

"HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER."

A SKETCH FROM LIFE
By W. W.

I remember so well the very first time I saw Mike Lonnegan. It was outside a wayside Irish station, where he had drawn up a pair of ill-matched, bony hunters (driven during the summer in a wagonette) with a great flourish—indeed, in reckless style, for the bony hunters resented this unusual flippancy on Mike's part, and pranced on and off the pathway with indignant hoofs.

My friends whispered to me that Mike had intended to impress my English mind. He did; but not exactly in the way he intended, poor old fellow! It was his head. I never saw such a head! All the parts that ought to have stuck out went in, and vice versa. Then the marvellous manner in which he had balanced the shabby cocked hat on the contrary bumps was in itself a work of art; no, rather an "outward and visible sign" of an "inward and spiritual" originality worth cultivating.

They begged me not to laugh at Mike or his appearance, saying, with a sigh: "He is so sensitive, poor dear; and really I don't know what we should do without him." Ah, what indeed!

I had the pleasure of staying many months in this genial Irish house, and my respect—nay, awe—for Mike increased daily.

He was coachman, gardener, butler and valet—this, in itself, was to me sufficiently astonishing; but I had only been a week in the house when I discovered that Mike ruled it with an iron rod, gently wielded, maybe, and with a padded tip; nevertheless, from my host, who loved him, to Brian Boru (the setter, which had reason to remember Mike's strength of arm), no one seemed to question his right to rule them.

"Tell me," I asked, "why do you all bow down to Mike, and do you like it?"

"My dear," I was told, "Mike has been fifty years at Ballyknockshannon; he came to my father as a boy to help in the garden. Times are bad for us Irish landlords, and Mike has gradually drifted into the proud post of general factotum, because we have no money and because he loves us." My pretty friend's pretty eyes filled with tears, and she went on: "You don't know how good Mike is and what he does for us. He is nearly seventy years old, and it is still against his principles to sit down during the day, and only after supper will he rest; so, of course, we must put up with his dictatorial fits, and, worse still, of contrariety. Watch him at dinner to-night when I refer to the table decoration. It will amuse you."

I watched. I had already observed silent battles over the immense aggressive bowl of flowers that ornamented the centre of the dinner table at Ballyknockshannon. Enter the company, who take their seats. Enter Mike, with the air of carrying in boar's head and truffles, instead of vegetable soup; enter Brian Boru, stealthily, making for the soft mat under the table, with a wary eye on Mike withal.

"Dear me, Janet!" cries my wicked little friend; "I can't see a wink of you; this bowl obstructs the view. Mike, I've told you that we don't like that thing, but the little silver yases, why don't you use those?"

Mike fixed the bowl with a regretful but determined eye, and murmured, deprecatingly, "Sure 'tis a fine beautiful thing, yer ladyship's honor, and fitting it is to you and his honor; as to the other things—bad luck to 'em, they—"

"That will do, Mike," replies her ladyship's honor, "take away the bowl."

Mike looked at her with anguish, then clutching it with feverish fingers, muttering withal, he moved it with more force than was necessary to the side of the table; and then withdrew hurriedly, as if he had forgotten something.

"Now, you watch," whispered my delighted host, "he will never remove that bowl."

Mike came staggering in with the fish.

"The bowl off the table, Mike," whispered the wicked one, sternly. Mike expostulated in an undertone, "And is it not the fish sauce he was getting; hadn't her honor wish the fish without sauce, and an elegant English lady there," etc. And so on through dinner.

"Mike, the bowl," reproachfully.

"I will, I will," returns he, soothingly; "just wait until he brings in the foine figure of a duck," and so on, ad lib. Dear, funny old Mike! He stuck firmly to his point; the bowl had been used ever since he could remember, therefore it should be used now and for all time.

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,

was incomprehensible heresy to Mike. Three or four days after the "Battle of the Bowl" (as we slyed it) I was sitting under the beautiful trees of Ballyknockshannon reading.

