

life. In labour for love of it I count it worthy to rank among the toils of the bush where I began to know what a clearing was and a garden in the clearing. But it wasn't just labour. It was a great big nature-born sentiment. And any man who can garden without sentiment is a fine subject for a museum.

A first garden, however, is a good deal like a first baby—you make a heap of discoveries about garden-hood, and it's nobody else's business but your own. For years I had been glued to sidewalks and restaurants. Now I could scarcely wait till four o'clock to board a trolley, and I begrudged the time it took to slide into my old togs, so that with hose squirting over my shirt front, sand in my boots and sweat from top to toe, I could the better enjoy my bachelor supper of bread and butter, bananas and milk all got from the corner grocery away down the new street and eaten from a bench in the bare kitchen.

Sometimes I think it was the vireos at sundown that prompted most of my passionate sentiments about this garden. It was in the thick of a swamp elm bush that I first heard vireos. Here they were right back of my garden, resting, foraging, playing their discordant piccolos among yellow-hammers, goldfinches, woodpeckers, crows, blackbirds, Baltimore orioles, song sparrows, jenny wrens—why that canyon behind my garden was nothing but a vast and glorified bird cage. Less than half of these birds ever came up to the garden. The rest stayed below. The garden was one level; the bird-nests another; and far below that again were the cat-tail flags and the pussy-willows where the little brook meandered somewhere and lost itself in a marsh.

Of all these rare delights I fancied I was the discoverer. Nobody else I imagined could take such joy out of that canyon. To my great surprise Mr. Lemuel Goodbosh, my neighbour, seemed to concur absolutely in all my enthusiasm. A matter of fact, I think he copied it all from me. I suppose, although he knew the names of the flowers and half of the birds in the canyon, he had no eye for the dizzy design of a cloud-swatting landscape such as formed the back yard to my garden.

Goodbosh's grand idea was very practical. His aim was to make me a partner in an enterprise that should make us both independent of working. Briefly, he wanted me to buy the corner lot, add it to his next three or four, and get capital to run up a grand apartment house.

Aviation Apartments, Canyon Club, was to be the full name and address of this institution. It was the birds as he said that gave him the notion of Aviation. The Canyon Club, of course, would be a bigger affair involving all the people who either bought or rented places from him along the crescent of the canyon. We should then have those who preferred individual gardens overlooking the gorge and those who preferred apartments with a superb landscape thrown in. He proposed to make easy terms for the former. The latter we would "soak," he said, because they would be the gentry of the Club. With their united influence we could get the city parks department to look after the ravine, keep out poachers, drain the marsh and get the brook running again and see that the birds were encouraged.

Goodbosh, however, had one grievance in the way of his great scheme.

"These lots o' mine, Mr. Jones," he said, "have all got me short-changed on the depth. Twenty feet to the rear they all drop down into the gorge. You can't garden on the incline. It'll cost me a penny to level 'em up."

This was quite obvious.

That first summer I put in annuals, but no vegetables; also a few perennials, such as hydrangeas, peonies, golden-glow and hollyhocks, with a few rose bushes. I felt rather uncertain about this. If Goodbosh and I should organize the Canyon Club and build the Aviation Apartments there was no use spending money and labour on perennials. I didn't mention this to Goodbosh, because I liked that garden of mine too well to give it up easily, even for the chance of getting a fat income from Aviation Apartments.

