

POSTOFFICE CLERK'S TROUBLE

The Fargo Forum Interviews a Postoffice Clerk, Who Tells His Experience.

"I guess I have looked at more tongues than all the doctors in North Dakota," said one of Uncle Sam's veteran clerks at the postoffice stamp window. "In my many years' service at this window I have also inhaled some of the loveliest Bermuda onion breaths that one can imagine. I have also smelled some of the worst Rail Fence Rye that has ever come out of a moonshine still. Usually, however, the whiskey-laden breath is mixed with cloves, parched corn or coffee. If I didn't belong to a church it is possible that I would frequently fracture the third commandment.

"As a rule members of the gentler sex are hardest to deal with. Most women are from Missouri when it comes to buying stamps. They have to be shown the stamps before they will wrench themselves away from their money. A man will rush up and throw down a dollar and ask for so many postage stamps. That gives us a chance to inspect the money, as we are getting the stamps ready, and we are expected to take in good money here for stamps, and for that reason we like to have enough time to inspect it before it goes to Uncle Samuel, as we are held responsible."

"Do you mean that women are slow pay at the stamp window?"

"You have hit the nail in the vicinity of the head," said the overworked stamp vender. "When a woman orders so many stamps she usually hunts in her purse for a certain coin which

she d... to tender in payment. There... be a string of men behind... resembling a minstrel parade, but this does not deter her from taking out ten or twelve yards of lace, a cook book, three or four memorandum books and a lot of other traps, which she takes from her shopping bag and places on the window until she can find the half dollar which is slightly defaced and was accepted from the conductor with reluctance and a frown. While she is fishing around for that particular coin that squad of men put in their time making remarks on this order: 'Get her an arm chair.' Any time today.' 'That stamp clerk must be one of the snail family.' I wish I had a pillow.' 'I'll bet that woman has her own way at home.'

"I hear all this, but no matter how I try to make the woman hurry, it is no use. Don't think this is a rap at all the sex, because it is not.

"Some women buy their stamps and get away the same as business men. An interesting thing is the various ways that people have of putting stamps on letters. Greeks and Italians, who have just landed here, invariably place the postage stamp in the center of the back of the envelope. In doing this, however, they are following the custom which obtains in their own country, where stamps are used for the dual purpose of postage and sealing.

A man or woman has to be a mind reader to fill the job.