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EDITORIAL

## POOR JOHN C. DAVIS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**S**ITTING on a stool with Bible and hymn-book in his hands, reading verses and singing hymns John C. Davis is described spending his time in a gloomy cell in the jail of the District of Columbia, charged with embezzlement, forgery and false pretences. This is hard on John.

Mr. Davis was the leading manipulator of the Potomac Loan and Building Association. Large sums came into his hands. Then came the collapse, with the net result that Davis landed in jail. Net results? No; that is not quite correct.

The Davises perform quite a mission in the scheme of capitalism. The Capitalist Class, that is, the top fellows, strain at concentration, and ever more concentration. Of course, they perceive not that they are thereby laying the foundation for Socialism, which means their own downfall. They believe they are for all time, and that they are working for themselves. So believing they complacently and uninterruptedly concentrate. But they can not do it all. At any rate, it would take too long if they were left to their own unaided efforts in embezzling, forging, false pretences, and the rest of the capitalist methods. The tribe of the Davises are unconscious tenders to the top capitalists.

The Davises are a sort of scavengers for the real capitalists. Prey that is too small to be seized by the large talons of the capitalist vulture, their scavengers seize, gather together, and, when the lump is large enough to be prehensible by the capitalist himself, something happens that dumps the scavenger,—and the lumped prey is appropriated by the upper fellows.

Thus Building and Loan Associations, small insurance concerns, co-operatives, etc., rise—and are sponged up by upper capitalists who never could have themselves gathered the separate particles. And the poor Davises, who took themselves seriously and did not know that capitalist swindle must be conducted on a scale

large enough to break through the cobweb of the law—these poor Davises land in jail where they sing hymns, or indulge in profanity, according to their different temperaments.

It is a pity to see these Davises, so useful to the capitalist class, regularly cast off like that, treated by capitalist law even worse than the proverbial squeezed lemon.

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

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