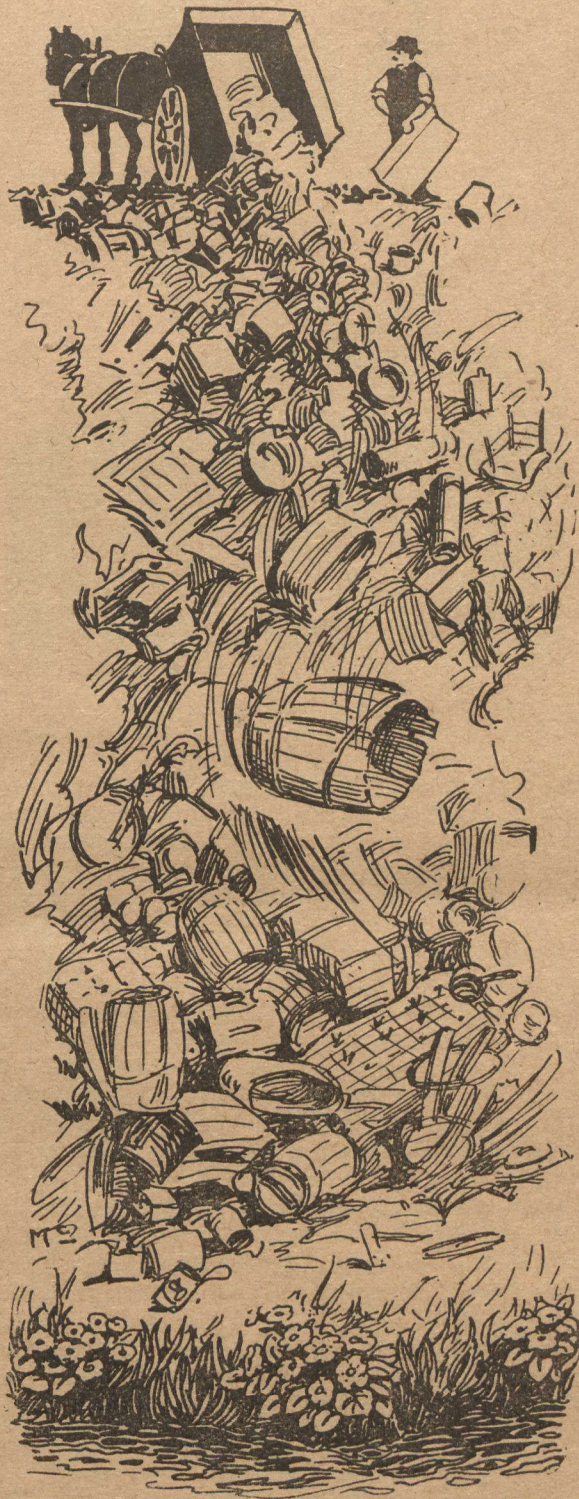
Every time I got down in the canyon digging up shrubs for my garden I thought of Bryant's "Thanatopsis," "To him who in the love of nature holds communion with her visible forms she speaks a various language."

But this Aviation Apartments scheme of Goodbosh's seemed to dull the edge of poetry. Sometimes I was quite miserable. I wished this serpentine Good-

bosh had left me alone. I began to hate the whole idea of the Canyon Club. To my personal knowledge Goodbosh made six sales of lots that summer to people whom he had trailed in to admire my garden.

"See what one man kin do," he would say over and over. "Jine the Canyon Club. Be one o' the crowd that preserves country life in the city."

For all his purchasers Goodbosh agreed to "run 'em up" houses to suit their individual tastes. He had six different plans. Building 'en bloc" he could do it



cheaper. Such was his insinuating enthusiasm that he prevailed upon me to become President of the Canyon Club. I demurred. It was no use. "Nothing to do with the Aviation scheme, Mr. Jones," he assured me. "No, if you want to hang on to this corner, go ahead. We'll have the Canyon Club anyhow. It's a grand idea."

I thanked him for the honour. His concession made me more tolerant towards the Aviation Apartment idea. After all, Goodbosh was not a mere schemer. He was an enthusiast. So was I. Our enthusiasms differed; that was all. When I announced to Goodbosh that I would be reluctantly away for a three-weeks holiday from my garden, he said:

"That's too dang bad. Say, you'll miss that garden. But I'll look after it. Sure pop!"