It was a gorgeous, golden afternoon in September, and a harvest was being gathered in; the voices of the workmen and the gurgling of a

little stream that ran at the bottom of the garden floated to me across fields of waving gold. I had been reading "The Idylls of the King," and their beauty had sunk deep into my heart, making a sweet content.

I watched Mike mowing the lawn pitily.

"Poor Mike," thought I, "with no idylls to comfort him, no poetry to delight his fancy, no beautiful books to stimulate his intellect—a mere machine!" Oh, wise woman! "Mike," I called, as the old man's methodical mowing began to irritate what I imagined to be my poetic appreciation of nature, "Mike, can you read, and would you like me to lend you some books?"

Mike put down the mowing machine with great care and precision, and came over to me. I remember the sun set full on his quiet old face, with its deep set childish eyes, and on the lines of care so deeply marked on the prominent forehead.

"And what books may they be, yer ladyship?" (We are all "ladyships" to Mike, and he had begun, during the last few days, to think that some good might come out of England.) "His honor has given me a grand library, and the new ones they are," severely, "the devil, begging your pardon, my lady."

"What do you read, Mike?" I asked, patronizingly.

"Ah, well, my lady, I have all Mr. Carlyle's works, and the grand Scotch gentleman's—Sir Walter Scott; then her honor last Christmas gave me William Shakespeare in a foine figant cover of green and gold. And I have Tennyson and Moore and Robbie Burns and Longfellow and Wordsworth and Shelley and Cowper and—"

"Good gracious, Mike," I exclaimed, sitting up and putting my hat straight, "do you mean you have read all these—Carlyle, I mean, and Shakespeare?"

"I have, my lady," said Mike, simply. Then he went on to tell me that Colonel O'Callaghan, a neighbor, had a valuable library and had given Mike permission to use it whenever he wished.

I discovered that there was no standard work of any note that Mike had not read.

It was one of the mysteries of Ballyknockshannon as to when Mike did read, and how and when he had acquired the extraordinary all-around knowledge he undoubtedly possessed, for he was thoroughly employed during the day; in the evening we often heard him playing the violin, and out of his sixty-five odd years he had hardly spent one out of Ballyknockshannon.

It was borne in upon me gradually that Mike was in himself (1) a philosopher, (2) a literary critic, (3) a poet, (4) a musician, (5) a horticulturist, (6) an amateur jockey, (7) a local time table, (8) a calendar, (9) a Whitaker's Almanack, (10) an army list, (11) a complete peerage!

My brain reels when I think of Mike's practical knowledge, and whenever I wished for useful advice or an unbiased opinion of a horse, a book, a flower, I went to Mike.

On one of these occasions I remember I hurt the old man in his most sensitive part, namely, his pride. He had given up a considerable portion of his time to constructing a wooden stand for my bicycle (I forgot to say he was a carpenter in addition to his other accomplishments), and I made the egregious mistake of slipping a sovereign into his hand.

Up to that moment I must confess that the expression "filthy lucre" had seemed to me a mere fazon de parler, but I felt the force of it then. Mike gave me one look of indignant scorn, put the money down (with the air of dropping a black beetle), and turned on his heel and left mending there very much ashamed of myself, with eyes askance.

The mistress of Ballyknockshannon followed me to my room that evening. "My dear Janet," she began, mournfully, "what have you been saying to Mike? He is in a right royal rage; I know the mood, and I feel"—working me up to the awful climax—"I feel we shall have the Battle of the Bowl at dinner."

I confessed my sin, of course, and was implored never to offer Mike money again.

"Not when I go away?" I cried, incredulous.

"No, for Heaven's sake, don't. Why, do you know, I have known Mike make a point of hiding himself if he thinks any departing guest is going to 'tip' him."

I gasped, remembering sundry English country houses and their demands on my slender purse.

One morning, just before my departure, my hostess came into the study with a harassed expression on her face and an open letter in her hand.

"Oh, Janet," she explained, "such an awful thing—"

"What?" (With visions of boy-cotting and dining with pistols on the sideboard.)

"Mike's brother has come back."

"Never knew he had a brother," I answered, with great interest.

