

thought to your disappointment as he merrily drives his drill; but who can doubt that he often and often chuckles to himself as he reflects how neatly he has got the drop on the small boy who had made a note of your plum trees, not necessarily for publication, but for future reference some night when the moon is off in bed.

Sometimes the curculio finds he has contracted for more holes than he can conveniently make; he thereupon enlists the services of a limited number of able-bodied nosquitoes, whom he hires without consulting an employment bureau, and thereby saves money and mosquitoes.

After the curculio has made a complete job of your plum trees he goes into seclusion for the remainder of the year, living on the plum preserves he has stowed carefully away, and the thoughts of coming again next season sharp on time and with more of his relations and friends. A notable feature of the curculio's operations is that he always leaves the plum behind—the hole plum, I might add, if the slight departure from serious writing be permissible. But you do not use the plum—you have too much reverence for your departed guest to disturb the souvenir of his visit. You are sorry his trunk was not big enough to take the plum away, for all the good it is to you. You nevertheless console yourself with the reflection that if the curculio has got the substance of the plum, you have got the holes; but at the same time there are moments when you wish that the curculio was not such a hole-souled fellow—towards you.

I am sure you would not feel offended if occasionally he took an exclusive fancy to some other man's orchard, or would confine himself when he calls on you, to your succulent Canadian shistles or your over-ripe chubarb or your highly-prized catnip, or if he would adopt any other course whereby you could have a chance to know just what kind of plums you had on your place.

Persons who have objected to cultivating plums for the benefit of the curculio have tried to effect his arrest by spreading a clean white sheet under the tree and shaking him down on it. But the curculio, while appreciating this disposition to prevent as far as possible his dirtying his clothes, respectfully but determinedly resists, and, with arms and legs wound around the tree trunk, laughs to scorn all efforts to dislodge him.

A steel trap and patience, and a shot gun and eternal vigilance, have both been suggested as a possible means of apprising the curculio that he has somewhat worn out his welcome. But a friend of mine has an entirely new idea that seems to appeal strongly to one's sympathies. His plan is to get up some very dark night, cautiously approach the plum tree, silently cut it down close to the roots, take it fourteen miles into the back country, dig a large hole in the middle of a big field and bury it completely out of sight.

This would be pretty rough on the curculio; but, after all, a man really cannot always be studying the convenience of the curculio.

A debtor, who had obtained a *cessio bonorum* at a prodigious expense from the opposition to the measure on the part of his creditors, was asked, when the final sentence was given in his favor, if he had gained his cause. "Yes," said the debtor, "I have gained the *cessio*, but the lawyers got the *bonorum*."

"Oh, Doctor, I'm out again; I'm so much obliged to you," said a convalescent, warmly shaking the doctor's hand. "Why, I didn't even know you'd been ill, and have never been to see you," said the doctor. "That's it, that's what I'm thanking you for," replied the gentleman.



The other day lynx-eyed detectives discovered a presumed dynamiter on board a ship which had just reached Queenstown. They of course felt in duty bound to arrest some passenger on this vessel, because the associated press correspondent advised them that he really must have a good dynamite item for that day's budget, if he had himself to go around carrying an American valise and chewing tobacco. Happily on board the boat was a man named Patrick, and the lynx-eyed detectives felt themselves perfectly justified in laying hold of him, on the grounds that if he was not a dynamiter he ought to be one. This man had some sort of contrivance among his effects which contained a mysterious liquid. The detectives could not pronounce as to its nature—although I am morally certain they knew it was not whiskey—but the stuff, it eventually transpired, was only oil, and so Patrick was liberated. There are various distinguished journalists across the border, I might remark, *en passant*, who will say, in referring to him, that Patrick got off oil tight; but I would sooner be arrested as a dynamiter myself than be in their mental condition. A parallel case to this was that of Gentle Jimuel who, when a *Globe* envoy to Ireland, was thrown into the Tower of London—eh, Briggs!—on suspicion of being a pirate, or some such erratic person. I do not care to revive the painful rumor current at the time that Jimuel owed his escape with his head to the fact that he was only a *Globe* reporter and not the chief editor. But the incident suggests the reflection that maybe the British authorities are looking for the editor to this very day, unaware that he has left the *Globe*, reformed, and accepted an office.