I thanked him. Goodbosh evidently loved my garden. We were fellow-partners in Nature & Co. In fact, while I was away I talked about Goodbosh and his grand scheme. I got back after dusk in August. I went out at once to smell the freshly watered garden. Yes, there was the hose still gurgling. Goodbosh had left it in a hurry not waiting to coil it up, knowing from my post-card that I would

be back that evening. It was kind of him to throw on the water. So kind of him that I decided to buy him a box of Havana cigars the very next day.

Never had I smelled nicotinas and stocks and all those things so powerfully. The place was reeking with wet. The day had been nearly 100 in the shade. In the dusk I could see the full blooms of everything but dahlias, which were just budding. A last exultant vireo was playing piccolo down in the grand canyon. I went up and down the walks wishing it were dawn that I might see the glory of my garden which for three weeks I had not ceased to think about, bragging to my camp mates that none of the canoe haunts we were in that summer were wilder to look at than the gorge behind my garden seen from the bed of the brook. Leaning on the back fence I gazed into the depths of the canyon under the shadow of the pines and drew in long gulps of air.

But the breath of the canyon was more powerful than that of the garden. There was a slight east wind. Never a good lady had smelled the breath of her habitually abstemious husband so jealously as I the breath of that ravine—which had suddenly acquired a breath.

"Must be the pines," I murmured. "Or the alder-bush blows—or the filbert trees? No. No, it's—oh, heavens what is it?"

I ran down the gorge to reconnoitre. I felt like calling on Goodbosh to ask if he noticed anything. Or was my nose deceiving me? I followed the direction of the smell. It got worse. It became a real stentorian stink. I held my nose. I gagged. I used my handkerchief. Great rambunking billows of smell came rolling down the bank from just beyond Goodbosh's house. What was it? I groped along, realizing now that the breath of my garden had been fooling me. Not all the perfume of nicotinas could have overcome this primeval odor, this stercoraceous stench, this nose-insulting nausea of compounded and villainous smells that with the overwhelming character of the sewer, the slaughter-house and the garbage heap seemed to haunt the vapors of that glorified canyon of Goodbosh's and mine.

What could it be?

Drawn by the smell I paused at the bottom of something. What that something was is shown in the picture. In my three-weeks absence Mr. Lemuel Goodbosh had been proving himself a genius. From the top of that canyon to the bottom thereof, clean down to the yarrees and the buttercups and across at least four of his lots there was a pyre of dump. Such a dump as I had never beheld. The dump contained everything in the offal of civilization that sewers do not carry down. Barrels, boxes, cardboard packing-cases, defunct tin cans, old mattresses, broken bricks, heaps of weeds—and common garbage.

I guess it was the common garbage that I smelled. There were tons of it. In my absence Goodbosh had got leave from the city hall to have all the garbage caravans dump on the rear of his lots. He was filling up the slope of twenty feet that short-changed him on the depth. He was putting a frill on that canyon such as none but a genius of improvement could have devised. The canyon—

Oh, the canyon! Oh, my garden! To-morrow the birds would sing as usual. Birds have no noses. I stood and recited Bryant's Thanatopsis. No other language would have expressed my feelings.

As I stood there, a figure came out on top of the dump. I knew it was Goodbosh, the ghost.

"Good evening!" I called.

"Same to you and many of 'em!" he replied. "How do you like my stunt?"

"It's—rotten!" I gasped.

"Oh, but wait till she's done. It'll take all this summer and half o' next to fill up these rear ends. But when she's done the Canyon Club 'll be right on deck."

"How do you stand the smell?" I asked.

"I'll tell you," he shouted, "put a chunk of assafoetida in your vest pocket. You'll never notice it."

I went back to the cottage. No arguments of mine could prevail upon the City Hall to stop the garbage-dump nuisance. I resigned the Presidency of the Canyon Club. That fall I moved. I learned afterwards that Mr. Lemuel Goodbosh had bought my corner—by proxy—at a heavy reduction, because of the prevalent smells in that neighbourhood. By this time I daresay he has the Aviation Apartments on the way.