## A Pravor.

If any little word of mine May make a life the brighter : If any little song of mine May make a heart the lighter, God help me speak the little word, And take my bit of singing. And drop it in some lonely vale To set the echoes ringing If any little love of mine May make a life the sweeter; If any little care of mine May make a friend's the fleeter; If any lift of mine may ease

The burden of another. God give me love and care and strength, To help my toiling brother !

## "Probable Sons."

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST PUNISHMENT.

Slowly but surely little Milly was advancing in her uncle's favour. Her extreme docility and great fearlessness, added to her quaintness of speech and action, attracted him greatly. He became interested in watching her little figure as it flitted to and fro, and the sunny laugh and bright childish voice about the house were no longer an annoyance to him.

One day he was moved to anger by an accident that happened to a small statue in the hall, and Milly was the delinquent. Her ball had rolled behind it, and both she and the dog were having a romp to get it, when in the scuille the statue came to the ground and lay there in a thousand pieces. Hearing the crash, Sir Edward came out of his study, and completely losing his temper, he turned furiously upon the child, giving vont to language that was hardly fit for her earn to hear. She stood before him with round, frightened eyes and quivering lips, her little figure upright and still, until she could bear it no longer; and then she turned and fled from him through the garden door and out upon the smooth grassy lawn, where she flung herself down face foremost close to her favourite beech-tree, there giving way to

favourite beech-tree, there giving way to a burst of passionate tears.

"I didn't mean it—oh! I didn't mean to break it," she sobbed aloud. "Uncle Edward is a fearful angry man; he doesn't love me a bit. I wish I had a father! I want a father like the probable son; he wouldn't be so angry!"

And when later on nurse came, with an anxious face, to fetch her little charge in from the cold, wet grass, she had not the heart to cold her face the heart to scold her, for the tear-stained face was raised so pitifully to hera with the words,—

"Oh, nurse, dear, carry me in your arms. No one loves me here. I've been telling God all about it. He's the

only One that isn't angry."

That evening, at the accustomed time, Milly stole quietly into the dining-room, wondering in her little heart whether her uncle was still angry with her.

As she climbed into her chair, now

placed on the opposite side of the large table, she eyed him doubtfully through her long lashes; then gathering courage from the immovable expression of his face, she said in her most cheerful

'It's a very fine night, uncle."

"Is it?" responded Sir Edward, who was accustomed by this time to some such remark when his little niece wanted to attract his notice. Then feeling really ashamed of his outburst a few hours be-fore, he said, by way of excusing him-

"Look here, Millicent, you made me exceedingly angry by your piece of mischief this afternoon. That statue can never be replaced, and you have destroyed one of my most valuable possessions. Let it be a warning for the future. If every you break anything again, I shall punish you most severely; do you understand?"

"Yes, uncle," she answered looking up earnestly. "'You will punish me most severely.' I will remember. I have been wondering why I broke it, when I didn't mean to do it. Nurse says it was a most 'unfortunate accident.' I asked I asked her what an accident was. She says it's a thing that happens when you don't expect it-a surprise, she called it. I'm sure it was a dreadful surprise to me, and

to Fritz too; but I'll never play ball in the hall again, never !

A week later, and Sir Edward was in his study, absorbed in his books and papers, when there was a knock at his door, and, to his astonishment, his little niece walked in. This was so against all rules and regulations that his voice was very stern as he said .--

"What is the meaning of this in-trusion, Millicent? You know you are never allowed to disturb me when here."

Milly did not answer for a moment she walked up to her uncle, her small lips tightly closed, and then, standing in front of him with clasped hands, she said, - I've come to tell you some dread-ful news."

Sir Edward pushed aside his papers, adjusted his glasses, and saw from the pallour of the child's face and the scared expression in her eyes, that it was no light matter that had made her venture

into his presence uncalled for.
"It's a dreadful surprise again," Milly continued, "but I told nurse I must tell you at once. I—I felt so bad here," and her little hand was laid pathetically on

her chest. "Well, what is it? Out with it, child! You are wasting my time," said

her uncle impatiently. "I have—I have broken something else."

There was silence. Then Sir Edward

asked drily,—
"And what is it now?"

