

The two friends that I write the most often don't have to worry how high their postage bills run. One is a San Angelo pediatrician who, from the way his practice has grown in the past 30 years, may be on the verge of making a big killing from the strep throat and diaper-rash game. My other compadre, in his late years of life, is showing a lot of promise as a poet and Western writer. Two fields of endeavor, needless to say, which could, by compounding the income over 50 or 60 years, produce a big pile of dough.

First class postage is going to take another rise this year. I write those two guys nearly every week; plus the longer this correspondence has lasted, the more copies of book reviews and magazine cartoons and news items are included.

These items, of course, take extra postage. But I want an audience that'll pay attention. If, for example, I mail one of my sons a news article captioned "92 Year Old Man Sprains Little Finger On Trampoline Doing Half Gainers," chances are he'll miss the value of the story. But my correspondents will not only comment on the report, but be heartened to know of this late age acrobat.

I suppose postal rates need to stay up with the times. The national debt is running into the trillions. I think it's appropriate that we tax payers start watching the coins we toss across the counters at postal stations.

So next week I am going to use 15-cent stamps. I hate to have to give up mailing the news, but I can't underwrite educating the affluent.