"Yes; this is the only one. He's a ne'er-do-well, and comes from America. He has no money, and is very idle and dishonest and fascinating, and—"

"How typical," I murmured dreamily.

"What of?"

"Oh, nothing, dear. Please tell me more about him."

It appeared that Mike's brother was nearly twenty years younger than he, and had distinguished himself by robbing the surrounding families when at home, and, when shipped off to America at great expense to his family, had proceeded to drain their feeble resources by begging letters, full of—Irish imagination!

"Mike's brother?" I cried, amazed.

"Yes, Mike is his guardian angel, and I believe"—with great mystery—"I believe that Mike sends him money still."

Mike came into the room just then, and our conversation stopped, but I noticed he looked very much disturbed the next few days, his simple eyes clouded, his ruddy face paler.

I left Ballyknockshannon a week afterward, and I always carry in my mind the remembrance of old Mike as he opened the gate for the dogcart that was to take me to the station—the November sun on his white head, a bunch of his best ruddy chrysanthemums held up for me to take as we sped along, his left clutching Brian Boru (whose coat matched the chrysanthemums), and a wistful, far away eagerness in his earnest eyes as they followed the cart down the leaf strewn road.

I wondered—did Mike look more careworn? Was my sight, misty with tears, deceiving me? Or was it the influence (always keenly felt by me) of the romantic melancholy of the half-neglected acres around me, with their fateful autumn stillness?

Life, however, with its incessant bustle and stir, claimed me, and in its feverish stress perhaps the memory of Ballyknockshannon and my old friend Mike faded a little until chance took me to Ireland again—to "dear, dirty Dublin" on this occasion.

It was during the late spring, and the season there was nearly over. I remember I had promised to do a commission for a friend in a remote and somewhat "slummy" part of the town, and as I was amusing myself with watching the "types" around me my eye suddenly fell on a little old man who came hurriedly out of a pawnbroker's shop and walked in front of me a few steps, then turned to cross the road. I caught his profile, then full face—it was Mike! The same "bumpy" head (and the hat at the same angle), the same childlike, deepset eyes, yet I thought he looked broken, older, shabbier.

"Mike," I cried, "you remember me?"

He dropped his eyes nervously and flushed with embarrassment.

"'Tis Miss Janet," he said, with an obvious effort at being pleased to see me. "Sure, an' how could I be forgettin' the lovely face of yer?"

"Oh! Mike, just the same," I laughed. "How are they all at Ballyknockshannon?"

"Yer ladyship," the old man's voice sank and his earnest eyes solicited mine, "'tis a grand favor you'll be doing me not to tell her honor that you met me here. I was just"—he hesitated—"buying an illegat present for me cousin Biddy, who is to marry young Larry Murphy at"—he began to cough, and I didn't like to hear him, also I distrusted his coming to Dublin to buy a present.

"Doesn't the mistress know you're in Dublin, Mike?" I asked, gravely.

"She does, yer ladyship, but this street"—he indicated it with a fine air of patrician scorn—"tis not of the quality, and her honor might be thinking I'd be after taking some sickness down," he stammered, painfully.

"Of course, Mike," I answered gently. "I shall not say anything."

In vain I tried to persuade the old man to let me give him some tea, he looked so ill and worn out. He protested with an air of great mystery that he had business, an appointment, etc.; so I let him go, as he was obviously eager to do so, and watched him down the street. How shabby his coat looked, and it was turned up around the neck as if he feared the wind; and Mike, who had faced all weather in all seasons, and this was a balmy spring afternoon. I went home wondering.

A few weeks later I received the following letter:

"Dear Janet—I have been intending to write to you for some weeks, but we have been in such trouble about poor old Mike. He has been ailing for some time, but last Monday he died from a severe attack of pneumonia—our faithful old friend. But oh, Janet, the sadness of it all! Do you know that for months the old man has been sending all his savings and wages to that insatiable brute of a brother of his; when he had nothing left he was obliged to pawn many of his clothes. We have found out since that he got rid of them one by one, and must have gone about with nothing next to him but his coat. Oh! my dear, he never told us or asked for help, poor, proud old fellow, and I feel I must ever reproach myself for not looking after him more; here he was, dying under our very roof. If ever a man deserved a martyr's crown, Mike did. I know you admired and loved him, so you will sympathize with us in our loss. Your affectionate,

"AMY."

