending of the terribly rigorous winter of those altitudes. Spring had come at last; the apricot orchards in the valleys were a glory of blossom; the grass was soon thick with flowers; the sun had melted some of the snow on the mighty mountains round us, and our small river was showing signs of bursting its banks in its riotous new energy."

"It was evening, and I sat alone in my little room that adjoined the surgery, rejoicing in the soft yet fresh breeze that swept in from the mountains. I was reading quietly when a voice outside my window startled me. "Doctor lady! Oh, doctor lady!" she said, softly, and when I hastened to look out into the gathering darkness I saw what was apparently a native woman crouched on the ground without. Bidding her enter by the side door into the surgery, I went into the latter room to meet her, which she knew was against the rules; but she raised her hand deprecatingly and said in a dialect which I could barely understand: "Oh, protector of the poor! I come not for myself, but for one who is sick unto death."

"You want me to go and see a sick person?" "Oh, doctor lady! The night is dark and the way is long, but this, thy servant, will guide thee to the place," was the somewhat cryptic reply. I was somewhat puzzled, and inquired whether the patient was in one of the little native villages that lay at varying distances from Ternabad and its fortress, but my visitor shook her head. "The way is long," she said again, "the path is rough and very steep. The sick one lies yonder where the wind blows from the great deserts."

"She raised her hand in a northerly direction, and it suddenly flashed upon me that she was asking me to go across the frontier into that wild no-man's-land into which I had never penetrated, and where I was pretty sure Major Manby would never consent to my going. "The major sahib," I began, but the woman sprang forward and suddenly flung back her veil, saying: "Oh, doctor lady! No harm shall happen to thee, but thou must come secretly. No word must go forth of thy coming, lest he should die."

"Lest he should die," I repeated after her. "Lest he should die!" and I looked gravely into the face which was no longer hidden by its veil, and which I saw to be that of an oldish woman, lined and wrinkled, but with eyes still full of fire and shrewdness. "Harken, oh! Doctor Lady," she said, dropping her voice to a whisper, "tis one who lies sick unto death, and thy servant's skill is as weakness, and her wisdom like unto folly before that sickness which draws the life from him whom I would fain save."

"But who is he?" persisted. She dropped her eyes, a strange expression crept over her wizen face, and she came yet closer to me and touched my hand. "He is not of my people," she murmured. "I know not his name—but delay not, oh! Doctor Lady, come at once, lest it be too late and he die ere help be given to him."

My curiosity was roused. I confess it; and I confess also that though fully alive to the folly of such a course, I wanted to go with my visitor without asking Major Manby's leave, which I knew would be refused. To make a long story short, after a few more questions, which the woman answered with considerable vagueness, I finally agreed to go with her, on condition that I should be back at my post by the next morning.

"Then, wrapping a cloak about me and adjusting the veil which I also wore when visiting the natives, I followed my guide out into the night. I must own that I experienced many very eerie sensations as we went swiftly first over rough stony ground, and then slowly began the ascent of a path that was little more than a goat track among frowning rocks and sheer precipices under a sky, out of whose indigo depths the great bright stars seemed about to drop upon our very heads. "We climbed, or rather crept, in total silence along the face of those awful

precipices for what seemed like hours and hours, and then we began to descend an equally perilous goat track on the further side of the mountain. Presently my guide paused before what looked like a dark hole in the rock, and made a soft sound, upon which a hanging before what turned out to be the mouth of a cave, was drawn back, and the old woman and I entered together. I found myself in a large and lofty cave; a girl sat close to the entrance, staring at me with great wondering eyes, and in a corner, on a heap of skins, a man lay tossing restlessly to and fro and moaning continually. I crossed at once to his side and put my hand upon his wrist; in the dim light I could hardly see his face. I supposed the cool touch roused him, for all at once he sat slowly, and in perfect English: "Mother!—why, mother?"

"I uttered a low exclamation of profound amazement. "This is an Englishman," I said sternly, turning to the old woman; "who is he? What is he doing here?" She covered back against the wall and answered whimperingly: "Be not wrath with thy servant, oh Doctor Lady. Thy servant hath tended and guarded him, when he lay as one dead. But the truth drops from thy lips—he is not thy people."

"Mother!" the weak voice said again, "I say—you haven't gone—have you?" The sick man raised himself on his elbow, then sank back with a groan, and I stooped over him again; and this time the flickering light of a most primitive lamp fell full on his face, and my gaze met the gleam of the bluest eyes I ever saw in my life, and a bewildering sense of familiarity, of having seen this man before, was creeping over me, when his hand gripped mine feverishly, and he murmured: "Say 'Felix my dear boy,' say it mummy, darling, then I shall know this

never hesitated. Turning, he started to creep back, using all his art to avoid the bullets of the Chinese so that by no chance might he be disabled before he got back to the instrument of destruction in my life, and a bewildering sense of personal honor which still guide the actions of the descendants of the old samurai. The Japanese are said to lead the world in the matter of personal cleanliness. Never a day passes but every native Japanese takes a bath in water which is heated to at least 110 degrees, too hot to be borne by a citizen of the west. To the lowest coolie they are polite and courteous in their dwellings, among themselves and with strangers. Most of their houses are built of paper, and in every detail of life they are dainty, refined and artistic. That in spite of such habits and manners of life they should at the same time be such grim and countless fighters is one of the most curious contradictions of history. They have every habit which is supposed to make a people effeminate, soft, and unwarlike, and at the same time they are among the most courageous, skillful, and even reckless warriors in the world. It may well be that the result of the present war will force a readjustment of the ideas of civilization on the subject of the proper training for a brave and self-reliant race of people.

