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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {268}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN (angry)—I don't know what is the matter with you Socialists. You seem never satisfied—

UNCLE SAM—What is the mat—

B.J. (angrier)—The better off our people are, the more you Socialists howl; the happier we feel, the more you Socialists talk calamity; the—

U.S.—Wait a—

B.J. (still angrier)—You are a set of impossibles; you are good for nothing (getting angrier and angrier); you ought to be hanged to keep the country in such a turmoil—

U.S.—But—

B.J. (beside himself with rage)—But—but—but. I suppose you all want palaces and silks and—

U.S.—Yes—

B.J.—And will never be satisfied—

U.S.—Not until we have all that we produce—

B.J.—We are getting that!

U.S.—Oho!

B.J.—Yes, and we are getting better off every day.

U.S.—Now, Jonathan, something must have bitten you. What is it?

B.J.—Nothing bit me; but I have just been reading a beautiful speech by McKinley delivered in the West.



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

U.S.—And that has satisfied you?

B.J.—Why shouldn't it? Here is what he said—

U.S.—It must be wonderful, indeed. Let's have it.

B.J. (taking out of his pocket a metropolitan capitalist paper and reading:

“McKinley in the West”; “Enthusiastic Crowds of Workingmen Flock to hear him”; (running his finger down the column through the speech) here is the speech; but the principal part I want to call your attention to is this: Just look at this. (Reading.) “We have gone from labor seeking employment to employment seeking labor.” Just think of that! Is not that prosperity! And yet you Socialists howl—

U.S.—Just let me take a squint at that paper, will you?

B.J. (passing it over to him)—Gladly, convince yourself.

U.S. (turns to the columns of “Help Wanted”)—Do you see this?

B.J.—Yes: “Help Wanted.” There you have it;—“employment seeking labor.”

U.S.—How many columns?

B.J.—Not quite one.

U.S. (turning to the columns of “Situations Wanted”)—Do you see this?

B.J.—Yes: “Situations Wanted.”

U.S.—How many columns?

B.J. (counting)—One, two, three, four—

U.S.—Say eight, and be done with {it}; don't you see they cover the whole page?

B.J.—Yes; eight.

U.S.—Is that all, do you think?

B.J.—Is there any more?

U.S. (turning the page over)—Count on.

B.J.—One, two—

U.S.—Eight more.

B.J.—Yes.

U.S.—That makes sixteen (turning over to the next page). How many more?

B.J.—One, two—eight more.

U.S.—That makes?

B.J.—Twenty-four.

U.S. (turning over the fourth page.)

B.J. (amazed)—Is there still more?

U.S.—See for yourself.

B.J.—One, two—why, eight more!

U.S.—And that makes?

B.J.—Thirty-two columns!

U.S. (turns over to the fifth page.)

B.J.—Lord! Is it not yet done!?

U.S.—Stop your gab and count!

B.J.—Why that's eight more.

U.S.—Making?

B.J.—Forty columns of applicants!

U.S. (turns to the sixth page)—And how many more?

B.J.—One, two, three, four, five and almost six. Almost forty-six columns of applicants for work!

U.S.—As against how many of “employment seeking labor”?

B.J.—Not quite one!

U.S.—Now look at this item:

B.J. (reading)—“Jeremiah Ingals, aged 34, was found dead in his room last night. An empty bottle of laudanum and a letter, found on a chair near the bed, told the story. ‘Out of work, and can find none.’”

U.S.—“Employment seeking labor” must have missed this one, eh?

B.J. remains silent.

U.S.—Now read this item:

B.J. (reading)—“Susan Elger, followed by two children and carrying one on her arm, applied yesterday at the 8th {street} Police Station for shelter. She stated that her husband, after having looked for work the whole summer, and finding none, left for Philadelphia two weeks ago, thinking he could get work there, and has not been heard from since. She had pawned most of her and his clothes, and she and her children were starving.

U.S.—It seems that that “employment seeking labor” has a knack to miss his man,

eh?

B.J. remains silent.

U.S. (folding the newspaper up in the shape of fools-cap and clapping it on B.J.'s head)—That much for us Socialists “howling without cause,” and “never being satisfied.” I tell you, we will howl until there will be precious few such fools as you left among the workingmen, who can be stuffed with a capitalist-Republican or a capitalist-Democratic lie, like that; until our class will stand solid by the Socialist Labor party, be part and parcel of it and smash this Dem-Rep system of capitalist iniquity.

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

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