

horse-blanket to the mail-bag. Judging from the number of siled cuffs, etc., many a country youth sojourning in a city attempts to send his "washing home to ma," by means of the government valises. The average annual number of "lots" is 3,700, each containing from three to nine articles; 156 pieces of jewelry appeared in the catalogue, but were disposed of singly and at a separate sale.

Having finished the glass cases, our attention was directed to a screen-door through which we could look into a larger apartment a few steps lower, where the inspection of the letters, etc., is conducted by men and women clerks. Visitors are not allowed to enter this apartment, but may watch as long as they please from this communicating door.

Letters that bear no outside information of their owner, are opened and searched for some clue. If it is found, the letter is returned enclosed in an official envelope that is exempt from postage. When no clue can be found, the letter is cast into the nameless heap upon the floor and soon gathered up by men who pass up and down between the desks collecting these letters into two bags for the paper mill.

It would seem that a person dispatching anything of importance would be careful about the address and postage; but blank envelopes, and many minus the name of the town, or State, containing money arrive on the average of 66,137 annually. The amount of money in checks, drafts, etc., something over a million; one year the amount in bills and stamps alone was \$32,000. This money is sent to the U. S. Treasury; if no owner can be found and proved, it is used for the nation; generally 35% is returned to the owners.

The clerks are, of course, assigned their special work, and those who correct the defective addresses, become so expert that they can often supply the hiatus without consulting the directories, and surprising skill is displayed in deciphering original spelling. Some of these addresses are preserved in albums, a corrected envelope having been substituted. We remember one envelope upon which the State was written "fur Goine." One of the bright clerks spelling it

phonetically discovered that the place intended was Virginia.

The average number of letters returned from hotels because the parties have departed, neglecting to give new addresses, is 78,605. Letters not addressed, 175,710. Packages of goods not allowed in the mails, 1,345. Books received, 906. Photographs, 35,160.

There is something pathetic in the sight of so many letters and remembrances destroyed and sold to strangers, while some anxious, loving heart, is watching and longing day after day for their coming. Who can count the heartaches, the life-long separations, the financial troubles starting from these lost letters? Yet the fault is simply and altogether that of those who write and send the letters, or packages, and one can learn a lesson in the Dead Letter Office never to be forgotten. That is, always be careful to write the full address and name both of the sender and desired recipient upon every letter, and in some way attach the same to every package whatever it may be; also to be sure of the proper postage, and the legality of the article sent. If the person lives in a city, the name of the street, and number of the house should be added in the lower left-hand corner; when one does not know the house number, or even the street, one may add to the person's name, in parenthesis, his business, or whatever can assist in finding him. Letters sent to transient residents should add the word "transient" to the residence, or post-office number. This should be the confirmed habit of every person, no matter how unimportant the letter, or parcel, may seem; in this, as in all things else, whatever is worth doing at all, should be done with care. It is a rule of etiquette that the desired recipient's name and address must be added in full to the most informal letter, the lower left hand corner for friendship letters, and at the beginning of business or formal letters. The writer's name should always be at the close, his address at the top. "Never sign initials, it suggests a wish to be unknown, or to escape the possible consequences." The reasonableness of this etiquette reveals itself in the Dead Letter Office.

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