It is not surprising to learn that O'Brien of *United Ireland* will refuse to pay the fine imposed on him for contempt of Court. Mr. O'Brien takes rank with those members of the Salvation Army who won't pay fines imposed on them for disorderly conduct,—or maybe it is these Salvationists that take rank with Mr. O'Brien, for it seems to me there ought to be some precedence on an important occasion of this kind. There is certainly no fun, at all events, in going to gaol when you have the money wherewith to settle up the trouble; but there are people who do it as a matter of principle. They believe it eminently desirable, if not absolutely necessary, to suffer for the Cause; and the satisfaction they experience in being clapped into a prison is simply indescribable. If all such self-constituted martyrs would only reflect that a man who has to go to gaol as a victim of what he believes to be an unjust proceeding, is a far different object in the eyes of the public compared with a man who actually *pines* to be incarcerated and won't accept an alternative which he might, probably it would dawn on them that they were making a mistake and that there was more advantage, to say nothing of better board and lodging, in preserving their liberty and going on with the performance right straight, if they mean to go on with it any more at all.

If any one doubts that the Fenians have lofty aims let him learn of ex-head centre Stephens' great scheme. He proposes sending a band of desperados up in balloons, from which they will drop explosives on London and other English cities and annihilate them. I wish the genial Steve would go on with his prospect and employ me to furnish the balloons and refreshments. I would be satisfied with making the balloons up to the standard, but I am bound to confess that my aim would be to make the refreshments beyond the standard—that is to say, the liquid refreshments. With a good balloon and no short allowance of overproof I think the venturesome *voyagers* might be trusted out of sight with the absolute certainty they would get on well—or rather well on—and "get the drop on" England in the most literal acceptance of the term. But it would almost be a pity to spoil a good balloon, when a few feet of well-regulated hemp would do the business instead.

Nothing further has been heard about the international embroglio which threatened to loom up as a result of the United States Minister in London having turned over the *Mail's* special cable grammer to a secretary instead of granting him a personal interview. The *Mail* people have kindly overlooked the matter this time, but I warn Mr. Lowell not to repeat the indignity. I do not want to see the Demon of War loosed on this fair continent. The most politic way to get rid of the cable grammer, if he is really so much of a nuisance, would be to stuff him fearfully some day and then when the paper came out deny the whole thing and say the correspondent must have been intoxicated. Or else the servants might have specific instructions to set the dog on him regularly until he was effectually scared off. But let there be no open and unmistakable hostility shown the young man.

A Barrie editor thus pleads with anonymous contributors:—"Many really good and sensible articles of necessity are thrown into the waste basket because the name of the writer is not given." But when the "good and sensible article of necessity" takes the shape of a mammoth egg, or assumes the form of a basket of prize turnips, or resolves itself into a year's cash subscription for the paper, the yawning waste basket yawns in vain, name or no name.

The strawberry season being at its height it has occurred to a poet to breathe softly the sweet sentiment that the berries are "nature's blushes materialized." This is all very æsthetic; but what are the cold facts? The strawberry blushes at the prospect of being a party to a proceeding whereby a man takes home a quart basket of the fruit under the impression that he has got a quart. Unlike the dealer in it, the strawberry has a soul.

A local paper insists that "The City Commissioner should see that all the sidewalks on the Island are put in proper condition before a drowning accident occurs." Well taken! Nothing hurts the feelings of a drowned man's friends so much as to reflect that the fatality occurred before the sidewalks were nice and ready to have people walk out on them and see him drown.

Blaine believes in the annexation of Canada. To adopt the logic of Blaine's own countrymen and presidents, "people who believe in that sort of thing, why, that's just the sort of thing these people believe in." But if Mr. Blaine is really sincere in his wish to annex Canada there is nothing for it but to refer him to Goldwin Smith, the agent, for terms, etc.