—The Ladies' Field.

"MOCHA AND JAVA."

A Phrase Which Has Grown to be Only a Tradition.

The United States imports about 1,000,000,000 pounds of coffee yearly. Some eight-tenths of the supply comes from Brazil, about one-tenth from other South American countries, and one-tenth from Central America and Mexico.

The importations of Mocha coffee, which takes its name from the town of Mocha, at the southern extremity of Arabia, are only about 2,000,000 pounds annually, and of Java coffee only about 10,000,000 pounds.

These quantities are so small as to constitute only an infinitesimal proportion of the vast consumption of coffee in the United States. The average import value of South American coffee is about eight cents per pound, compared with 12 and 15 cents for coffee from Arabia and the East Indies.

Turkish and Egyptian traders go to Arabia before the harvest and buy the Mocha crop on the tree. They make sure that it is not picked before it is perfectly ripe, and they attend to its preparation themselves.

Such choice Mocha is marketed largely through Cairo or Alexandria, and the coffee that reaches Mocha and is exported from Aden is only what these merchants thought too poor to buy.

In view of the fact that the best Mocha never reaches this market at all, and the notorious fact that for years only an infinitesimal proportion of United States imports have been from Arabia and Java, the official statement sent out by the United States Government is doubtless true in declaring that "the terms Java and Mocha have now become mere characteristics of quality and blend." But it would be difficult to frame any description of the characteristics of quality and blend which these terms are supposed to represent.

As a matter of fact, therefore, the words Java and Mocha on a brand of Coffee may usually be accepted as equivalent to the words "finest" or "best," or similar adjectives. Only on coffee which is positively known to be the pure product from Japanese plantations or from Arabian plantations do these terms have any significance.

There are not a few disinterested coffee lovers who prefer some of the standard brands of Brazilian coffees (which constitute the great bulk consumed in this country) to genuine Java or Mocha. A. E. Gans, who has given much attention to this subject maintains that most of the coffee consumed in the United States is taken by the consumer in the belief that it is genuine Mocha or Java. If this statement is true, declares Good Housekeeping, such fraud and graft is of the largest dimensions.

The Color of Alpine Flowers.

The extraordinary purity and brightness of the colors of many Alpine flowers—and the same is true of Arctic ones—are well known. The vivid coloring often extends to the whole part of the plant above the ground, even the leaves and stems being covered with a deep red or purple which masks the chlorophyll green. Dr. Thorild Wulff who has published his researches with the Russo-Swedish Expedition in Spitzbergen, finds that the pigment—Anthocyanin—which causes this color is present in all Arctic plants, and that it is connected with a superfluity of sugar in their composition—in other words, that the leaves of Arctic plants are "sugar leaves." The purpose which the pigment serves is possibly that of helping the plant to pass the products which the leaves assimilate into its general system; or it may be that the red and violet colors which result from the accumulation of the pigment enable the plant to absorb more radiant energy from the sun's light, and thus help out its rather feeble vital processes. Another interesting feature of Arctic plants is that they are all of feeble transpiratory powers—that is to say that the amount of moisture exhaled from their leaves is very small. At high temperatures the transpiration rate falls. The Arctic plants, in fact, dare not make use of the conditions which favor evaporation, because their roots are unable to absorb enough water to cover the loss which would result.

The Shakeless Grip.

The English high handshake which raged to such an extent in this city at one time that some of its devotees are said to have practiced it on step-ladders has now entirely disappeared, and, according to an authority on such subjects, is to be replaced by another form of salutation which consists in thrusting the hand straight out, giving one quick grip without any up and down motion, and then instantly withdrawing it. Whether people who like this no better than they like the high shake will be forced to adopt it for a while, as was the case with the other fad, will depend on the violence and extent of the new epidemic. The origin of this latest style, by the way, is supposed to be a fear of germs, the idea being that since handshaking cannot be dispensed with altogether, it should be as brief a performance as possible.—Philadelphia Record.

