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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM AND BROTHER JONATHAN. {353–354}

By DANIEL DE LEON

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

UNCLE SAM—Don't you think it is about time that, if there be any decent Democrats in Tammany Hall, they give their organization a thorough overhauling, and start by firing out Croker?

BROTHER JONATHAN—What has he done now?

U.S.—He is coming back to the ways of his younger days.

B.J.—What were they?

U.S.—To-day he goes dressed up and putting on the airs of a decent man. But he was originally a tough, a leader of "dead-rabbits," on one of which occasions a man was killed, for which Croker had to stand trial and was not spoken free. Now he is trying to bring things back to his good old time "dead-rabbit" style.

B.J.—What is he doing?

U.S.—Don't you know that he has recommended that the "Democratic voters" congregate in force about the polling places on the evening of election day, "Count noses" and then, if the election returns don't tally with their count, "go into the polling places" and "throw the election officers into the street"? Don't you know he said that?

B.J.—Well, that is going back to the dead-rabbit times!

U.S.—But Croker is growing senile. He forgets that these are not the good old days of Tweed. I doubt very much that his anxiety is for anything else than the 16th Assembly District. It is there that he proposes ruffianism to prevent an honest count, and thus

prevent the walloping he is about to receive at the hands of the Socialist Labor Party. But let him try it! We'll "count noses" too. And it may happen that Croker may yet grace the cell that John McKane recently occupied in Sing Sing.

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BROTHER JONATHAN—Heavens! Did you see what a pile of treasure the Countess of Castellane, Anna Gould, has been spending?

UNCLE SAM—How much?

B.J.—She has already spent 15,000,000 francs, and she is in debt 23,000,000 more.

U.S.—What is it that shocks you about that?

B.J.—Why, the squandering of such a pile of money. Don't it you?

U.S.—That "squandering" don't shock ME. What shocks me is the pile, which this squandered pile shows the workingmen of America to have been fleeced out of.

B.J.—Were WE fleeced out of that?

U.S.—Yes, and maimed and killed to boot.

B.J.—How so?

U.S.—This big pile does not come from Europe. It comes from America. And it comes from the railroad and telegraph operators who have to slave it for the Goulds.

B.J.—They do look underpaid.

U.S.—Go along the elevated road; see those conductors, ticket agents and other employees. They are all working hard and at starvation wages. They produce millions upon millions, and they get barely a crust;—the rest goes to the idle Goulds.

B.J. puckers up his brow.

U.S.—The automatic coupler has been a law for a number of years. It is intended to protect the limbs and lives of the railroad workers. That law is virtually a dead letter. If it were obeyed the workers would be saved. It is disobeyed because to obey it would cost too much money to the Goulds. Being disobeyed, the carnage among the railroaders is appalling. But the number of maimed and killed is a barometer of the wealth that the Goulds pocket: the more maimed and killed, the greater is the pile of wealth for the Goulds.

B.J. scratches his head.

U.S.—Look at the telegraphers, a skilled trade at that. Look at the girls and boys employed in the Western Union. They are wan. Underfed because under-paid, stunted in body and mind. Their misery is also a thermometer of the wealth that the Goulds pocket.

B.J. wipes a tear off his eye.

U.S.—Now, you will agree with me that what this Castellane episode brings home to the thinking workingman is the stupendous amount of wealth that just one single capitalist concern robs the workers of.

B.J.—This must be stopped!

U.S.—And stopped it will be! The Socialist Labor Party is in the field to put an end to just that sort of crime. Its vote from year to year has gone up. And this year the ticket headed Malloney and Remmel will poll a vote that will send the chills down the backs of that organized crime called capitalism, and of which the Castellanes are but one manifestation.

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