

devotion to the classics. As the young man regarded it an instant in passing, he felt with a curious certainty that here might be a new link in the chain.

Look as he would, however, there was nothing further to be gleaned; and, the German beginning to show signs of impatience, Phileas took his leave. He felt a real reluctance to see the door locked upon him and to pass out through the unobtrusive gate. It seemed to him as if he were turning his back on a place that had already become dear and familiar.

Arriving at the hotel, he had to while away as best he might the interval between the early midday meal and the departure of the afternoon train. At nightfall he was thundering once more through the tunnel, and beholding the light of New York twinkling out of the gloom, with the vast metropolis itself lying comparatively silent in the Sabbath restfulness.

(To be continued.)

## THE SNUFF BOX

One morning after early Mass I passed through the sacristy of the church to the side lawn, and there I saw Don, Father Dalton's dog, digging and barking with delight. I called 'Don! Don!' but he was too occupied to notice me, so I went over toward him and discovered that he had made quite a hole in the ground under the steps. Something bright and shiny attracted my attention. Stooping, I picked up an old silver snuff box. Brushing the earth from it, I wiped it off with my handkerchief and found engraved on one side the name 'Brother John.'

The box seemed to possess a history, and upon careful examination I found that it had the date '1875' still discernible upon the reverse side. Knowing that Father Dalton was not at the rectory, I carried the box with me, until some future time when I could give it to him.

Upon arriving at my grandmother's house, where I had been spending my vacation, I asked her if she could recall the names of the former sacristans of St. Patrick's, and if she remembered one named 'Brother John.'

'Yes, indeed, I do remember Brother John,' she said. 'But why do you ask?'

'Because, grandma, I'm so interested and excited.' Then I related to her my discovery of the box in the yard of the rectory.

When I placed it in her hands she said, 'Fetch me my glasses, dear.' As I handed them to her, her eyes filled with tears as she turned the little box over and read the name and date.

Bringing a stool to grandmother's chair, I sat upon it and waited, knowing that soon I should hear a story—and grandma's stories were always so real!

'Let me see,' grandmother began: 'it must be forty years ago since Brother John was sacristan of St. Patrick's. Every one knew and loved the kind old man for his genial, happy smile, and his earnest "God bless you" sent old and young rejoicing on their way. The altar boys were his special delight: if one of them got into trouble it was Brother John who would get him out of the scrape. "Sure, they're only boys bubbling over with fun and they don't mean a bit of harm," I heard him say one morning to a young priest who was unedified at the way the boys rushed to see who should be the first to extinguish the lights on the altar. Brother John had come to this country from Ireland when quite a young boy. Until the age of twenty he worked on his uncle's farm; then he sought and obtained admission to an Augustinian monastery as a lay Brother.

'No task was too difficult to be undertaken by this ever-willing Brother, who never seemed to tire, and so faithfully did he perform every duty that the news of his removal to our parish was received with deep regret by those who knew him about the monastery.

'Brother John was a saintly man whose wants were few. Early in the morning or late at night you would

find him in the quiet church, before our Blessed Lady's altar, saying his beads. There was just one failing Brother John had, and that was his fondness for snuff; the parishioners, particularly old men, soon found this out.' Some of them would press a dollar or two into his hands on their way out from Mass and say: 'For snuff, Brother John, and pray for me.' 'I will, God bless you, I will,' would be his unfailing reply.

'I remember how proud he was when one Christmas he received this little silver box. The altar boys had been saving their pennies for months, and they could hardly wait for the day to arrive. Your father, Betty,' said grandmother, 'was one of these boys, the most mischievous one; that is why I recall so well this little box, for I helped him and little Billy Flynn (now Dr. Flynn) to select the gift.'

'But, grandma,' I said, 'how do you account for its having been buried so deep in the ground, unless some one actually placed it there?'

'Indeed, Betty, I've often and often wondered what became of the box, but now I see it all quite plainly,' said grandmother, as she wiped the tears from her eyes. Mine, too, were brimming over, for the very mention of my father's name brought the tears to my eyes. 'It was in the spring following the winter in which your father began practicing,' continued grandmother, 'that an epidemic of typhoid fever broke out in the town. Your father, with all the physicians and nurses obtainable, worked night and day to relieve the distress; the priests, too, were untiring in their efforts and devotion to their flock; still, many of the people died for want of proper attention.

'It was during this frightful time that Brother John's snuff box disappeared: no one knew when or how, but your father half-guessed the truth, for he came to me one day and said: "Mother, I think I know what has become of dear old Brother John's snuff box. He has been supplying the O'Brien family with food ever since the father sickened and died of the fever. Now that the mother is ill I believe he has promised to do without snuff and has sold his little box, for as I came out of the O'Brien house this morning I met Brother John, looking very tired and worn, going in with a basket of food. I stopped for a minute to have a chat with him. "Good morning, Brother; have a pinch of snuff?" I said as I pulled out my box. "No, thank you, Dr. William, not this morning." I was insistent, but he kept to his original answer, "No, not this time: I've given it up for a while: the poor need all the luxuries now," and changing the subject, he said: "How's the mother in there this morning, Doctor? Sure, my heart aches for all those little children, and I hope the good Lord will spare her to them." "God bless you, Brother John," I said to him as I passed on through the gate, and may He grant your wish!"'

'Several weeks after this meeting your father was called hurriedly to the rectory. Arriving there he found that Brother John had had a stroke, brought on by over-exertion and anxiety. He spoke incoherently at times, and once, opening his eyes as your father bent over him, he said, "Dr. William—my little altar boy—I couldn't part—with the box. It was such a temptation—and every penny counted—so I buried it—under—under——" and then the dear old man lost consciousness. He rallied again, but never alluded to the snuff box.

'A few weeks later, fortified by all the sacraments of our holy faith, Brother John passed away to his eternal reward, and there was genuine sorrow amongst old and young at St. Patrick's, as was attested on the day of his funeral, when the whole town turned out to honor his remains, for there was not a family in the town which had not at some time or other come in contact with his unfailing charity and simple kindness. And to think, dear,' grandma concluded, 'to think that after all these years the daughter of one of his loved altar boys should come upon the secret hiding place of the snuff box.'

'Oh, grandma,' I said, when I could control my voice, 'I should love to keep this box. I shall ask Father Dalton if I may, and I shall prize it as one of my dearest treasures for the sake of Brother John and