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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {287}

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BROTHER JONATHAN—Do you know that I find that, of all the impractical people the Socialists lead the van, take the cake and pie?

UNCLE SAM—No, I didn't know that you had that notion.

B.J.—Don't call it a "notion"; it is something more solid; it is positive knowledge. Just see—

U.S.—I'm seeing.

B.J.—Just see: here are these Socialists wearing themselves off to a bone, plundering themselves, making all sort of sacrifice of time, money, efforts and whatever else they have at command in order to start a daily English paper—

U.S.—Is that an impractical idea?

B.J.—No; not that; there's nothing the matter with the idea; the idea is all right. A daily English paper to alarum those capitalist blood-sucking parasites, to pitch-fork and hold up to public execration that dirty gang of the capitalist press, to nail the capitalist politician's lying tongue every time it wags—

U.S.—Why, you are growing positively eloquent and sensible.

B.J.—Eloquence, true eloquence is but the uttering of sound convictions strongly felt. Who but the veriest mutton-head can fail to realize the damage done by the various mouthpieces of the capitalist class, and who is there who does not understand that to check-mate this sponging class an English Socialist daily is needed, is the only thing that can do the work?—



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

U.S.—I certainly agree with every word you just said; but it seems to me that, the more you say, the more you disprove your charge that the Socialists are impractical. A Socialist English daily is the only thing adequate to the emergency; the Socialists are straining every nerve in that direction; meseems you have proven their right judgment and supreme practical sense.

B.J.—Not at all; you have not heard me to the end. Just listen. A daily Socialist paper in English is needed. Now, what would a practical man do when he needs a thing, go about the easiest or the hardest way to get it?

U.S.—The easiest by a long majority.

B.J.—And that is just what the Socialists don't; they are going about it in the hardest way possible. It takes money, quite a stack, to set up a new paper; now they can have a paper without their making any sacrifice;—

U.S.—How? HOW?

B.J.—By simply giving encouragement by supporting an existing paper that is going their way,—

U.S.—Which?!?!

B.J.—The New York *Journal*.

U.S. twirls around on his heels and emits a shrill, long, loud and protracted Indian whoop.

B.J.—Just as I feared; you are as impractical as the rest of them. Now, will you deny that these recent *Journal* editorials have in them a mighty good ring, a ring that is bound to captivate the popular heart?

U.S.—Will you deny that the bait with which you and I so carefully baited our hooks last Saturday, when we went out fishing, had a smell and taste about it that was bound to captivate the fish we were after?

B.J.—I won't deny that; and we succeeded, didn't we? What hauls we did make!

U.S.—And the "captivated" fishes, are they now better off or worse?

B.J.—What a question!

U.S.—Worse off, of course. And why?

B.J.—Because they bit our stuff.

U.S.—Their biting our stuff alone would not have caused their misfortune. Say we

had dropped the stuff overboard and they had swallowed it; they would have fared well thereby; there was nothing bad in the stuff itself; the trouble to the fishes lay in the good stuff being BAIT,—having a hook inside of it. Not so?

B.J.—Yes.

U.S.—And so it is with your *Journal* editorials—

B.J.—Hey?

U.S.—They are baits; not one of them but conceals the hook of the capitalist, ready to yank the workers to their destruction. The editorial that howls at the wrongs done to Labor and does not add that Labor's only salvation is the conquest of the public powers; the editorial that howls against trusts and does not declare that the only way out is their public ownership; the editorial that howls against existing political parties and does not point out that their mischief lies in their having their roots in the capitalist system of the private ownership of the machinery of production; the editorial that does all this and does not herald the Socialist Labor party as the only party for the oppressed to flock to and carry to victory;—such editorial is but fishy bait to catch brainless fish with. The hook of a labor-skinning Hearst will never catch us; nor will any other hook.

B.J. looks dumbfounded.

U.S.—It will be a cold day when the Socialist can be justly charged with being impractical, and colder yet when he is caught with bait. So far from its being as you said, the Socialists are giving just now a supreme evidence of their unerring judgment, and of their practical sense. The cry that is now going up—“A DAILY PEOPLE!”—aims at the most practical thing conceivable; it is a loud announcement that “No baits need apply!”

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

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