

Robespierre and St. Just downward, the most sanguinary of the savages who made France a shambles, the perpetrators of the Noyades and the Fusillades, as well as those of the butcheries in Paris, were always propounding ideals of social progress, every whit as humane and enlightened as those of any Nihilist or Dynamiter at the present day. In their utterances, the tenderest effusions of philanthropic sentiments alternated with preachings of wholesale massacre. Robespierre and Couthon were prominent in this line. Nor were their characters at all wanting in sensibility; they were always ready with tears of love, as Louis Blanc, their great apologist, has been at the pains to prove. It is due to them, however, to say that, vile, and steeped in innocent blood as they were, they recoiled from the public sanction of assassination when it was proposed by one of the homicidal lunatics of the Convention. History takes strange turns. Who would have dreamed half a century ago that murder would ever again become a power in the world? We used to read of the Old Man of the Mountain and the reign of terror which he set up by means of his assassins as a half legendary tale of the remotest and most irrevocable past. The secret societies of the Middle Ages, such as the Vehmgericht and the Hermandad, which put people secretly to death, were Vigilance Committees of a permanent kind, and found their apology in the lawlessness which the arm of government was too weak to repress. Assassination prevailed to a fearful extent in Italy, but it was personal, not political or terrorist. The Carbonari hardly assassinated any but traitors to their own brotherhood; and in private, as well as in public, Mazzini always repudiated the use of the dagger. He had too much sense to believe that nations could be regenerated by crime. A terrorist association was discovered some years ago at Ravenna, but it was purely local and its objects were private. Extravagant faith in the efficiency of education is rebuked when we see that a depth of wickedness unknown to the barbarous Middle Ages has been opened by highly educated men and women in the midst of our modern civilization. To suppose that murder will prevail would be treason to humanity; yet the struggle may be severe, and dreadful things may be done before it closes. Besides the ordinary denizens of a Faubourg St. Antoine, there are wretches, both male and female, in whom the lust of crime is congenital, and whose depraved natures revel in the consciousness that they are terrible powers of evil. Science just at this juncture has placed in the hands of such people instruments of destruction hitherto unknown, while the increased facilities of locomotion and intelligence have enabled them to extend their concerted action over the world. It happens also that the moral sinew of mankind has been somewhat relaxed of late. The Agnostic will vehemently deny that this is in any way traceable to the decay of religious faith; yet it is at least conceivable that, pending the evolution of scientific ethics, he who believes in nothing beyond or above this life may be less willing to brave the stroke of the assassin than he who believes that so long as his feet are in the path of duty his life is in the hands of God. Policemen and all the guardians of the law are men, and should the influence of terrorism ever reach them, society might for a time be to a fearful extent at the mercy of the assassins. Sentimental dalliance with Nihilism or any of its kindred villainies is, at all events, more than society can afford; and it is somewhat alarming to find anything but thorough-going reprobation in the pages of so eminently respectable a journal as the *Contemporary Review*.

WHEN a journal so strongly liberal and Anti-Jingo as the *Pall Mall Gazette* proclaims that a British Protectorate of Egypt has become a necessity, we may be sure that the die is cast. There is, of course, a chorus of outcries against the hypocritical ambition of Great Britain, from Anglophobists, both French and American, who see nothing hypocritical or ambitious in French aggression on Madagascar and Tonquin. But the charge, like the legend of "perfidious Albion" generally, is baseless. It is true that the reactionary party in England, wishing to divert the minds of the people from political change to military adventure, advocates a Jingo policy in Egypt as well as elsewhere, and that Sir Stafford Northcote, in order to earn his bread, a miserable crust, as leader of the Tory Opposition, has been making a series of factious and unpatriotic moves in that direction. But Mr. Gladstone has been, in his foreign and imperial policy, the steadfast champion of moderation and righteousness. His reluctance to occupy Egypt is sincere, and it is shared by the great body of the nation. The English people want no more territorial aggrandizement; many of them would be only too glad to resign much of the territory which they have; they want only that which is indispensable to the security of their trade, as well as of their empire—safe transit through the Suez Canal. Had Egypt possessed a tolerably stable and not unfriendly Government, no British soldier would ever have set foot on the banks of the Nile. But the Khedivate, with its golden sty of lust and gluttony, its ragamuffin

