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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

orders and postal notes for the year amounted to $136,811,816.23.

The number of letters and packages mailed during the year for special delivery was 3,225,[illegible], an increase over the preceding year of nearly 22 per cent. The special delivery stamps used upon these letters and packages amounted to $[illegible], and the messengers for delivery thereof numbered [illegible]. The cost of the special delivery service was $[illegible], leaving a profit to the government of $[illegible]. The railway mail service is now only waiting for the completion of mail delivery at all offices to be in the superior position to fully meet the needs and requirements of the service on an equitable basis, in regard with the larger and heaviest offices. This branch of the postal service has therefore received more attention from the Postmaster General, and though it is gratifying to know that it is in a condition of high efficiency and great usefulness, I am not to refer with the Postmaster General that there is room for further improvement.

There are now connected with the post office establishment 28,[illegible] employes who are in the classified service. The heads of the great departments give conclusive evidence of the value of civil service reform, in their, albeit in some instances, brief reports, and as the subject absolutely relates, as expresses the opinion that without the benefit of this system it would be impossible to conduct the vast business entrusted to them. I desire to commend to the especial weight of congress attention the suggestions of the Postmaster General relative to a more extensive extension of the postal service and a better distribution of responsibility in his department.

THE NAVY.

The report of the Secretary of the Navy contains a history of the operations of the department during the past year, and exhibits a most gratifying condition of the personnel of the navy. He presents a satisfactory account of the progress which has been made in the construction of vessels and makes a number of recommendations to which attention is especially invited. During the past six months the navy has done very creditable work for peace and, if need arose, for war. There have been no accidents to any of our vessels, and the service has been free from any serious disaster. The cruise of the Chicago, carrying as our representative the World's Fair Commission, who were previously under the act of June 27, 1892, which allows payment of expenses of march and maintenance, not chargeable to any service, was $[illegible]. The aggregate cost of the navy for the year was $[illegible], and the number employed was 13,[illegible]. The first cost of vessels of navy allowed during the year amounted to $[illegible]. The items included already in commission between the time from which the date of passage of vessels date and the time of actually placing the certificate. Although the use of this premium system for obtaining new vessels is strongly urged, yet as a reputable to be beneficial