

LULU'S TWO BIRTHDAYS.

BY M.

THE FIRST.

It was a bright summer's day when Lulu first opened her eyes upon this beautiful world. But little preparation had been made for her coming, for her parents were poor, and they already had four children. Still they welcomed her heartily, and loved her none the less that it was another to work for. Indeed honest John Martin seemed very proud of his daughter, and laughingly told neighbor White that he "would not exchange her for all his boys;" but White, who was the father of three sturdy urchins, rather doubted him, saying "Nay, nay, man, boys are better nor girls for a poor man."

"Mebbe, but I've got both, and will be able to tell the differ by and bye."

"No, John Martin," said a bright, cheery little woman who happened to be passing, "you will never know the differ till one wants ye more nor the other. Maybe the wild one will give you the heart scald, and then ye'll try and try to win him back, and love him all the more for the trouble he gives you; or maybe," and here the bright eyes seemed to dim a little, and even the cheerful voice became saddened, as laying her hand on Martin's arm she continued, "may be one will grow sick, and then ye'll know which ye love best. The minister says,"—here she seemed to go on in a dreamy sort of way as though quite forgetful of her listeners,—"the minister says God sends sickness 'in love,' but I say God sends it *with love*—love so strong that we never feel the trouble of it, for that's what kills, the trouble, and that only comes where there's no love."

She walked away after these words, and the two men stood looking after her. There had been no word of parting, as there had been no salutation on meeting; but these

things were but little esteemed in the class to which John Martin and Philip White belonged. At length John said,

"Ah, poor Ellen knows trouble," and then the two men separated—Philip for a game of romps with his youngsters, John to prepare as comfortable a tea as he knew how for his sick wife. We shall not follow either, but will rather climb the steep stair after Ellen Black, who spite of many an ache that would call forth a groan from another, makes her way with a loving "Well, dearie," into a tiny attic room. How bare everything looks, and how querulous sounds the voice from the further corner: "Why did you stay so long? I wanted yer."

"I wasn't long, dear; I only went to Murphy's for the tea and sugar, and oh, Neddie dear, John Martin's wife has another little daughter."

"Oh, I am so glad, won't you bring her to me, and, mother, I'll try not to be cross any more, but you know I never am with babies," and the poor bed-ridden Neddie turned a wistful glance upon his mother.

"Whisht, whisht honey, mother never thinks yer cross,"—and it was true; no matter what poor Ned Black might say, his mother never thought him cross; no matter what he asked for, she would try to obtain it for him; so now, unreasonable as the request would have been in any one else's eyes, in hers it was all right that he should ask to have a day-old baby brought to see him.

John Martin was a good-natured, easy sort of fellow, willing to oblige a neighbor if possible; but he had some compunctions about allowing his little daughter to go visiting so soon, even if it were but across the street. However, Mrs. Black gained the day as she usually did when it was anything concerning her son, and before long