"It's a-a flower-pot, that the gardener's boy left outside the tool-house. I-I well, I put it on Fritz's head for a hat, you know. He did look so funny, but he tossed up his head and ran away, and it fell, and it smashed to bits. I have got the bits outside the door on the mat. Shall I bring them in ?"

A flower-pot was of such small value Sir Edward's eyes that he almost

in Sir Edward's eyes that he almost smiled at the child's distress.

"Well, well, you must learn not to touch the flower-pots in future; now run away, and do not disturb me again."

But Milly stood her ground.

"I think you have forgot, Uncle Edward. You told me that if I broke anything again you would numbe me 'most

thing again you would punish me 'most severely.' Those were the words you said; don't you remember?"

Sir Edward pulled the ends of his moustache and fldgeted uneasily in his chair. He always prided himself upon

silence. There was commiseration in her tone. The situation was becoming ludicrous to Sir Edward, though there was a certain amount of annoyance at feeling his inability to carry out his

threat.
"Nurse told me," continued his little niece gravely, "that she knew a little boy who was shut up in a dark cupboard for a punishment, but he was found nearly dead, and really died the next day, from fright. There is a dark cupboard on the kitchen stairs, I don't think I should be very frightened, because God will be in there with me. Do you think that would do?"

make it easier, I expect."

"Perhaps I might do that," said poor
Sir Edward, who by this time longed to dispense with the punishment altogether; "as it was only a flower-pot, I will leave out the 'most severely.'"

"I think," she said, coming up to him and laying one hand on his knee—"I think if I were to go to bed instead of coming down to dessert with you this evening, that would punish me; don't

"Very well, that will do. Now, run away, and let this be your last breakage. I cannot be worried with your punish-

up in bed that night, "because Uncle

This was not acceptable. The child went on with knitted brows. "I expect the Bible will tell you how to punish. I remember a man who picked up sticks on Sunday: he was stoned dead; and Elisha's servant was made a leper, and some children were killed by a bear, and a prophet by a lion, and Annas and Sophia were struck dead. All of them were punished 'most severely,' weren't they? If you forgave me a little bit, and left out the 'most severely,' it would

sponse.

Milly's face brightened.

you think so?"

ments."
"I will try to be very good, nurse, always," said Milly whilst being tucked



"I DIDN'T MEAN TO BREAK IT," SHE SCHEED.

being a man of his word, but much regretted at the present moment that he

had been so rash in his speech.
"Oh! ah! I remember," he said at length, meeting his little niece's anxious Then, gaze with some embarrassment. pulling himself together, he added stern-

"Of course you must be punished; it was exceedingly careless and mischievous. What does your nurse do when she punishes you?"

"She never does punish me—not now," said Milly plaintively. "When I was a very little girl I used to stand in the corner. I don't think nurse has pun-

ished me for years."
Sir Edward was in a dilemma: children's punishments were quite unknown to him. Milly seemed to guess at his

difficulty.

"How were you punished when you were a little boy, uncle?"
"I used to be well thrashed. Many is the whipping that I have had from my

father !" "What is a whinning—like von Fritz when he went into the game ₩00₫ ?" Yes."

There was a pause. The child clasped her little hands tighter, and set her lips firmer, as she saw before her eyes a strong and dealing very heavy strokes with a riding-whip. Then she said in an awe-struck tone,

And do you think that is how you had better punish me?"

Sir Edward smiled grimly as he looked the baby figure standing so erect before him.

"No," he said; "I do not think you are a fit subject for that kind of treatment." Milly heaved a sigh of relief.

"And don't you know how to punish?" she said, after some minutes of awkward

Edward is very puzzled when he has to He doesn't know what to punish me. do. He looked quite unhappy and said it worried him."

And Sir Edward, as he finished his dinner in silence and solitude, muttered to himself,-

"The child is certainly a great nuisance at times, but, upon my word, I quite miss her this evening. Children after all are original, if they are nothing eise, and she is one of the most original that I have ever met.'

It was Sunday morning, and Sir Edward was just starting for church. As he stood over the blazing fire in the hall buttoning a glove, a little voice came to him from the staircase: "Uncle Edward,

may I come down and speak to you?"
Permission being given, Milly danced down the stairs, and then, blipping a little hand into her uncle's, she lifted a

coaxing face to his.
"Will you take me to church with you? Nurse thinks I'm almost big enough now, and I have been to church in the afternoon sometimes."

