

Italy has enough to do to dispose of 179 members of the Mala Vita Society at present under arrest at Basi. She ought to be deeply obliged to New Orleans for disposing of a few members of the Mafia.

The promised improvement in the publishing of the proceedings of the Local Legislature, by omitting the long winded and tiresome debates, and giving an official synopsis in the daily press, is one that will be warmly welcomed. THE CRITIC has always deprecated the publishing of the debates in full, and giving inquiring minds a difficult piece of work to extract the gist of the matter without spending an undue length of time over it. Owing to this difficulty many people, to whom freshness of news was not an important point, have been in the habit of reading papers published in Toronto and elsewhere, in order to see a concise telegraphic report of the doings of our legislators. Now, however, that the Government has decided to yield to the wishes of the Opposition and make the desired change, the public will be able to get the news up to date. Not only will the reading public be benefitted by not having to wade through the debates, but the increased amount of news the daily papers will be able to give by reason of the relief of pressure on their space will be highly appreciated. Usually, during the session, the news is very seriously shortened, and the public have to suffer. The matter of paying for the printing in the daily papers of the official reports was also discussed in the House, with the result that it has been decided to pay for them.

In a late number of the *Arena* Professor Alfred Russel Wallace, of evolution fame, has been writing on the subject of ghosts, under the title of "What are Phantoms and why do they appear?" After examining the evidence at some length Dr. Wallace comes to the conclusion that the apparitions which from time to time appear are indeed none other than the spirit forms of the dead. As illustrating the impossibility of the telepathic hypothesis of communication between living persons he cites the experience of Mrs. Storie, of Edinburgh, who one night saw in a dream her twin brother knocked down by a train, after which she saw a railway compartment in which sat a gentleman she knew, the Rev. Mr. Johnstone. She afterwards learnt that her brother had been run over and killed by a train at the moment of her dream, in which train Mr. Johnstone was seated. But as it was impossible for Mrs. Storie's brother to know that Mr. Johnstone was in the train, Dr. Wallace argues that this knowledge could only have been acquired after death. The Professor also tells a story of a Yorkshire vicar in New Zealand, who was saved from drowning by hearing a voice saying to him before going to bed, after arranging to be called by a boating party next morning, "Don't go with those men." "Why not?" asked the vicar. The voice answered, "You are not to go." He asked, "How can I help it? They will call me up." The voice replied, "You must bolt your door." He did so. The party rattled at his door in the morning, but as he did not stir went away. A few hours afterwards he heard that they were all drowned. From these and from other acts Dr. Wallace regards it as proved that the so called dead still live, and that some of them under special conditions and in various ways make their existence known to us. The Doctor then asks what reasonable explanation can be given of the causes and purposes of these phenomena? He admits that most of their communications are trivial and commonplace. This is because the majority of those who die are trivial and commonplace. Secondly some are condemned to haunt the places where they commit crimes as a kind of penal servitude, ever continuing to re-enact those crimes. Thirdly good and benevolent spirits wish whenever possible to give some message to their friends. Dr. Wallace's conclusion of the whole matter is that if we look upon these phenomena not as anything supernatural, but as the natural and orderly exercise of the faculties of the spiritual being for the purpose of communication with those still in the physical body, we shall find every objection answered and every difficulty disappear. But if so then why do not more benevolent spirits communicate with their relatives and friends?

The recent vote in the Imperial House of Commons against the continuance of the India opium traffic with China, will, it is hoped, result in the final abandonment of the infamous trade. Petitions, both from India and China have been largely signed, showing that the Christians of those countries are anxious to have the traffic put a stop to. Bishop John F. Hunt, in the *Chautauquan* for March, in regard to the opium trade, says:—"Anyone standing on the quay of the Hugli, at Calcutta, can frequently see a monotonous train of waggons, drawn by toiling, puffing bullocks. The progress is very slow, for the burden is heavy. The waggons are piled up with chests, all of equal size and appearance. The contents are to be inspected and then shipped to China and other countries. What are the contents? Opium and nothing else. It is England's greatest contribution to the world's wretchedness. The relation of the culture of the poppy in India to the happiness of the people is very close. The temptation is to plant the herb, for the profit from it is far greater than from any cereal. The cultivation of the poppy in Malwah results in from three to seven times the amount derived from wheat and other cereals, and sometimes from twelve to twenty times as much. The constant tendency is to put a larger average into the cultivation of the poppy. Now and then large tracts of country are visited with great famines. Experience has proved that in these very districts the poppy is most cultivated. Not enough cereals are cultivated to supply the people with food when any great freshet, drought, or other calamity befalls. Behar, the very home of the poppy-culture, for

