

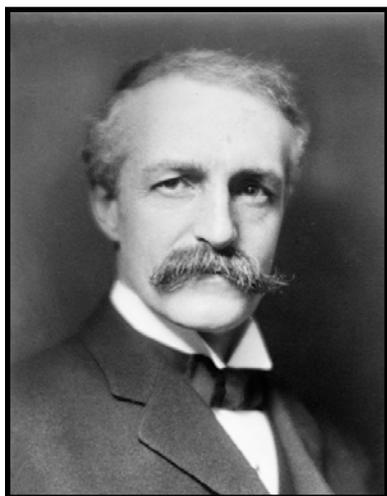
EDITORIAL

SLANDEROUS PINCHOT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

UPON his arrival back to the United States, Gifford Pinchot, former Chief Forester, gave an account of the late disturbances in the champagne district of France.

Among the things he said was that an officer, who was an eye-witness of the pilaging of the castle of “a wealthy woman more than 75 years old, who had been



GIFFORD PINCHOT
(1865–1946)

known for her charitable acts to the poor of the district for half a century, and who had nothing to do with the champagne trade,” informed him that “the white-haired owner begged the rioters on her knees to take all, but spare the only painting she had of her dead daughter, but that, mad in their desire to wipe everything off the earth, the rioters seized the picture and tore it into fragments in front of the aged woman and threw the pieces into the flames.”

Gifford Pinchot’s probable honesty in repeating this yarn is an indictment of the mans knowledge of history, and of the intelligence that goes therewith.

A wealthy old woman living in a castle can not choose but have exploited upon an extensive scale the proletariat of her region. Great gifts wax poor when givers wax unkind is a good old maxim. The unkindness of long protracted exploitation, and its fruition in a castle, can not choose but render poor the charities bestowed upon some of the many proletarians to whom the castle was a visible symbol of cruel unkindness. One, two, or a dozen, or a score of hard hearted villains may take delight in destruction for destruction’s sake, and in the grief of a mother over the tearing to ribbons of the only painting of a departed daughter—a mass of human beings,

acting in such wanton manner is unimaginable. More likely, when human masses act with such fury, it is that the sight of an exploiting mother, begging for the preservation of her deceased daughter's painting, brings back forcibly to the minds of the "rioters" painful memories of their own departed daughters, departed for want of the sustenance produced by the parents but consumed at the "castle." Towards a really benevolent and innocent member of an exploiting household, even the most savage fury that distress and exploitation can engender never yet forgot its own human side.

Such is the language of history. Eugene Sue condenses the same in two superb pictures—one in his historic novel *The Iron Trevet*, the other in a following story of the same series, *The Blacksmith's Hammer*, both descriptive of peasant uprisings.

Whether intentionally or unintentionally, Gifford Pinchot has been retailing slander against the late "rioters" in the champagne district of France.

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