Hammerless Guns.

The new hammerless guns are more dangerous than the old fashioned ones. The slightest pressure of a twig on the safety snap puts the companions of the owner of a hammerless gun in danger of receiving a charge of leaden pellets. It will be interesting at the end of the season to compare the number of injuries by firearms this year and last.—Boston Record.

OF INTEREST TO WOMEN

New York City.—Elaboration appears to be the one all pressing demand for the season and almost everything except the tailored suit of the severest, most useful sort is braided trimmed. Here is a most charming



little Eton that gives all the dresny effect demanded by fashion, while in reality it is absolutely simple in construction and can very easily be made. Braid of varying widths is combined with velvet to give a really

loops of braid. The sleeves are in the fashionable three-quarter length with bands at the lower edges.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is three and one-quarter yards twenty-seven, one and three-quarter yards forty-four or one and one-half yards fifty-two inches wide with five-eighth yard of velvet for the collar and wide bands, six yards of medium width, tea yards of narrow braid with soutache, according to design used, with one yard of lace.

Feather Breast For Turbans.

The soft feather breasts so much used for natty turbans are beautifully matched in wings.

Fancy Pleated Skirt.

There seems literally to be no limit to the possibilities of the pleated skirt. It is constantly appearing in some new guise or other and is seemingly always most attractive in the latest. This one is perfectly smooth over the hips, giving something of a yoke effect at the same time that the lines are long, graceful and becoming. In the illustration it is made of nut brown broadcloth trimmed with bias bands of velvet and is stitched with balding silk, but trimming can be braid or anything that may be liked or the skirt can be finished with a stitched hem only. Again it gives a choice of round or walking length, so that it becomes adapted both to the street and to indoor wear while it is suitable for the thinner materials, such as silk and veiling



handsome and altogether elaborate effect, but the foundation is just the plain little Eton shown in the small view. In this instance the material is hunter's green broadcloth and the collar and the wider bands are made of velvet, the collar being overlaid with lace while the trimming consists of flat braid in two widths and of soutache braid applied over a stamped design. All suitings are appropriate, however, and the model will be found especially well adapted to velvet and velveteen as well as to broadcloth, while it can be made far simpler, by being trimmed on different lines. For example, if the horizontal strappings were omitted altogether the garment would still be an attractive one or the narrow braids in fronts and back could be dispensed with, still leaving a dressy garment.

The Eton is made with the back, the side-backs, fronts and side-fronts. Both the side-fronts and side-backs are cut to form extensions at the lower edges and these extensions are lapped over onto the fronts and backs, so providing a foundation for the braiding, which gives the effect of a band. The back is slightly longer than the side-backs and is attached to the belt, over which it blouses. The flat collar finishes the neck and the closing is made with buttons and

quite as well as cloth and other suitings.

The skirt is made in nine gores that are cut with extensions below the plain yoke portion, which provides fulness and flare, while at the back are the inverted pleats that are so universally becoming.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is eleven and



one-half yards twenty-seven, six and one-quarter yards forty-four or fifty-two inches wide, with two yards of bias velvet to trim as illustrated.

Footwear For All Occasions.

As every one knows the dressing of the foot and leg is an all important part of any child's costume.

Tan and black are the standard colors in stockings as in shoes, but where economy is not closely considered there are many variations from these standards.

Stockings that match the frock and shoes that harmonize are the desirable thing from a fashion standpoint.

Low shoes and slippers in ooze

leather with embroidered motifs, as well as shoes of kidskin and satin in self colorings, are worn for dancing classes and similar juvenile festivities.

Bodice of Ruffles.

The bodice composed entirely of narrow ruffles of lace, laid one above the other on a well-fitted lining, is a charmingly fluffy evening waist. Wide bands of Cluny pass from shoulders to waist, crossing at the bust.