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DIALOGUE

## UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {299}

By DANIEL DE LEON

**B**ROTHER JONATHAN (looking the picture of gladness all over)—Oh, I feel so happy! It is coming! It is coming! I knew it would come, but I never imagined it would come soon enough for my old eyes to see it. It is coming fast!

UNCLE SAM—What, pray? What?

B.J.—Socialism, of course!

U.S. (looking at B.J. suspiciously)—Why, of course, it is coming. That's nothing new, or that it is coming fast either. I have been telling you that all along.

B.J.—Yes, but I now see the signs of it; these signs were not there before. Hurrah!

U.S. (looking behind and to the right and left of B.J.)—How you talk! I see nothing very particular that has happened over night.

B.J. (testily)—Well, I do.

U.S. (looking up into the skies)—What?

B.J.—Jones! Toledo Jones! Mayor Jones! That's what's happened!

U.S.—Bosh!

B.J.—Doesn't he talk Socialism? Doesn't he say he is a Socialist? Doesn't he denounce the capitalists?

U.S.—Give us a rest! Did you ever hear of Pingree?

B.J.—Yes, the scoundrel! My brother in Detroit was employed in his shoe factory,



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and had to strike for even living wages, and lost!

U.S.—And didn't he "talk Socialism?"

B.J. scratches the back of his head.

U.S.—And didn't he say he was a Socialist?

B.J. scratches the left side of his head.

U.S.—And didn't he "denounce the capitalists?"

B.J. scratches the right side of his head.

U.S.—And did you ever hear of William R. Hearst—

B.J. (giving a start)—Of the *New York Journal*?

U.S.—Yes; did you ever hear of that bird?

B.J.—The contemptible scoundrel and coward! Why, don't you know what he has just done? He raised the prices on his newsboys! Two of my little boys earn a living peddling his paper, and they are now on strike.

U.S.—You seem to know him. Now, why are you so indignant about him, and call him a coward?

B.J.—For mighty good reasons. He doesn't dare to tackle the grown men who are working for him; but the little boys, the most defenceless of all—them the coward squeezes. He has just had a strike of men on his hands on his ranch in California; there he does not seem to fear men; but here he does, and he therefore tries to get it out of the hides of the poor newsboys.

U.S.—Correct, old boy, correct! Now didn't this labor-skinner Hearst "talk Socialism" in his paper?

B.J. relapses into silence.

U.S.—Didn't he denounce the "blood-sucking capitalists?"

B.J. takes off his hat and scratches the top of it.

U.S.—Didn't he—

B.J.—Yes, yes, yes; he did, and so did that Pingree—

U.S.—And so does Jones now; Jones, owner of oil-wells and of other monopolistic labor-skinning concerns. Your brother got bitten by Pingree; your two little boys got bitten by Hearst; and here YOU are ready to be bitten by Jones. When will you have had enough?

B.J. (collapses like a dish clout)—But how is one to know?!?!

U.S.—How is one to know? Easy enough: by applying everyday common sense. You heard the fable of the wolf protesting his love for the sheep? Well, you wouldn't take any stock in such protestations? Would you take stock in the protestations of the flea? Of course not. Why not?

B.J.—Because it ain't in their nature to be other than they are.

U.S.—Now, apply that everyday bit of common sense to the Social Question. The capitalist class are like the wolf and the flea; the capitalist must live on the workers or die. That is his “material interests,” that is his “class interests.” All the phrases that a capitalist may use against “blood-sucking capitalists,” “grinding monopolies,” “Socialism” and the like are but baits to catch us with; they are like the protestations of the wolf and the flea. “No phrases” must be our device. Does a man want to help us abolish the wage system of slavery and enthrone the working class? Then let him say so without reservation or circumlocution, and let him then join our ranks, and fight all others who won't. But if a man does not come out for this demand plump and plain, then he is a fraud, or, what is equally, if not more, dangerous, a fool; in either case, we must give him the widest berth possible. “No more Pingrees, no more Hearsts, no more Joneses!”—That and the principle back of it must be a motto with us; the moment that it is lost sight of, that moment we are gone with our heads right into the dragon's mouth.

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