Sir Edward besitated. "If you come

you will fidget, I expect. I cannot stand that." "I will sit as still as a mouse; I won't

fidget."

"If you behave badly I shall never take you again. Yes, you may come; be quick and get ready."

A few moments later, Sir Edward and his little riece were walking down the avenue, she clasping a large Bible under her arm, and trying in vain to match her steps with his.

The squire's pew was one of the oldfashioned high ones, and Milly's head Very quiet did not reach the top of it. and silent she was during the service, and very particular to follow her uncle's example in every respect, though she

nearly upset his gravity at the outset by taking off her hat in imitation of him and covering her face with it. But when the surmon commenced her large, dark eyes were riveted on the clergyman as he gave out the text so well known to hor

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," and though the sermon was half an hour

in length, her gaze never left the pulpit.
"Uncle Edward," she said, when their steps at length turned homewards, "do steps at length turned homowards, "do you know, I heard all the sermon, and understood it pretty well, except the long words. Wasn't it nice to hear about the probable sen?"

"'Prodigal,' you mean; "cannot you pronounce your words properly?"

Sir Edward's tone was irritable. He had not been feeling very comfortable under the good vicar's words.

"I can't say that; I always forget it. Nurse says one long word is as good as another sometimes. Uncle, what did

another sometimes. Uncle, what did by people running away from God? No one does, do they?"

"A great many do," was the dry re-

"But how can they? Because God is everywhere. No one can't get away from God, and why do they want to? Because God loves them so."
"Why did the prodigal want to get

away ?

away T'
Milly considered.
"I s'pose he wanted to have some a—aventures, don't you call them 7 I play at that, you know. All sorts of things happen to me before I sit down at the beech-tree, but—but it's so different with God. Why, I should be fearful unhappy if I got away from Him. I with God. Why, I should be fearful unhappy if I got away from Him. I couldn't, could I, uncle? Who would take care of me and love me when I'm take care of me and love me when I masleep? And who would listen to my prayers? Why, Uncle Edward, I think I should die of fright if I got away from God. Do tell me I couldn't."

Milly had stopped short, and grasped hold of Sir Edward's coat in her growing the state of the stat

excitement. He glanced at her flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes. "You foolish child, there is no fear of your getting away from God. Don't be so excitable. We will change the subject. I want to see Maxwell, so we will go through the

Maxwell was Sir Edward's head keeper, and a little later found them at his pretty cottage at the edge of the wood. It was Milly's first visit, and Mrs. Maxwell, a motherly-looking body, greeted her with such a sunshiny smile that the

child drew near to her instinctively.
"What a lovely room," she exclaimed,

looking round the homely little kitchen with a child's admiring eyes, "and what a beautiful cat! May I stroke her?"

Assent being given, Milly was scon seated in a large cushioned chair, a fat tabby cat on her lap, and whilst Sir Edward was occupied with his keeper she was making fast friends with the wife. "Uncle Edward." she said, when they

had taken their leave and were walking homewards, "Mrs. Maxwell has asked me to go to tea with her to-morrow. May I—all by myself?"

"Ask your nurse; I have no objection."
"I should love to live in her house,"
continued the child eagerly; "it is all amongst the trees, and I love trees. And this wood is so lovely. Why, I might get lost in it, might't I? I have never been here before. In my story-books, children always get lost in a wood. Uncle Edward, do you think the trees talk to one another? I always think they do. Look at them now. They are just shaking their heads together and whispering, aren't they? Whispering very gently together, because it is Sunday. Sometimes they get angry with one another and scream, but I like to hear them hum and sing best. Nurse says it's the wind that makes them do it. Don't you like to hear them? When I lie in bed I listen to them round the house, and I always want to sing with them. Nurse doesn't like it; she says it's the wind moaning: I think it's the trees singing to God, and I love them when they do it. Which do you think it is ?"

And so Milly chatted on, and Sir Edward listened and put in a word or two occasionally, and on the whole did not find his small niece bad company. He told her when they entered the house that she could go to church every Sun-day morning in future with him, and that sent Milly to the nursery with a radiant face, there to confide to the nurse that she had had a "lovely time," and was going to tea as often as she might with "Mrs. Maxwell in the wood."

(To be continued.)

Palestine is about one-fourth the size of New York