



DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND AGRICULTURE.

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LION'S LESSON TO HIS MASTER; OR, RETURN GOOD FOR EVIL.

"A dog cannot plead his own right,
Nor give a soft answer unto wrath."

MARTIN TUPPER.

"When Solon gave laws to the people, 'tis said,
For private affronts no provision was made,
But Scripture points here to an excellent way,
Bidding all men for evil, with good to repay."

"I'll never forgive her, never; and there's
an end of it," said John Whitworth. "I'll
have nothing more to do with her, happen
what will."

Such was the reply I received from my
often cross-grained parishioner when I went
to him to try and plead the cause of his
niece, Mary Walton, who had sorely dis-
pleased him by her marriage.

The circumstances were these. John
Whitworth was a small farmer, living
on the confines of my parish. His wife
had died several years before this time.
Report said he had been a surly hus-
band to her, though he had seemed to
feel her death a good deal. He had no
children, but he had a young niece, who
often came to stay with him, who looked
after his domestic concerns as she grew
to womanhood. She was an orphan,
and had been brought up by a cousin,
who had a large family of children, but
whose heart was large enough to take
Mary into it and her house when her
parents died and left her destitute. She
was the daughter of John Whitworth's
wife's sister. Although he had never
actually adopted her, he had her so often
at the farm after his wife's death, that
it seemed likely he would do so in the
end. John was not a popular man
with his neighbors. His temper was
not at all good, and he never forgot an
affront. He had shown this by keeping
up a feeling of anger toward a man
named Symonds, who had grievously
offended him some years ago by going
to law about a small piece of land which
John claimed for his own, but which
Symonds was prepared to prove be-
longed to his adjoining farm, having
been bought by his grandfather; though,
owing to death and subsequent troubles,
it had not been claimed for years, and
had been used as a right of way by
Whitworth's father to reach some fields
to which it was a short cut. Symonds
resolved to contest the point, and he
won it, and at once shut up the road by
way of proving his rights, though in
reality he could make little or no use
of it himself. John never spoke to him
again from that day, and he extended
his anger to all his family even after
Symonds' death, and when the circum-
stance had died away from every one's

mind, being only remembered by the neigh-
bors as an old law affair concerning a right
of way, which had caused a coolness between
the two men concerned.

Henry Symonds was scarcely come to
man's estate when his father died. He would
fain have been friends with his crusty neigh-
bor, but all advances were in vain. John
would have nothing to say to him or to any
of them. The old feeling seemed to rankle
in his heart strong as ever, even toward
another generation.

It will easily be understood, therefore,
that it was with considerable annoyance he
found that a strong attachment had sprung
up between Henry Symonds and his niece,

Mary Walton, who was now so much with
him that she was becoming almost as a
daughter. Her uncle's indignation took her
quite by surprise, for she had scarcely be-
lieved it possible that an old quarrel with
the father should so affect his feelings to-
ward the son, who was but a mere boy
when it took place. But John was firm, and
when she declared their intention of marry-
ing, he vowed that from the day she became
Symonds' wife he would have no more to
do with her. On the other hand, he said
if she would give him up he would adopt
her as his daughter, and she should inherit
the farm and whatever was his at his death.
But Mary loved too well to give up

Symonds. His prospects, unfortunately,
were not bright, for bad times had come
since his father's death. A debt which had
long been owing had had to be paid, and the
little farm was about to be sold, and Henry
Symonds must earn a living by industry
and hard work; but he was in a fair way
to do so, and Mary preferred sharing his
fortunes rather than becoming her uncle's
heiress.

She was married from her cousin's house,
and they settled at Tiverton, a village about
two miles from Whitworth's farm, Henry
having obtained a situation there with a
farmer, which would give them a settled
though humble home.

From that time Mary saw nothing of
her uncle, though she made several at-
tempts to conciliate him. I tried, as his
clergyman, to bring him to a more for-
giving state of mind, but in vain. Once,
when he had a severe illness, I had
opportunities of seeing him which did
not occur when he was well, and I
hoped I was beginning to show him his
own great need of forgiveness for his
uncharitable feelings. But he recovered
his health all too soon for the good of
his soul; and the care of the farm
seemed again the only thing that inter-
ested him. Several years passed by
and brought misfortune and sorrow to
Mary Symonds. Her husband fell into
ill-health, and had to give up all hard
work. Consumption came on so
rapidly that Mary found herself a
widow with one child almost before she
had fairly realized that his case was a
hopeless one.

As she was left nearly destitute, I
made another attempt to move John
Whitworth's heart toward her. I
thought, now that her husband was dead,
he surely would relent and offer a home
to her and her child. It was on a fine
spring morning I went to him. He was
in one of his fields, and by his side was
a large dog that he had had for years,
and that had grown old in his service.
Alas! it was in vain I pleaded for Mary.
He made the old reply, that she had
chosen to marry contrary to his wishes,
and so he had nothing more to do with
her. I saw it was useless to say more
on the subject.

A few weeks later his house was broken
into by thieves in the night, and a sum
of money was stolen out of a bureau
that stood in the parlor. "Lion," the
dog, slept in the yard, very near that
part of the house, but he had not barked
or given any alarm, probably because he
had grown deaf of late from old age.
Whitworth was very angry with him,



"THE MAN WAS ALMOST SENSELESS WHEN I DREW HIM OUT."