

"important question," and who, married may be in haste to repent at leisure, oftentimes regrets that telegraphed word. But use is second nature, and the young lady telegraphist soon gets as accustomed to her machine as does the engine-driver to his iron horse. How astonished would be the "postes" of the olden times could they behold our young lady seated so calmly at a little desk, and conveying, with a few slight movements of her little hand, news to the uttermost parts of the world of what is now happening in "dear old England," news which will reach those other lands in a few hours at most—nay, sometimes in Australia actually before it happened, as is often the case, with the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race for instance, when they know in Melbourne the winner before the race is run, an Irishism for which the difference of the world's clocks is accountable. The salary given to lady operators is very inadequate, considering that the young ladies must be well educated and that the strain to the brain is of necessity great. Accuracy, method, and patience are all needed. The hours average about eight a day. The subjects for examination are (1) writing from dictation; (2) writing with a pencil or style; (3) arithmetic. After passing the candidates have to attend the Post Office Telegraph School. The course is free, and lasts for three months. Next follows the period of probation, during which the telegraphist receive from eight shillings to twelve shillings. On receiving a certificate the salary is raised to fourteen shillings per week, gradually increasing to thirty shillings, according to ability; the last is a maximum wage. The limit of age is from fourteen to eighteen years. Application must be made to the Postmaster-General. The work is a favourite one, and in consequence much overcrowded.

AFTER all, everything lies in originality; the great thing is to be original. The hitting on a really new idea is to workers what "striking oil" is to an American. "I struck ile," announces the fascinating old Yankee in Besant and Rice's charming book, "The Golden Butterfly." For an unique, yet simple idea, commend me to the clever French lady, who has not only discovered how to make, but has actually made, quite a fortune. How, ask you? By letting out pillows to passengers on long night journeys, at a franc apiece, a sum gladly paid by tired travellers, who have either forgotten or have not cared to trouble themselves by adding to the already heavy total of baggage a pillow, and yet who soon discover that railway carriages have hard cushions. This wise little lady, who has now the monopoly of the business, is about to add railway rugs, nearly

as good an idea as her first brilliant notion. "Easy to do, truly," as exclaimed the courtiers when Columbus made the egg stand upright. Yea, but who but she would have thought of it?

A PERFORMANCE was given recently by the Gem Amateur Dramatic Society on behalf of the Society for the Boarding-out of Destitute Children. There are advantages, but disadvantages also, in this system, and great discretion and knowledge of human nature are needed for the work. On one side evil, alas! is more communicative than good, for it is so easy to pull down, so difficult to build up. Thus one black sheep, as says the old proverb, may infect the whole flock. Again, it is not easy for parents to treat "the stranger" as they do their own children. Natural instinct is against so doing, and though many, I doubt not, receive the little one in the Master's name, regarding it as a God-sent child, many are, I fear, tempted by the money to accept a responsibility that they soon come to feel a *gêne*; therefore most careful investigation is needed.

My readers will be surprised to hear that Madame Antoinette Sterling "has made formal application for admission to the Society of Friends." This popular sweet-voiced singer is renowned for her good temper and kindness of heart, and is an universal favourite in her profession. She is happily married, and has two dear little children. She ever receives a hearty welcome in the provinces, where she is even a greater "success" than in London, though Londoners will willingly testify how her name on the programme ever draws, and will gladly acknowledge her as one of the reigning stars.

THE heart of the aged ex-monarch of Brazil must be almost broken by the sudden death of his life-partner, especially following as it does so soon upon his forcible dethronement from a throne on which he has reigned more years than any other sovereign in the world, our own beloved Queen not excepted. His own life hangs, as the saying goes, upon a thread, and according to report it will not be long ere death re-unites him to his spouse. The family consists of two daughters, the elder of whom is married to the Count d'Eu. She is a high-spirited, self-willed woman, with strong likes and dislikes, and was very unpopular in Brazil when last winter she acted as Regent during her father's absence in search of health, which, I hear, was one of the main features in the overthrow of the monarchy in that country.

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