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EDITORIAL

## WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HE late municipal election of New York was not a local affair. New York City is more than the metropolis; New York is the head and heart center of the land. What happened here at the late municipal campaign and election in the bourgeois camp was an event of national importance—the conspicuous rise of a conspicuous personality, henceforth to be reckoned with—William Randolph Hearst.

With the flippancy that English critics impute to the American reading public, Mr. Hearst has been called a “tricky politician,” a “self-seeking demagogue,” a “shallow office-seeker” in some quarters, while, in other quarters, the quarters of the High Finance assailed by him, the slogans were “Hearst is an ignoramus, he is a dissolute man, he is an indolent man.” When Mr. Hearst failed in the Mayoralty election of four years ago, a sigh of relief was heaved from all these quarters. They thought: “We are now through with Hearst.” When, the next year, his running mates were all elected and he was beaten for Governor, the belief “we are through with Hearst” became stronger. The belief suffered a shock last year when Mr. Hearst, as the advocate of an independent candidate for



WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST  
(1863–1951)

President, toured the country and delivered a dozen speeches which called more attention than anything Taft or Bryan said; which caused consternation to the Standard Oil, therefore to both the old parties; and which drove from office one of the leading Federal Senators, Foraker, and shook the ground from under several others. Finally this year, at a moment when the Tammany local tickets seemed safe,

with the election of Bannard as the only alternative, it was Mr. Hearst who stepped forward and by a manoeuvre that was brilliant broke the slate, and routed both Murphy and Woodruff. The posture of the public in general towards Hearst has changed very materially since election day. And well it may, seeing that, immediately after his election victory, Mr. Hearst has turned his guns against another mammoth and otherwise dreaded corporation, the New York Central.

History repeats itself—with the variations dictated by circumstances. Caesar of old was also called by the “reformers” of the day and in the then vernacular, a “tricky politician,” a “self-seeking demagogue” and a “shallow office-seeker”; while the proud patriciate had for him none but the kind of epithets that now the large corporations and trusts have for Mr. Hearst—he was “a libertine,” an “idler,” an “ignoramus.”

With the variations that nearly 2,000 years of social evolution compel, the great American Republic is presenting the aspect of the great Roman Republic of the days immediately preceding the rise of Caesar; with the variations that such a span of time compel, what the *Daily People* has said more than once before may be here repeated—the Caesarian outlines are shaping themselves in the personality of William Randolph Hearst, whom the American plutocracy fear as much as the Roman patriciate feared Caesar, and who, in the end, saved their necks.

In the first of the *Two Pages from Roman History*, devoted to the necessity of the revolutionary economic organization of Labor these passages occur:

“Let there be no fatalism in our Councils. The Socialist Republic is no predestined inevitable development. The Socialist Republic depends, not upon material conditions only; it depends upon these—plus clearness of vision to assist the evolutionary process. . . . Is the revolutionary spark of our Age to be smothered and banked up till, as in the Rome of old, it leap from the furnace, a weapon of national suicide?”

When Caesar stepped upon the stage of Rome he was the only logical figure. “Reform” appeared only in the guise of Catiline and his compeers—utterly illogical figures. When the American Caesar shall take full shape in our country, his success or his failure will depend upon he organized progress that Socialism will have made upon the economic field.

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