

**THE MAN WHO
WANTED A
BUNGALOW**

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The Man Who Wanted a Bungalow by Lionel Josaphare

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LIONEL JOSAPHARE

**THE MAN WHO
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BUNGALOW**

THE MAN WHO WANTED A BUNGALOW

*Being the Veracious Account of an Author Who
Went Back to Nature to Get Inspiration
and Reduce Expenses*

By

LIONEL JOSAPHARE

Author of "A Tale of a Town," "The Sovereign in the Street,"
"The Lion at the Well," "Turquoise and Iron," Etc.

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DEDICATION

To John D. Rockefeller:

Perhaps you will be surprised to hear from me at this late date, seeing that that which might have been never was, is not, and it might be that wasn't.

You will doubtless remember how when, as boys, we did not go fishing in the same rustic pool, nor sit side by side sharing the contents of our simple lunch baskets. Fond memories of later years which we did not enjoy together on the golf links nor at your summer home, still linger with me, as, I trust, with you.

I do not dedicate this book to you because you are a rich man. I would not stoop to such an affectation. It is because you are the very richest that I thought of you immediately.

Perhaps at a future time we may renew the friendship that was unreal; for unreality is the ideal.

Therefore in token of the many things we have in common, you in the reality and I in the ideal, our many industries, charities and fortunes, yours from oil-wells and mine from ink-wells, permit me to inscribe myself, with a deep regard for your sources of income,

Your well wisher,

L. J.

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The Man Who Wanted a Bungalow

BUYING A STUDIO FARM

Almost every man who knows the meaning of "sky-blue" or likes to look at a squirrel, has had longings for the country. A City life supplies all the luxuries except sweet air and sound livers. Does not the imagination in a dark dining room verily smell the walls of restraint? And do not the far-fancied field-lights and the distant azure burn voluptuously?

I had lived in a village when a boy, proud of every wart on my fingers; which proves me a predisposed lover of Nature. In the later muddle of a metropolis, rural fancies were constrained to exercise themselves with Spring poems, sonnets to choice neighborhoods of Creation, and such interpretations, that were not worth one real glance at a buttercup or shoes printed with dew by the blades of grass. The City tills the mind with commercial thoughts. It puts muck on our heart-felt desires, until mushrooms grow in the gloomy instincts we had theoried with roses for the sunlight. It makes us cross as the Devil with his tail caught in the door when we have to wait five minutes for dinner. This brings the wish for meadows where there is no waiting, because nothing is expected, and nothing

comes except many varieties of quietude. You sit by a plashy creek, and a bullfrog that looks as wise as if he had been reading Schopenhauer, causes you more amusement than a vaudeville show on Ellis Street. A beetle that has fallen on its back arouses more excitement than a fire or a runaway in the Western Addition. And a woodtick in the armpit makes all Nature seem sublime.

Often a mild summer breeze would bring me boyhood fragrances, fairyland impulses; a board walk edged with furze, make me dream of treading the landscape, joyous as a god who has thrown away his watch and time-table.

There was another phase. Rents, pleasures and prices were doing a startling aerial performance in my resources. My literary achievements did not attract an income of strong steady pulsation. There would be periods of few receipts from editors, unharmonizing with the systematic business tones of boarding-house keepers. My own landlady had a first-of-the-month scowl that was like the dungeons of despair. In her evil times, it gave me rheumatism and palsy and the gout to approach her. Requesting two days of her indulgence was accompanied by more anguish than a confession of all the rest of my sins. Supplementing this plea with a statement that I had money in the bank made her milk of human kindness turn to limburger cheese and infect me with the blues for an hour.

The idea came that on an acre of ground I could make one successful month help along a subsequent bad one, as if holding the net for a bad fall of prosperity. Then, with vegetables bobbing up from the ground at all seasons of the year (I saw them bobbing in gorgeous array) and chickens laying eggs here and there, a cow with its portable, inverted milk fountain,

I would never lack homely provender. With a capital of \$200, the first payment could be made; I could farm the mortgaged acre a few hours a day, and, with my pen, cultivate it as an acre of Parnassus during the others. Literary labors would be unharassed by the punctual outlays of the City. Time would not be despot to tax me with bills for the maintenance of an appetite. I pictured myself off in the seclusion of this acre, free as Piping Pan, industrious as Vulcan, and yet not so far from San Francisco as to become hayseedy and afraid of modern improvements.

Not knowing just what town across the bay would offer the most inducements, I scanned the newspaper advertisements and found it to be a case of no good nor better, but all best. I could either take pains to select the choicest of the charming, the balmiest of the best, or make no mistake by trusting to the Pandemonium of chance. Almost all were within a half hour of San Francisco, exquisite opportunities, the whipped cream of a bargain, the most logical of locations. And all desired me to act quickly and secure one of the cheapest little homes yet offered, one that would bear the closest investigation.

In this mood, I consulted a real estate agent and confided my plans. He thought I was doing the wisest thing in the world. This made my ardor feel as phenomenal as the four elements at the outset. For what better start can one have than with doing the wisest thing in the world, especially in the worldwise opinion of a real estate dealer?

He had the place I required: a four-room bungalow in an acre of ground north of Melrose. Melrose! I had read of it often in all sizes of type. It had been to me one of those intangible situations alluded to as twelve miles from San Francisco, twenty minutes from Oak-

land, convenient to Haywards; though the temptation of being convenient to Haywards never seemed to me a strong play on the imagination. Having read, during several weeks, of a delightful spot so many miles from somewhere and so many minutes from somewhere else and convenient to otherwheres, I had no hint of it being Melrose. Now was the delightful spot discovered.

On this acre, I was now told, existed a cow, a bull, and a "veal," six pigs and fifteen chickens. O gar-rulity! I had unconscientiously yearned to possess some fauna of this character, but lacked the courage to affront my town-lubbering friends by collecting them. There they were, and I could not help their being there. Besides, I would not have known how to buy them, had I so desired. They were part of the acre. It would be unnecessary to move into my new quarters leading fifteen chickens, six pigs, a bull, a cow and a veal at the end of so many strings and ropes through Melrose to my farm. I would take this property, if it pleased me on inspection; and would inspect forthwith.

Its price was \$2000 and would soon be worth twice as much; had cost \$3000; but the owner was going east and would accept \$200 cash, I to assume the mortgage.

On the following day I took the broad-gauge train for Melrose. A bulwark stopped the local from running into the main street. This thoroughfare did not cause any highfaluting throbs of admiration until I caught sight of a canvas sign over a real estate office; to wit: MELROSE, THE CHICAGO OF THE WEST. This encouraged as well as surprised; for there was nothing Chicagolike that I would have discovered by my own sense of sight or smell.