example, was visited by three great famines in eight years. The culture of the poppy and the manufacture of opium, therefore, are co-existent with famine. In 1883 the area of territory devoted to the culture of the poppy in Bengal was 876,454 acres. Anyone can cultivate the poppy who desires; but the Government having still the monopoly, is the only purchaser. The native gets about 3s. 6d. per pound. But the Government must make its profit, and so it sells the opium at 11s. a pound. The profit, therefore, instead of going into the laborer's hand, goes into the treasury of Christian India. The price of opium in India depends upon its range of price in the Chinese markets. After all expenses are paid, the annual revenue to the Government is upwards of £9,000,000 sterling, gross, and £6,000,000 sterling net." If any man or men can succeed in overturning this vast machine of mammon, a greater victory than that of Trafalgar or Waterloo will be won.

THE LINOTYPE.

The Linotype machine recently introduced into the Government printing office at Ottawa marks a revolution in the art of printing. The "art preservative of arts" has not since its invention received such an impulse as the use of the Mergenthaler Linotype machine is destined to impart. Especially in great daily newspaper offices, where the amount of matter to be set is large and the time within which it must be done limited, will the linotype work a revolution. By this machine one man does the work of four or five trained hand compositors, and with an accuracy, clearness and legibility which type can never attain. For some years these machines have been in use in the New York *Tribune* office, the *Louisville Courier Journal*, the *Chicago News*, *Providence Journal* and the *Brooklyn Standard Union*. Within a few months they have been introduced in the offices of the New York *Herald*, *Commercial Bulletin*, the *Troy, N. Y., Press* and in the Printing Bureau at Ottawa. They have also been successfully introduced in Great Britain. More than two millions of dollars have been spent in bringing the machine to their present development, and the work of improvement goes steadily on. The *Standard Union*, of Brooklyn, N. Y., says the Linotype machines have been in use in that office for five months. The operators are compositors from the cases and had to be educated from the beginning. They are paid under a provisional arrangement—\$22 per week of six days of eight hours each actual composition on the machine. They like the work and pay both better than that of the case. A case of infringement of the Mergenthaler patent recently came before United States Judge Lacombe, which was speedily settled by granting a preliminary injunction against the only competing machine which ever attempted to dispute the claims and merits of the Mergenthaler. As the decision is of interest to publishers in particular, and also gives the general reader a fair idea of what the machine accomplishes, the following extract from the judgment will not be out of place:—"The product of the combination of machinery described in the patent and thus claimed, is a line of type, cast in a solid bar, presenting on its printing edge any combination of letters and printer's marks which the operator may desire—produced automatically. By its use a great change is introduced into the printer's art, whereby the type-setting of single types is dispensed with, and the matter is set up from 'slugs' or 'bars,' each containing, not a single letter nor a single word, but any conceivable combination of words and figures. That such a change in the art is almost revolutionary, seems to be practically conceded, the defendants insisting, however, that the merit of the invention which effected it, must be shared so largely with others early in the field, that Mergenthaler can at most claim but an extremely small part of it for himself. Upon the papers, however, it appears that Mergenthaler was the first man who united in a single machine the instrumentalities which, by means of the operation of finger keys, assembled, from magazines or holders, independent disconnected matrices, each bearing a single character, carried each individual character independently, one by one to a common composing point, where they were placed in line, and were thereupon brought in contact with and closed the face of a mould, of the exact length of a predetermined line, into which mould, by a subsequent operation of the same machine, molten metal was injected and a cast taken, which cast consists of a line bar of type-metal, having on its printing edge any desired combination of characters, and which is ready, as it leaves the machine, for imposition on the form. Some of the advantages secured by the Mergenthaler machine had existed separately before, but all of them could not and did not exist until some one made the combination which lies at the foundation of that machine. When that was once made the way was open for a new departure in the printer's art. The defendants themselves, in the circular which they issue recommending their own machine to the public, enumerate, as among the benefits secured by it, the getting rid of the disadvantage due to individual type, with the dangers of 'squabbling,' the abandoning of single types as the unit without having to provide the two large cases required, when 'logotypes' are used, the avoidance of the necessity of keeping a large stock of type, the adoption of the line bar, cast automatically from assembled matrices as the unit of composition, and the securing of a 'new dress' every day. These same results, however, are all achieved by Mergenthaler's invention, which, moreover, is not a mere paper machine, but one practically operative. The patent which covers it may therefore be fairly considered a foundation patent, and its claim should be broadly construed. When thus construed, infringement seems plain." In offices where the amount of work is small and the time for accomplishing it ample, hand composing will of course hold its own for many year.

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