

# Northern Messenger

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'HE HASTENED TO MEET HIM.'

## The Prodigal Son.

There was once an idle and dishonest son who did not love his home or his good, kind father, and who would not work in the fields with his elder brother, so he said one day to his father.

'Give me all that belongs to me. Let me have my share of my riches, to spend just as I like.'

So the father gave him half of all that he had, and directly after, this ungrateful and selfish son went far away from his home, and wasted the money so quickly that he was soon a beggar.

He was so wretchedly poor and hungry that he was glad to be allowed to look after some pigs, so that he might eat the husks upon which they were fed.

And now this foolish son began to wish he had never left his home, or grieved by his disobedience his good, kind father.

'Why, even my father's servants are better off than I,' he would say; 'for they have more than enough bread to eat, while I have nothing but husks!'

At last he was so wretched thinking of his beautiful home, and of all the love and happiness he had thrown away, that he could bear it no longer, and said,—

'I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants."'

So he arose and left the swine, and went back to his father. Yet as he ran along the road he thought,—

'Perhaps my father will be so angry that he will not let me even come near him.'

But no: as soon as that kind, loving father saw the poor ragged son coming back to his home, his heart was so full of pity and forgiveness that he hastened to meet him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. And then he called the servants, and bade them bring a robe and a ring and shoes for his feet, and get ready a feast to welcome him.

## Bearing Testimony.

(By Sara Virginia Dubois, in the 'Christian Intelligencer.')  
Intelligencer.)

The beautiful steamer, the 'Northern Star,' was sailing over the smooth waters of the broad Atlantic, with its mixed company of old and young upon deck.

A group of young men had assembled together; now and then an oath escaped from one and another; while snatches of song, fit only for city slums, and even to be deplored there, grated upon the ears of those about them.

A gray-haired clergyman gazed sorrowfully upon them, and a motherly-looking woman, with eyes brimming over with tears, half rose from her seat, as if she would remonstrate, then suddenly sat down again, with the half-formed resolve dying upon her lips.

Suddenly there rose above the din, a clear contralto voice, and every eye fastened itself upon the sweet girlish form as she sang—

'Stand up, stand up for Jesus,  
Ye soldiers of the cross;  
Lift high His royal banner,  
It cannot suffer loss.  
From victory unto victory  
His army He shall lead,  
Till every foe is vanquished  
And Christ is Lord indeed.'

There was a momentary hush at the close of the stanza, and when she again began, a dozen or more voices had joined her:

'Stand up, stand up for Jesus,  
Stand in His strength alone;  
The arm of flesh will fail you,  
Ye dare not trust your own.  
Put on the gospel armor,  
And watching unto prayer,  
Where duty calls, or danger,  
Be never wanting there.'

The chorus of voices on the closing stanza was full and deep, for the young men had joined now, and the young singer still led them:

'Stand up, stand up for Jesus,  
The strife will not be long;  
This day the noise of battle,  
The next, the victor's song;  
To Him that overcometh  
A crown of life shall be;  
He, with the King of Glory,  
Shall reign eternally.'

'My dear young lady,' said the aged clergyman later, 'how was it that you were inspired to sing as you did, that beautiful song?'

'Sir,' she answered, 'I am one of the King's Daughters, and one of our resolves is, always to bear Him testimony. As I stood there listening to His name reviled, I thought of His words upon the cross: "Father, forgive them," and then the words of the song came to me, and before I could analyze my purpose, I was singing, as you heard me.'

It is a grave mistake ever to excuse ourselves on the plea that we cannot do anything. The sovereign God, 'whose we are, and