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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {137}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN—Won't you give me five cents; haven't eaten anything all day; I want a cup of coffee.

UNCLE SAM (looking sternly)—What ticket did you vote last November?

B.J. (embarrassed)—I—well—you know—see here—

U.S.—You don't need be bashful. You fear that I may be a Democrat if you voted the Republican ticket; or that I may be a Republican if you voted the Democratic ticket. Don't be afraid; tell me the truth;

your chances of getting the five cents from me won't be affected one way or another.

B.J. (brightening up)—Truth to say, I didn't vote a straight ticket. I voted the Democratic State ticket, then I voted the Republican municipal ticket, and then I voted the Goo-Goo County Clerk.

U.S.—Did you know there was a Socialist Labor party in the field?

B.J. (shrugging his shoulders)—Yes, I did; but what's the use?

U.S.—The use of what?

B.J.—Of voting that ticket. It couldn't win.

U.S.—What is it you are after? Do you want a ticket to win, or do you want to win yourself?

B.J.—Of course, I'd like to win myself.

U.S.—Your tickets were elected, were they not?

B.J.—They were!



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U.S.—And did you win?

B.J.—Guess I did; didn't my tickets?

U.S.—Have your wages gone up?

B.J.—No; fact is, I am out of work.

U.S.—Just as before?

B.J.—Exactly.

U.S.—Of what use to you has been the winning of your ticket?

B.J. remains uncomfortably silent.

U.S.—You lost your vote!

B.J.—Suppose I did, voting the way I did. Would I have been any better off had I voted the Socialist ticket?

U.S.—Do you mean immediately?

B.J.—Yes, or otherwise.

U.S.—Immediately, a large Socialist vote would not have directly aided you to a job; but the larger the vote is to-day, all the larger will it be to-morrow, and all the nearer will you be to the time when your living will not depend upon the whim of an idle capitalist, when the working class will have triumphed.

B.J.—Oh, 'tis so long to wait!

U.S. (indignantly)—And because you imagine it would take so long therefore you would make it longer?

B.J.—No, not that.

U.S.—Now, see you here. You have a right to vote yourself into poverty if you like; but you can't do that without you vote me too and all other workers into poverty with yourself. You insist, by voting for the capitalist parties, to remain in misery; you thereby drag me too down; and then you have the cheek to come to me for money and drag me down further! Here are five cents. But your rascality or your stupidity beats anything I ever heard talk of! (Walks away and leaves the other pondering.)

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

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