

"But where *are* they?" asked our American incredulously, his vision cut off by the ten-foot wall.

At this we invited him upstairs to a lofty window at the back of the house, leaning from which he had a totally new view of the town whose arid gray streets he had traversed so many times. Back of every one of these gray-white, monotonously aligned plastered houses stretched a garden, often a very large one, always a jewel, gleaming, burnished, and ordered, with high old trees near the house, and flowers and vines; and, back of this pleasure spot, a great fertile stretch of well-kept vegetables and fruit. He stared long, our American, reconstructing his ideas with racial rapidity. On withdrawing his head his first comment was, usually:

"But for the Lord's sake, how ever do they get the money to pay for building all those miles of huge stone walls? It must cost every family a fortune."

Upon learning that those walls had stood exactly there in those very lines for hundreds of years, requiring only to be periodically kept in repair, he sank into another momentary reconstructive meditation.

Then came the inevitable American challenge, the brave new note from the New World which I always rejoiced to hear:

"But what's the *point* of shutting yourself up that way from your neighbors and making such a secret of your lovely garden that nobody gets any good of it but yourself? Why not open up and let everybody who goes