

**WAKE UP, ENGLAND!
BEING THE
AMAZING STORY OF
JOHN BULL - SOCIALIST**

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Wake up, England! Being the amazing story of John Bull - socialist by Edward Prince

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EDWARD PRINCE

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Being the Amazing Story of
John Bull—Socialist

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CHAPTER I

THE Doctor was regarding with very grave anxiety the face of the little patient before him. "Nurse," he said, "is there no possibility of tracing the parents of this child? I have a strong suspicion he is of consumptive tendency, and I must know something of his antecedents. Why! the boy is nearly blind. Look! he can scarcely see my hand when it is held between him and the light. This is very sudden; he must go into hospital at once. Where is the mother? I suppose you took all particulars at the time of birth. Who was the father?"

"Well, comrade, we took all the particulars we could get. It is always a most difficult matter, and in this instance the mother would tell us nothing about the father. She just said that she had taken a dislike to him, and that the marriage had been dissolved "with the consent

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of the community," by the "Civil representatives of the State."* This happened some months before the birth of the child."

"Well, where is the mother now?" said the Doctor. "I must see her, if possible. Perhaps she could tell me something of her own parentage."

"Ah, that I doubt, comrade. She told us she never saw either father or mother; she was brought up by the State. We found her very troublesome and restless; she was always wanting to get outside. She married again shortly after she left us, and some time later we heard she had been sent up north, at her own request, to one of the textile factories. Her last husband told us this. He had just had the marriage dissolved. He said they were 'absolutely incompatible in temperament,'† and he told us too, that she did not go up north alone."

"Well, well," said the Doctor impatiently, "it seems there is nothing to be done. It is a sad pity. If I could diagnose this case with

* The Woman Socialist, p. 61.

† The Woman Socialist, p. 62.

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certainly, I believe I could cure the child, but it is absolutely necessary I should know something of his antecedents. However, we must do the best we can. What do you call this little man?"

"We call him John Bull, comrade; it's a fancy name. The mother's name is Jane English, and he is registered as John English; but the consulting physician, Comrade Dr. Henderson, gave him the name of John Bull. He said it made him think of old times."

"Ah! that reminds me. Where is Comrade Henderson now?"

"He is on the pension list now. You see, he is nearly seventy years old. He is living by the sea, in one of the State Pension Houses. Do you want to see him?"

"Yes, I must have a talk with him about this child. Before the Socialists came into power he was House Physician in one of the hospitals for consumption. I was only a student at the time, but I remember him well. He was most successful with one or two cases of eye-trouble, which defied diagnosis until he traced the heredity. I am inclined to think

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that this is a similar case, but I must have a few more particulars, nurse. Let me see. The boy is now nearly six years old, and has been brought up in a Training Home. Was the mother fond of him? Did she never wish to have him? Was she able to nurse him?"

"Oh, yes! she was quite able to nurse the child, but she only did it for a short time. She was certainly not fond of him; she always seemed to be thinking of something else. She often had letters from someone outside, but she would never say who it was. I taxed her one day with not caring for the child, and reminded her that it was contrary to the wishes of the State."

"What did she say?" said the Doctor smiling.

"'Oh, well,' she only said, 'what's the good, comrade? the little 'un don't belong to me—he belongs to the State. I ain't agoin' to care for the child, and lay up for meself a lot of mis'ry when he's took away. Not me!' That's what she said; so I just told her she ought not to be thinking of herself, but of the child, who

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had to grow up strong and healthy, to be a worker in the State."

"I am afraid your arguments were not very convincing, nurse, seeing that she left the child," said the Doctor. "Do you often have this difficulty?"

"A great deal oftener than we used, comrade; but what can we do? Comrade Jane English cared nothing for any of us. She just snapped her fingers at the officials, and at last became so restless and fractious that we felt the child was better without her, so let her go. She went back to work long before the usual time."

"*Ah*, so much for thirty years of Socialist rule," said the Doctor. "Now listen, nurse: I must, if possible, get a day off, and go down and see Dr. Henderson. He may want to see the child himself; if so, I shall bring him up. I will get Comrade Dr. Helen Brown to look at the boy while I am away. Meanwhile, feed him well; let him get as much air as possible, but on no account let him take cold. I am not without hope that we may save his sight yet, in spite of the difficulties before us."

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"*Well, well,*" said the Doctor, under his breath as he left the room, "what a curse this rule is!"

Speeding along in the train to the little seaport town on the south coast, Comrade Dr. Bryce had much to think about. He rarely had any time to himself, as the Socialist rule of the short working day did not apply to doctors. It was found that it would not work. In serious cases, the doctor's attendance was required several times a day for the same patient; and although it had been urged by the Socialist Government that the same patient could be visited by different doctors, and that in some cases it would even be an advantage, it was found in the working out to present so many difficulties—difficulties fraught with so much danger to the patient—that the hospital officials had finally declared it to be impossible.

The State gave long and serious consideration to this check to Socialist Administration; but at last giving in on the grounds that "no man has a right to his self because he did not make that self,"* they proceeded to work the

* Merrie England, p. 75.