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EDITORIAL

THE SAW-DUST GAME IN JERSEY.

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AS a rule the capitalist political saw-dust game is played as a joint performance by the two regulation capitalist parties. As a rule, the way they do it is for one of the two—either the Democratic or the Republican—to set up the out-spoken defenders of the labor-fleeing class, and the other of the two—either the Republican or Democratic—to set up a “friends of labor” set of dummies. Then the two sets go before the people; tear each other by the hair (or pretend to); declare the country is doomed beyond repair if the other is elected;—and, after the working people have been thoroughly bewildered and mystified, and have scattered their votes, then—in the language of the Lord of Skibo Castle—the two contending sets of candidates shake hands and have a good laugh over the lark. That’s the way they usually do it. In Jersey City this year, however, a variation has been introduced. The political saw-dust game is there being played within each of the regulation capitalist parties separately. Most striking is the game in the Democratic camp.

The Democratic candidate for Mayor in Jersey City is a worthy by the name of G.T. Smith. He is a true blood. This particular Smith earns his living as a slave driver for the Pennsylvania Railroad. As General Agent for the New York District, he cracks the capitalist lash over not less than 5,000 employees, and he sees to it—his living and prospects depend on his success—that the stream of sweat and blood, in the shape of profits, run deep and broad from the flesh and marrow of these 5,000 wage slaves into the pockets of the Company. Slave-driver Smith, accordingly, represents absolutely and unqualifiedly capitalist interests, and he talks that way. Stick a pin there.

At the bottom of the Democratic ticket is another worthy. His office is Assemblyman, and his name is Allan Benny. While Mr. Smith, the candidate for Mayor, recklessly exposes the lives of the railroad employees under him, and can not be supposed to enjoy much popular sympathy, Mr. Benny poses as the

particular friend of the railroaders. At last Saturday's Democratic mass meeting in Jersey City, Mr. Benny held forth, and among other things, said:

“There is no harder working class than the railroad men; 27,000 of these men in convention, drew up a bill providing that three men should be in every one of the big hogback engines now in use. The law of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Ohio, require it and now when one of these engines reaches the border line of our state one of the men are dropped—three are necessary in Pennsylvania, but two enough in New Jersey, thanks to a Republican legislature.”

While Smith's corporation does the dropping of a man at the border-line of New Jersey, and thereby squeezes more wealth out of the men, and thereby hastens their death, Benny weeps over the wrong,—and both things happen on the identical ticket, Benny acting as the puller-in for Smith, who is the head of the Democratic political saw-dust game for the Republican-Democratic capitalist class.

What particular reason there is for the two old parties each to play the saw-dust game by itself this year is not ascertained. The circumstance, nevertheless, is to be applauded. When the two play it together, the trick passes unperceived, except by the most wide awake; when, however, the trick is played by one and the same party, none but the dullest can fail to see through it. Allan Benny's weeps for the “grinding Pennsylvania Railroad Company” illuminate G.T. Smith's acts of grinding on behalf of that company; and the latter's acts, in turn, illuminate the former's weeps.

What workingman in the country, especially in Jersey City, needs better light to escape being buncoed by the old parties, and to pick his way so as to land flat-footed in the camp of the Socialist Labor Party?

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

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