

LITERARY.

What ails the World?

FATHER RYAN.

‘What ails the world?’—the Poet cried—  
‘And why does death walk everywhere?  
And why do tears fall anywhere?  
And skies have clouds, and souls have  
care?’  
And thus the Poet sang, and sighed.  
For he would fain have all things glad,  
And lives happy, all hearts bright—  
Not a day would end in night—  
Not a wrong would vex a right—  
And so he sang—and he was sad.

Thro’ his very grandest rhymes  
Moved a mournful monotone—  
Like a shadow eastward thrown  
From a sunset—like a moan  
Tangled in a Joy-bell’s chime.

‘What ails the world?’ he sang and  
asked—  
And asked and sang—but all in vain—  
No answer came to any strain—  
And no reply to his refrain—  
The mystery moved round him, masked.

‘What ails the world?’—an echo came—  
—‘A la the world!’ The minstrel bands  
With famous or forgotten hands,  
Lift up their eyes in all the lands,  
And chant alike and ask the same—

From him whose soul first soared in song  
A thousand thousand years away,  
To him who sang but yesterday,  
In dying or in deathless lay—  
‘What ails the world!’ comes from the  
throne.

They fain would sing the world to rest—  
And so they chant in countless keys  
As many as the waves of seas,  
And as the breathings of the breeze—  
Yet even when they sing their best—

When o’er the lightning world there  
floats  
Such melody as raptures men—  
When all look up entranced—and when  
The song of fame floats forth—e’en then  
A discord creepeth thro’ the notes.

Their sweetest harps have broken strings,  
Their grandest accord have their jars,  
Like shadows on the light of stars—  
And somehow, something ever mars  
The song the greatest minstrel sings.

And so each song is incomplete,  
And not a rhyme can ever round  
Into the chords of perfect sound,  
The tones of thought that e’er sur-  
round,  
The ways walked by the Poet’s feet.

‘What ails the world!’ he sings and  
sings—  
No answer cometh to his cry—  
He asks the earth and asks the sky,  
The echoes of his song pass by  
Unanswered—and the Poet dies.

“BOREEN.”

CHAPTER I.

(Continued.)

A little lady of about six years, a bal-  
of pink and white, with lustrous golden  
hair brushed down to her blue eyes, came  
running towards him.

‘How dare that dog touch my darling  
pet?’ she cried, her haughty, short up-  
per lip quivering with anger. ‘I’ll get  
papa to kill him, and—and—you too  
you horrible big man!’ Then, snatch-  
ing her mangled and tattered favorite  
from the barrister’s hand, and discover-  
ing the true condition of affairs, the  
poor little maid rent the air with the  
most heart-breaking sobs.

‘Don’t cry, my little lambkin,’ said  
Walter, stooping and tenderly caressing  
her. ‘I’ll get you another doll. Upon  
my honor I will. A nicer one, a larger  
one.’

‘Will she open and shut her eyes?’  
sobbed the little maid.

‘She will, she will.’  
‘And cry ‘ma’ and ‘pa’ when I pull a  
wire?’ sob, sob, sob.

‘As often as you like.’  
‘She’ll never, never, never be such an  
angel as Maudie,’ hugging the battered  
effigy to her frills and tucker, and bows  
and laces.

‘Wait till you see her, my little bird,’  
soothed Walter.  
‘Is she dressed?’  
‘Oh! certainly.’

‘Who dressed her? Worth dressed  
Maudie.’

‘We, Monsieur Worth dressed—Estelle,  
baptizing the new doll.’  
‘Is that her name?’

‘Yes.’  
‘Estelle what?’  
‘Estelle Lafarge,’ replied the barrister,  
highly amused at the child’s inquisitive-  
ness.

‘Is she French?’  
‘She’s French.’

‘I’m so glad, for do you know that  
Felix Ogilvie’s new doll is French and

she abused my poor dear Maudie because  
she was English. What’s your name?’  
By this time the little maid was smiling  
through her tears like a sunbeam in  
showers.

‘My name is Nugent—Walter Nugent.’  
‘I like you, Walter,’ she said, putting  
her plump little hand in his. ‘Come  
over to auntie; she’s reading German  
under that big tree.’

