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EDITORIAL

AT BEST, A CATO THE CENSOR.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Tacoma, Wash., *Times* is a red-hot Roosevelt paper. It is not a paper such as would be issued by a Pinchot, a Garfield, or any other politician with a personal grievance. It is a paper with a Cause—a Cause such as it can see—and it looks to Theodore Roosevelt as the incarnation of that Cause, and the one to carry the Cause to victory.

What that Cause is appears from the series of editorials that our Western contemporary has been fulminating. These editorials draw parallels between the moral corruption to which the ruling class of Rome had become a prey, and the conduct of our own plutocracy of to-day. One instance will do for all the rest.

The Tacoma *Times*, quotes from Dill's *Social Rome*:

“The wives of many Roman citizens during this period had no recognized social position; they had the double taint of servile origin and more than doubtful morals; they were often endowed with many charms and accomplishments, and possessed a special attraction for the Bohemian men. Often of oriental extraction, these women were the most prominent votaries of cults and superstitions which poured into Rome from the prolific east. The one woman whom Nero loved was Acte, bought in an Asia market.”

The passage is paralleled with this item from the San Francisco papers:

“George Morgan, Pierpont Morgan's nephew, is here to-day to meet his Japanese bride, a Geisha girl purchased in Japan from her parents. Mr. Morgan has taken apartments at the Palace hotel and his bride is due to arrive Thursday from Japan. She still wears Japanese clothes.”

And the paper then moralizes and concludes:

“In the same 'Frisco where a Morgan waits to-day for his slave bride of

the Tokio slums are 20,000 wage slaves without a job, and you can get any of them for much less than \$80; though you couldn't get a midnight lunch for four in the 'best' grills of the city for the same sum, let alone get a peek into a monkey dinner at the Fairmont.

"When Rome was getting ready for the rude hand of the Goth and Hun, its leisure class paid \$25,000 for a carpet, \$2,000 for a circus table, and \$500 for a slave cook. Go into an exclusive oriental rug shop and see if the prices have changed much; though cooks are worth a bit more just now.

"They had their indecent and suggestive literature, their indecent plays, and their all-night Turkish baths; any rounder from an American city would feel entirely at home in the Rome of Nero.

"'The Giant problem of the city was to secure without labor the wealth monopolized by the few.' That is an extract from another learned gent's essay on the Fall of the Roman Empire. But otherwise you would think it was an editorial opinion from *Outlook*.

"Race suicide was common; the women of the rich had lap dogs and dwarfs, but no children, and the aping pace of ostentation between the wealthy Roman families was as acute as any pace set at Newport to-day.

"If you want to know why this nation is not going to fall, read the election returns next November," showing Roosevelt's triumphant return to the White House.

The supposition requires much effort, yet, for the sake of simplifying the point, we shall assume that the *Tacoma Times* is correct in its estimate of Roosevelt. We shall assume that Roosevelt is in the field against the extravagance of the Plutocracy. That would show up Roosevelt merely as a Cato the Censor in the Rome of old—a critic and punisher of civic misconduct—a condemner of effects without a word against causes, or the grasp of them—a shouter of "Back to the times of the daddies!"—a blind Cassandra moaning through the halls of Priam's castle—a preacher preaching in the wilderness.

Yes, this Nation is not going to fall. But the symptoms of its rejuvenescence will not yet appear in the election returns next November in magnitude sufficient to seem conclusive. The symptoms of the Nation's rejuvenation lie as yet deep below the surface—the organization of the useful occupations of the land in such form and upon such principles that will yield the crop of an overwhelming vote on election day, followed immediately by the overthrow of the Political State of many-sided iniquity, and the simultaneous establishment of the Industrial or Socialist Republic.

No Cato the Censor's job!

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