

DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM AND BROTHER JONATHAN. {358}

By DANIEL DE LEON

BROTHER JONATHAN walks up looking quite crestfallen.

UNCLE SAM (looking the picture of happiness, claps B.J. on the shoulder)—Hell! What's the matter with you?

B.J. (sighs)—I'm heart-broken.

U.S. (smiling with a knowing smile)—What about?

B.J.—This election! It makes me sick in the stomach.

U.S. (consolingly)—Come now, let me know what you mean.

B.J. (after sighing three times and groaning four times)—I voted for Bryan.

U.S.—You ought to be sad.

B.J.—You agree with me that he ought to have been elected?

U.S.—Oh, no! I don't agree to that. He ought to be beaten.

B.J. (surprised)—Didn't you vote for him?

U.S. (emphatically)—No, sir; I did not. I never throw away my vote.

B.J. (with great surprise)—Whom did you vote for?

U.S.—I voted for Malloney and Remmel. I voted the Socialist Labor Party ticket straight.

B.J.—Well, what are you blowing about? They were not elected either. You threw away your vote too.

U.S.—Not much I didn't. My vote counted and counted remarkably well. It, together



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with the other S.L.P. votes in this election, are the only votes that counted.

B.J.—I'll be blown if I can see how. Least of all can I see it if you say that my Bryan vote didn't count. Bryan polled over 6,000,000, the S.L.P. ticket didn't poll 100,000. And yet you say my vote for Bryan was lost, and yours for Malloney was not lost. I'll be blown if I can see how you make that out.

U.S.—You will see it without your being blown. Didn't you tell me before election that the Socialist Labor Party was right and it would be the party of the future?

B.J.—I did, so I did!

U.S.—And didn't you say that the only reason you were going to vote for Bryan was that he was a step in the right direction and would be elected?

B.J.—I did.

U.S.—Isn't a miss as good as a mile?

B.J.—It is that.

U.S.—Consequently it matters not how large the Bryan and how small the Malloney vote was; in point of winning, the Bryan miss is as wide of the mark as the Malloney mile.

B.J.—That's so, sure enough.

U.S.—There being no difference between the two from that view-point, there remains only one thing to consider, to wit, whether either vote did some building up, and, if so, which.

B.J.—How do you mean "building up?"

U.S.—I'll tell you. I have come across more than one Bryan man who, since election, told me he was through trying it on that line. Before election these people spoke just like you. Since election they have admitted that they wasted their time trying "one step at a time," they now declare themselves Socialist Labor Party men forever. Haven't you met such?

B.J.—Indeed I have. Lots of them. I'm one of them myself.

U.S.—Good! Now suppose all the men who voted for Malloney this year, especially in this State, where the real fight was, had followed, like you, the Bryan will-o'-the-wisp. What would have been the result?

B.J. looks like one who begins to see light.

U.S.—The result would have been that there would be to-day no S.L.P. to go to.

Bryanism being smashed and the S.L.P. dissolved, the only thing left over would have been McKinley's camp of raw-boned capitalism, on one side, and a collection of debris of freak and more or less corrupt political concerns on the other. The work of upbuilding a class-conscious party of the workers would have had to be started all over again, under conditions infinitely harder than prevailed ten years ago. By standing firm to their colors; by voting for Malloney and Remmel; by raising the Socialist Labor Party vote this presidential year, above the vote of four years ago, and doing so despite obstacles that seemed insurmountable;—by that the Socialists performed the yoeman's work of preserving the ground that had been gained, and gaining new ground. That's what I meant by "building up."

B.J.—I understand it and you are right. We threw our votes away on Bryan. That has gone to smash; you Socialists did not throw away your votes, you built like wise architects. Bully for you!

U.S.—The S.L.P. vote of this presidential year will go thundering down the galleries of time and history. It was the only vote that was not lost.

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