

Clippings

A New York dealer in medicinal tablets received some time ago an order to send six dozen boxes of his goods to a druggist doing business in San Francisco. The entire shipment weighed sixteen pounds. To send the goods by express would cost \$3, that being the rate for twenty pounds adopted by the express companies, and sixteen would not be carried for less. The goods were finally forwarded by mail at a cost of \$2.46 cents—a saving of 54 cents; but to go at this price they had to be divided into six packages, each one separately addressed and prepaid by 41 cents in stamps affixed.

UNUSED STAMPS

How Uncle Sam Redeems Envelopes that are Spoiled or Misdirected

One of the most interesting branches of the postal service is that which is devoted to the redeeming of stamped envelopes which have been misdirected. A person of an observing turn can spend a very profitable half hour there any time listening to the stories told by the men and women of how they came to spoil so much valuable stationery. Indeed, it is a remarkable thing how so many envelopes get misdirected, many large firms returning them in lots of several thousand at a time. The clerks who have to count them say that it is all gross carelessness, and they point to the way in which the envelopes are returned—some back to back, and others folded and twisted into every possible shape. All this means extra work for the

clerks, who have very little spare time on their hands.

The envelopes are redeemed in all cases possible, many packages being received which have obviously not been misdirected. For instance, if a firm goes out of business and has a quantity of envelopes left over, the chances are that a marking brush will be drawn over the edges instead of a few pen scratches being made on each envelope. There are many ways in which envelopes can be spoiled for business purposes, and if a list of all the peculiar cases were made it would fill a book. One man recently brought in a boxful over which he had spilled a bottle of ink, while another had a large quantity that had been badly damaged by fire, and a third appeared with a lot that he claimed had been gnawed by mice.

The government, of course, loses nothing by these transactions. It has been already paid for the envelopes and printing, and it redeems only the face value of the stamps. The New York office makes payment not in cash, but in postage stamps, and these stamps have to come out of the regular supply, as the department at Washington will not recognize any demand until the misdirected envelopes have been counted.

The Postmaster-General is urged in some quarters to face the music of the postal rates, and go back to the one-cent letter charge in cities, and a uniform charge generally. U. S. letters, for instance, come to Canada at a 2c. rate, and ours go to the U. S. at 3c. Then the charge of 5c. for registering is pointed out as unreasonable. Two