soldiery, and its devouring Jews, was doomed to share the fate of all Mahometan powers when their military energy has become extinct. It ended as its fellows have done, in military mutiny; and as it has no recuperative force, moral or political, once fallen it can rise no more. England will make no selfish use of her acquisition; she will hold the highway of nations in her trust, but she will never close it against the commerce of mankind. Nor will she take the Soudan if she can help it, though it would be impossible to leave the valley of the Nile always exposed to the devastating swoop of a fanatical horde. The trade of Egypt will not be monopolized; it will be left, as is the trade of India, open to the whole world. That the object of the Protectorate will be mainly material is true; nobody pretends that it will not. The object of the conquest of Texas and New Mexico was not purely moral. But though philanthropy is not the leading motive, there can be no doubt that for the downtrodden, plundered, and tortured peasantry of Egypt there has dawned a day better than any which they have seen since the Persian conqueror thrust the last Pharaoh from his throne. To them, poor beings, bowed to the soil, which they till for a master, destitute of national sentiment, of any political feeling, except abject fear of the despot and his slave-drivers, British sway, though that of a foreigner, is no humiliation; it is simply the substitution of a beneficent Christian ruler like General Gordon, for the tyrannical Ottoman and the grinding Jew. Let those who think the ambition of England unmeasured remember that without the slightest pressure she ceded the Ionian Islands to Greece, and let them produce, if they can, from the history of Empire, another instance of such voluntary renunciation.

THE thanks of all, but especially those concerned in the administration of charity, are due to the St. George's Society of Montreal, for its protest against indiscriminate assistance to immigration. The protest no doubt has been extorted by the bitter experience of this last winter, and it will be heartily echoed by the St. George's Society of Toronto, the office of which, like that of the sister society at Montreal, has been besieged for the last four months by sufferers, half of whom ought never to have been sent here at all. The chief culprits are the ship agents, whose heedlessness calls for prompt and decisive repression. But it is time that the whole question of assisted emigration should be reviewed in the light of present facts, which are widely different from the facts of forty years ago. It is extremely doubtful whether any one is now wanted here who does not find his way to us without government assistance. The North-West may be a case apart; but then it should be treated as a case apart; and emigrants bound for that region should be forwarded straight to their destination, as it were in bond, so that straggling destitution may not be scattered over the eastern cities of the Dominion. When Sir Hector Langevin denounces restriction as unpatriotic, he should have the justice to remember that there being no French immigration, the burden is not shared by his compatriots. Next to the ship agents, the people who do most mischief, though with the most amiable intentions, are orators like Lord Lorne and Lord Carnarvon, who by their pictures of Canada create the belief that whoever is hungry in England has only to come here and bring his family to be fed, even though it be at the setting in of winter when the season for work has closed. If the special object is to make Canada more British and to divert English emigration to us from the United States, it is more than doubtful whether that object is attained, so far at least as the class of mechanics is concerned, for displacement goes on, and the new comers often supplant older residents, who migrate to the States. Englishmen of rank who visit Canada and have no intercourse except with the knights and politicians are often in a fool's paradise about these matters. Canada has been so completely laid at the feet of England by ex-Governors General and other hyperbolically loyal persons, as to lead the English naturally to believe that we shall be thrice happy to relieve them of their pauperism. We would gladly do almost anything for the Mother Country, but for her pauperism we have no longer any room.

It is another thing to put any check on free and unassisted immigration. This, as a rule, is forbidden alike by economical policy and by justice. Immigrants or children of immigrants ourselves, how can we close the hospitable door of nature against our fellows? To immunity from artificial competition, the working man of Canada has a right, especially when the money used to flood his market is taken from his own pocket, but he has no claim to artificial protection. In the resistance to Chinese immigration the cloven hoof of industrial protectionism is always peeping out from beneath the cloak of moral quarantine. "The presence of these foreigners," says an anti-Chinese orator from British Columbia, "is a great drawback to the province: they work for lower wages than Englishmen demand,