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A week ago the dispatches told of a Japanese army officer who was acting as a spy at Vladivostok, and in order to better accomplish his purpose was working as a barber. One afternoon a Russian officer came into be shaved and took occasion to make remarks about the Japanese which the pseudo barber took as a personal insult. Instantly he drew a revolver and shot the Russian dead, then announcing his rank and position in the Japanese army and stating that he would not listen to insults to his fatherland. The cable has not told the punishment which was meted out to the

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beastly nightmare is over—say 'Felix, my dear boy.' My heart gave a leap. I knelt down on the rough floor beside the bed of skins and peered closer into the sick man's face. Felix?"

"Why—was it possible—could it be possible that the oddly familiar look in the patient's face was accounted for? Could it be that this was Mrs. Dymond's son, whom she mourned as dead? Could it—?"

"Say it," the tired voice almost moaned. "I thought you had come and the nightmare was over, mummy, dear—say it—or else—"

"His voice rose shrilly; he was laboring under an excitement that was very bad for him, and only anxious to soothe him at any cost, I gently stroked back the hair from his forehead, and in a voice that trembled I whispered: "Felix—my dear boy!"

"A wonderful smile flashed out upon his face, those blue eyes looked into mine, and he said softly: "You dear little mother—kiss me!" The old woman and the girl had vanished. "Where were you in the cave?" I did not dare to rouse his excitement again, and I laid my lips against his forehead gently, very gently, but as I did so his arms went around my neck, and he pressed a long, lingering kiss upon my face, over which the blood swept in a torrent of crimson, while my heart leapt and leapt till it almost choked me.

Then, after doing what I could for my patient's comfort, I sat down beside him and stilled those throbbing pulses of mine as best I could, whilst I watched the strong face which even now the gleam of the bluest eyes more than I had cared to own. He lay very still, and I thought he was sleeping, and in the semi-darkness and silence, broken only by the heavy breathing of the old woman and girl, who had returned to lie across the doorway, I myself began to feel drowsy,

when a touch on my hand roused me into wakefulness, and I roused up to find the sick man's eyes fixed on me in perfect consciousness. I had put back my veil, for the cave was very hot and stuffy, and though dimly lighted, my face was quite visible to him. "I thought my mother was here," he said faintly, "but you—are an Englishwoman?" His tone grew puzzled. "Where is my mother?" "She—is not here," I faltered, my face growing crimson again, and I am only—the doctor who—who is attending you—You—"

"Then who," he exclaimed impetuously, half raising himself, "who was it—that—I mean—my mother was here, was she not?" "No-o," I whispered, "but—but—I think you ought to lie still. You are better—You—"

Something flashed into those blue eyes which made me lower my own and set my pulses dancing wildly. "Yes—I am better," he said, and a little contented smile stole round his mouth; "I am much better. Your remedies—"

He said no more, but the hasty glance I cast at him showed me that his blue eyes were still fixed on me, and that the little happy smile still lingered on his lips. The remedies I had brought with me, simple though they were, did him marvellous good, and in the dim dawn of day I was able to leave him with an easy mind, for there came a day when Ternabad, for there would be a terrible hour, and cry if I were missed in the morning, but I promised that I would return to the cave that evening if the old woman would again be my guide. The sick man was very drowsy and weak now, but he means out of danger, and no longer aware of my identity; but when, after my morning's work and a refreshing sleep, I once more climbed to the remote cave, I found him lying with his face turned toward the entrance, full consciousness in his glance. "Welcome, oh! Lady Doctor! he said as he took my hand. Then a mischievous twinkle shone in his blue eyes as he said softly: "I do not think you are my mother today, you see!"

"I seemed to see that hid my scarlet countenance, and I flatter myself I answered very calmly: "I am very proud to think that I have found you for your mother; she is a great friend of mine," and without more ado I plunged into the story of our friendship, and of her mourning for the loss of her only son. "I feel like a log," he murmured; "I thought I was done for, but the enemy carried me off, and when they found I was alive they couldn't decide whether to kill me or get a fat ransom for me. Finally the old lady who fetched you had me spirited away to this place by her two sons. It seems she has some sort of gratitude toward the English, and she smitten with a wish to do me a good turn. For the same reason she fetched you, and I fancy, with a little persuasion we might, for the same reason again, induce her to let me get away and wink at my departure when I am well enough."

"Poor old woman! It appeared that once long ago an English lady had been kind to her and her children in a time of famine and sickness, and that kindness had never been forgotten. It bore fruit now, for these came a day when my patient was carried along that goat track on a quaintly fashioned litter borne by the old woman's sons, and she herself parted from us with a shower of blessings which ought to insure happiness for evermore to Felix and me. "Yes—it has come to be 'Felix and me!'"

He asked me to be his wife standing beside the roughly hewn cross which bears his name, and his eyes were shining with a great happiness as he said softly: "Sweetheart, I owe my life to you—and now I am to owe my happiness to you as well. My mother did wisely when she called me Felix; there never was a happier fellow!"

And I think he would say so still whilst, as for our dear mother, his and mine, she says her cup of joy overflowed on the day when I laid her baby grandson in her arms and told her he was a second Felix.

From the Detroit Free Press. He used to call her Sara very gently. "And now?" "O, he's shortened it to 'Say.'"

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