‘Some old fashioned frump, a weather  
beaten shesdragon like Mrs. Malaprop,’  
thought the barrister, as his little guide  
tugged him in the direction of the ubra-  
geous foliage of a gigantic elm.

‘Aunt Hester, here’s a gentleman has  
a dog, and the dog ran away with Maudie  
and ate her nose off, and tore her clothes  
most awfully, and he beat the dog, and  
is going to get me a new doll, and she’s  
French, and her name is Estelle Lafarge,  
and she opens and shuts her eyes, the  
dear!’ and says ‘pa’ and ‘ma’ as often as  
I like. His name is Walter. Walter  
this is Aunt Hester. And the little maid  
paused only for want of breath to enable  
her to go on.

Nugent bowed to a young lady attired  
in a plain tightly fitted, tight sleeved  
dress of a relieved black, her only adorn-  
ment being some bands of amber beads  
worn loosely around the neck. He had  
never seen hands so small and so white.  
She looked up from the book that lay  
upon her lap and indolently stared at  
him. The gaze was not haughtily, nor  
was it insolent, nor was it curious. It  
was cold, and indifferent, and lazily ques-  
tioning. Her eyes were of dark gray,  
heavy lidded, and fringed with long,  
black, sweeping lashes. They were soft  
eyes enough and capable of intense ex-  
pression. Her nose was delicately chis-  
elled, while the curves of her mouth were  
modelled on the most perfect lines. ‘She  
was a girl that no ordinary man could  
pass without paying an involuntary trib-  
ute of thought to. She waited for the  
barrister to speak.

‘I have a vagabond dog, he said smil-  
ingly, who ran away with this dear little  
girl’s dog and made sad havoc with it.  
This is the dog,’ kicking towards Boreen  
who stood panting at a short distance,  
well out of boot range. ‘I am bound to  
replace the doll, and it—’

‘There is no necessity,’ this coldly.  
‘Yes, but there is, auntie,’ chimed in  
the little maid. ‘If I don’t get Estelle  
Lafarge I shall die.’

‘You have too many dolls already,  
Ethel.’  
‘They are all English. Walter’s doll is  
French. She will teach me French and  
I’ll teach her English, auntie.’

‘I am greatly afraid,’ said Nugent,  
‘that this is a case that lies outside of  
your jurisdiction, madam, and it only re-  
mains for my young friend here to give  
me her name and address in order to  
have the grievous wrong done by my dog  
set to right.’

‘My name is—’ commenced the child.  
‘Ethel!’ her aunt drawing her close.

‘I will tell him my name—boo, boo,  
boo!’ And pink chubby knuckles dab-  
bled themselves in diamond drop-tears.

Walter Nugent stood his ground, un-  
certain as to what course he should adopt.  
It was quite evident to him that this  
coldly aristocratic girl had resolved upon  
having no intercourse whatever with a  
stranger. He chafed under the conven-  
tional ice, resenting it hotly. He felt  
injured, aggrieved. His dog had worried  
a costly doll prized beyond all price by  
its patrician owner. It was his duty as a  
gentleman to make good that doll by  
substituting another in its stead.

‘Had I been a cad,’ he thought, ‘I  
would have whistled to Boreen or pretend-  
ed not to own him and have sneaked off;  
but here I act as a gentleman towards a  
lady and this girl will have it that I be-  
long to the ‘canaille,’ or worse.’

Addressing himself to the sobbing  
child, he said: ‘Never mind little birdie  
you shall have that doll, I pledge you  
my word of honor.’ And without as much  
as casting a look at the coldly staring  
occupant of the seat, he gruffly lifted his  
hat and strode angrily away.

When he had walked some little dis-  
tance he espied a park ranger.

‘This man may be able to tell me who  
the child is,’ he thought, and he went  
over to him.

‘Do you see that lady in black seated  
under that elm-tree?’

‘The nuss as is a flirtin’ with a guards-  
man?’

‘No yonder.’

‘With the little girl?’

‘Yes,’

‘I see her, sir.’  
‘Do you know who she is?’  
‘I do, sir.’  
‘Who is she?’  
‘She’s Miss Branscombe, the banker’s  
daughter, the richest young lady in all  
England, sir.’

