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DIALOGUE

## UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {172-173}

By DANIEL DE LEON

**B**ROTHER JONATHAN—You are very wrong in opposing free coinage.

UNCLE SAM—Why?

B.J.—I admit that that won't solve the labor problem, but it will bring relief to the workers, temporary relief.

U.S.—In what way?

B.J.—Don't you see that the farmer who would be foreclosed can no longer employ farm hands?

U.S.—I see that.

B.J.—Isn't that an aggravation of the condition of the workers?

U.S.—What?

B.J.—The throwing out of work of farm hands.

U.S.—If the mortgagee proposes to turn the farm over to weeds, yes; but he won't; he will let the farm out to a tenant farmer, and he will continue to employ farm hands. No one is thrown out. But you are knocked out.

B.J.—Not quite. I admit that eventually the farm hands will be employed by the tenant farmer who hires the land from the mortgagee. But for a time at least the farm hands will be without employment; they may go to the cities and become scabs.

U.S.—Granted.

B.J.—Isn't that bad for the workers.

U.S.—'Tis.

B.J.—Now free silver will prevent that.



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

U.S.—How?

B.J.—The farmer will get money more easily, and won't be foreclosed, and his farm hands will remain on the farm.

U.S.—They won't.

B.J.—They won't?

U.S.—No. Let us imagine that the farmer will get more money. Do you think he will rest satisfied with paying off his mortgage, and won't try to get money enough to equip his farm with steam plows, threshers, etc., so that he may be able to compete with the larger and genuine capitalist farmers?

B.J.—Suppose he does.

U.S.—Then off go the bulk of his farm hands.

B.J.—How?

U.S.—For every 25 men plowing with the hand, the steam plow displaces 23.

B.J.—What?!?

U.S.—Just so. Your plan of keeping the farms hands at work by supplying the farmer with more money is busted. With more money at their disposal, the farmers who are now too poor to buy steam plows will be able to get them. That means the wholesale displacement of farm hands, their wholesale immigration into the cities with a consequent overstocking of the labor market.

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BROTHER JONATHAN—If I were a Socialist I would not go for the labor fakirs the way Socialists do.

UNCLE SAM—How would you do it?

B.J.—I would let them alone. They are sure to come around in the end.

U.S.—What “end”?

B.J.—When the movement is strong.

U.S.—A strong movement will bring them over, eh?

B.J.—Yes.

U.S.—And how can a strong movement be brought about before fakirdom is knocked out?

B.J.—Hem!

U.S.—What you want amounts to this: A strong movement is necessary; to bring that about we must break our way across the barrier raised by the fakirs; and yet you want us to leave the fakirs alone! Go to!

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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