

THE PRODIGAL'S BROTHER.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRODIGAL.

THAT the prodigal son has always been a much more interesting man than his brother is not only conceded by Holy Writ, but tradition, not to speak of public opinion generally, has even gone so far as to assert that the "wretched" prodigal is upon the whole a rather attractive and lovable individual, while his brother is, as often as not, a nonentity and a muff to boot.

Had Stephen Ironside listened to any such comforting opinions they would hardly have sufficed to put him on good terms with himself. But then "Steve," as he was usually called, was the prodigal—the prodigal for whom there was no killing of kids, far less fatted calves—who had made the