‘Who is the child?’  
‘Her little niece, the daughter of her  
sister the Marchioness of Pomfret. They  
comes in ‘ere every mornin’, Miss Brans-  
combe and the child, as regular as if they  
was common working peop e.’

‘Where does the child live?’  
‘Why, over there, of course,’ pointing  
to the palatial buildings a wing of which  
is dedicated to the Secretary of State for  
War.

‘What is the family name of the Mar-  
quis of Pomfret?’  
‘Branscombe, sir.’  
‘Thanks.’

‘I wonder wot the dickens is he up to?’  
soliloquized the ranger as he gazed at  
the barrister’s retreating figure. ‘He  
an’t a beggin’ letter himpostor. Oh!  
he’s some feller a-lookin’ for a place and  
wants to be up in the details of the fam-  
ily.’

As this wooden-headed official crossed  
the park Miss Branscombe beckoned to  
him.

‘I saw you speaking to a per—gentle-  
man just now.’  
‘Yes miss,’ lifting his hat.

‘Do you know who he is?’  
‘No, miss.’

‘Ah!’ and she took up her book.  
‘What was he saying to you, Parker,’  
eagerly demanded the little Lady Ethel.

‘He was a talking about you, my lady.’  
‘Did he tell you he was going to send  
me a doll, a real French one Parker?’  
‘No my lady, but he was a asking of  
where you lived, and I suppose—’

‘Did you tell him Parker? Oh, I hope  
you told him.’  
‘I told him, my lady.’

‘Oh! you are a nice man, Parker, and  
I’ll introduce you to Estelle Lafarge,  
and—’

‘Ethel that will do.’ And Miss Brans-  
combe rising, took the child by the hand  
and swept away.

If the barrister had been there to see  
he would have intense y have admired  
the easy grace of that girl, for a graceful  
carriage possessed a subtle attraction for  
him, as indeed it does for most men.

Walter Nugent crossed over to Pall Mall,  
having ascended the steps at Carlton  
House terrace, where he stumbled against  
Mr. Gladstone, and, passing St. James  
street, struck Piccadilly, and turned into  
the first toy stand in the Burlington Ar-  
cade.

‘What can I do for you, sir?’ demanded  
a pert, flippant saleswoman, impatiently  
tapping the nail of the forefinger of her  
right hand with a pencil.

‘I want to buy a doll.’  
‘What price?’  
‘A doll that squeaks—I mean that cries  
‘pa’ and ‘ma,’ and that sort of thing. It  
must open and shut its eyes, and be  
awfully well dressed.’

TO BE CONTINUED.

Wit and Humor.

She certainly had a pretty foot, but  
after all it didn’t make half as much  
impression on him as the old man’s.

If there is one thing calculated to  
blister a man’s immortal soul all over  
with profanity it is when, his shirt half  
way on, he discovers that the washer-  
woman, by a process known only by that  
species of female, has stuck the sleeves  
tightly together—and the head of the  
circus procession is just turning around  
the corner.

Why is a young lady forsaken by her  
lover like a deadly weapon?—Because  
she is a cut-lass.

The fellow who asked for a look of  
his girl’s hair was informed that ‘it  
costs money, hair does.’

A tailor, who was asked if the close  
of the year made him melancholy, said:  
‘Yes, until they are settled for.’

Madame Necker said the sword of  
her sex was their tongue, ‘which,’ she  
was very careful to add, ‘is never per-  
mitted to rust.’

Mrs. Smithers has a great idea of  
her husband’s military prowess. ‘For  
two years,’ she said, ‘he was a lieutenant  
in the horse marines, after which he  
was promoted to a captaincy in a regu-  
lar company of sap-heads and minors.’

We read very often of money sent  
to the Treasury Department as con-  
science money; but we never yet heard  
of a delinquent subscriber being con-  
science-stricken.

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terfeits they pretend to denounce.

These counterfeits are purchased by  
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price of my Pills and Ointment, and are  
sold to you as my genuine Medicines.  
I most earnestly appeal to that sense  
of justice which I feel sure I may ven-  
ture upon asking from all honorable  
persons, to assist me, and the Public, as  
far as may lie in their power, in de-  
nouncing this shameful Fraud.

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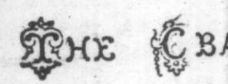
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