

Lost, Somebody's Child.

[The following poem, by Mr. Thomas Mackellar, in the *Oriental Casket*, cannot but be appreciated wherever read, and its sentiment will deeply move the hearts of mothers, everywhere. As a gem of our literature it will be treasured by all readers, and will add greatly to its author's reputation.]

Somebody's child is lost to-night! I hear the bellman ring;
And the earth is frozen hard and white, and the wind has a
nipping sting.

I know my babes are long abed, a tender, motherly hand
Laying a blessing on every head, after their evening prayers
were said—

 Gow keep the slumbering band!

Yet somebody's child is lost, I say, this night so bitterly cold,
Some innocent lamb has gone astray, unwittingly from its
fold.

"Bellman! oh, bellman, whose child is lost?" And I grasp
my staff and cloak;

But the ringer over the world had cross'd before I tardily spoke.
The neighbors soon gather, and far and near we pry into ditch
and fen,

Till, hark! an answering shout I hear—The rover is found
again.

Ah! mother, fond mother, your heart is light, with Joe to
your bosom bound;

But many a child is lost to-night, who'll never, no, never be
found.

Ay! somebody's child is lost to-night, while the wind is high
and hoarse,

And the scudding ship, like a bird a-fright, flies shivering on
its course.

She suddenly drops in the yawning deep, as never to return;
She leaps a-top the watery steep, a-creaking from stem to stern.
Hold well, good bark, for a score of lives comprise thy cost-
liest freight;

Else loving mothers, and maids and wives, will ever be
desolate.

And well she holds, with a single sail outspread to guide
her way,

While all the furies of the gale, around her bulwarks play.
The sailor boy with a fearful heart, sighs for his distant home,
And the hasty tears from his eyelids start, and drop in the
briny foam.

In the months agone a father sigh'd, and a mother trembled
with fears;

But that father's law had he defied, and scorn'd that mother's
tears.

The pitiless blast now mocks his grief, and a huge and hun-
gry wave

Bears him away beyond relief, to the depths of an ocean grave.
The brand is blazing upon the hearth, the work for the day
is done,

And the father's heart runs over the earth in search of the
wandering son.

"Oh! where is our poor boy to-night—this night so bleak
and wild?"

The mother shuts her eyes to the light, and inly prays for
her child.

The busy needles all cease their flight, while their hearts
say, "Where is he?"

They dream not he has sunken from sight, down, down, down
in the sea.

The mother may pray, and she may weep, till she weep her
life away,

But never more will she find the sheep, that wilfully went
astray.

Somebody's child is lost to-night! Oh! sorrow is on the day
When a virgin's fame is marr'd with blight, that cannot be
cleansed away.

A humble family sit in the gloom, bemoaning their hopeless
shame:

Would that she were safe in the tomb, with honor upon her
name!

While deck'd in the garments of satin and sin, the fallen
daughter, I ween,

Is scorched with a fever of heart within, though reigning as
wanton-queen.

O, merciful Father! is this the child, Thy hand created so fair?

With eyes where simple innocence smiled, and coy and maid-
enly air?

Is this the promising morning-flower, the brightest its rivals
among?

Is this the bird that sang in the bower, with sweetest and
merriest tongue?

Ah! me! this child is more than lost; for her low-fallen form,
On sin's voluptuous surges tossed, will perish in passion's
storm.

And the mother may sigh and she may weep, till she weep
her life away,

But never more will she find the sheep, that wickedly went
astray.

Somebody's child is lost to-night—a widow's only son,
With brow as light, and eye as bright, as ever you look'd upon.
"And he will be my staff and stay"—Her words were inly
spoken—

"When I am old and my hair is gray, and my natural strength
is broken."

 Her motherly soul with pride o'er-ran

 As the lad grew up to the estate of man,

And she said, in her joy, that nobody's boy

 Could match her paragon by a span.

Time stole along, and her locks were gray, but her heart
had lost its pride,

For the man had wandered so far astray, 'twere better the
boy had died.

 A loathsome, vile, and gibbering thing,

 Stung by the poisonous still-worm's sting,

 Despised of man, contemning God,

 And gnashing at the avenging rod,

 Wherewith his passions scourged him sore,

 Till fainting he could feel no more—

Ah! somebody's child was lost in him

 When he took up

 The wassail cup,

And sipped perdition from its brim.

Then his manhood died, and the beautiful boy
Of his mother's pride, spilled in the sand the cup of her joy.

Instead she quaff'd a wormwood draught,

 A sorely-smitten woman;

Yet loved she still, through every ill,

 The child so scarcely human.

In weariness and watchings often, un murmuringly her grief
she bore,

Until, unwrapp'd in shroud or coffin, her son lay dead before
her door.

Her sorrows had come so thick and fast, they cluster'd round
her everywhere,

Till, reason utterly overcast, the darkness hid away her care.
Yet oftentimes she would ask for one

 Long gone from home, her beautiful son;

 And while she chided his long delay,

 She would longingly sigh, and whimper and pray—

That mother will sigh and she will weep, till she weep her
life away;

But never more will she find the sheep, that wickedly went
astray.

So many children are lost to-night, that I, even I, could weep
As I hear the breathings, soft and light, from the crib where
Tommy's asleep.

And I strain my vision to pierce the clouds, that hang over
years to come;

But utter darkness the future shrouds, and the tongue of the
seer is dumb.

So I lay them down in the bosom of grace, the children whom
God has given,

Trusting He'll bring them to see His face—the face of our
Lord in Heaven.

—
A good wife is the most faithful and constant companion
a man can possibly have by his side while performing the
journey of life. When a woman loves, she loves with a double
distilled devotedness. Her love is as deep as the ocean, as
strong as a hempen halter. She will not change except in a
very strong fit of jealousy, and even then her love lingers as
if loth to depart, like evening twilight at the windows of the
west.