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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {171}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—I must have been dreaming all my born days.

UNCLE SAM—Are you making discoveries?

B.J.—It almost looks that way to me. Just think of it: When I struck with my fellow switchmen in Buffalo to uphold the 10 hour law, Governor Flower, the Democrat, swooped down upon us with the whole militia of the State and gave the victory to the bosses who were grinding us down.

U.S.—So he did.

B.J.—Then I went to work as a 'longshore man on the Erie Lake, and Mark Hanna, the Republican, cut our wages in two and when we struck he knocked the stuffings out of us.

U.S.—Too true.

B.J.—And then I got a job as a trainman on the Chicago & Rock Island Road, and when we demanded that our fellow men at Pullman be not treated as beasts of burden, good God, how didn't Cleveland, the Democrat, and Woods, the Republican, knock us into as many cocked hats with their soldiers and their Gatling guns on paper, and how didn't the Republican Depews and the Democratic Whitneys approve of those, there {their?} transactions!

U.S.—Indeed, they did.

B.J.—Now from all this I had drawn my conclusions.

U.S.—To what effect?



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B.J.—To the effect that these capitalists were a lot of scalawags, who looked upon us workers as their legitimate beasts of burden that had to be whipped blind if they roared or kicked.

U.S.—There are no flies on that conclusion.

B.J.—But here comes the puzzle—

U.S. (looking around)—Where?

B.J.—Right here: Flower, the Democratic Governor who browbeat us in Buffalo, makes a speech in Watertown where he says: “There is no conflict between capital and labor. The interests of the workers are the interests of the employers. And it behooves us who are employers to resist with might and main the efforts of the silver demagogues to reduce the wages of the working poor through the free coinage of silver.”

U.S.—That’s very loving.

B.J.—And Hanna{,} who sucked us dry, being interviewed in New York, exclaims: “Good God; the election of Bryan means starvation for the poor workingman. Every lover of his country will cast a vote for McKinley and the gold standard.”

U.S.—Ain’t he a daisy of loveliness?

B.J.—And Cleveland, whom I had taken for our archenemy, listen to him: “We must all array ourselves against this labor-killing free coinage programme”; and Woods: “In the upholding of the gold standard lies the prosperity of labor, to promote that must all our efforts be directed”; and Depew: “A gold standard means high wages, a contented workingman and a prosperous people; I am uncompromisingly opposed to free coinage”; and Whitney: “This silver craze, should it prevail, will play havoc with the wage worker; it must be downed!”

U.S.—The love of these people for the working class seems to bloom like the rose in June.

B.J.—Doesn’t it?

U.S.—Looks like it.

B.J.—And aren’t you puzzled?

U.S.—Where at?

B.J.—At so much love pouring forth from quarters that otherwise only pour down oppression upon us?

U.S.—Not a bit.

B.J.—Well, which is which? Are these gold bugs our real friends or are they our enemies after all?

U.S.—Don't you remember that Scotch terrier that snapped and growled at you yesterday when you called at John Jones'?

B.J.—Blast the brute! I could have broken his neck.

U.S.—Did you love him?

B.J.—Not much, I did.

U.S.—And yet I overheard you addressing him in these endearing terms: "Good doggy; sweet doggy; pch, pch; come, come nice doggy!"

B.J.—What would you have me do? Growl at him and have him tear me all to pieces?

U.S.—Just what you did to John Jones' doggy is what these gold bugs and silver bugs are now doing to us. They, the Clevelands, Depews, Flowers and gold bugs generally, the same as the Tellers, Tillmans, Stewarts, Newlands and silver bugs generally have been treating us as dogs, using us workingmen to satisfy their pleasures, skinning us, outraging us right and left. Now comes election time. They want to get into the White House—a sort of John Jones' house—where they will be able to carry on their system of fleecing us, each side of them, though wanting to get there to the exclusion of the other, so as to have our whole hide to itself. But now it so happens that there are one hundred workingmen's votes to those gold and silver bugs' one, and we workingmen are growling in their way, they need our votes to get in; they want to keep us from voting for ourselves and want us to vote for them.—Hence their present love. Catch on?

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