THE HERALD.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Concluded, from First Page.

regular service, both of which were recommended in my last annual message. Third—That the manufacturing operations of the Ordnance Departments be concentrated at three arsenals and an armory, and that the remaining arsenals be sold and the proceeds applied to this object by the Ordnance Department.

The appropriations for

RIVER AND HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS

for the current year were $5,015,000.—With my approval the Secretary of War directed that of this amount $2,000,000 should be expended and no new works should be begun and none prosecuted which were not of national importance. Subsequently this amount was increased to $3,237,000, and works are now progressing on this basis.—The improvements of the South Pass of the Mississippi River under Jas. B. Eads and his associates is progressing favorably. At the present time there is a channel of 20 and 3-10 feet in depth between the jetties at the mouth of the pass, and 18½ feet at the head of the pass. Neither channel, however, has the width required before the payments can be made by the United States. A commission of engineer officers is now examining these works, and their reports will be presented as soon as received.

THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

shows that branch of the service to be in a condition as effective as it is possible to keep it with the means the appropriations gives the department. It is, of course, impossible to rival the costly and progressive establishments of the great European Powers with the old material of our navy, to which no increase has been authorized since the war, except the eight small cruisers built to supply the place of others which had gone to decay. Yet the most has been done that was possible with the means at command, and by substantially rebuilding some of our old ships with durable material, and completely repairing and refitting our monitor fleet, the navy has been gradually so brought up that though it does not maintain its relative position among the progressive navies of the world, it is now in a condition more powerful and effective than it has ever been in time of peace. The complete repairs of our five heavy iron-clads are only delayed on account of the inadequacy of the appropriations made last year for the working bureaus of the department which were actually *less* in amount than those made before the war, notwithstanding the greatly enhanced price of labor and materials, and the increase in the cost of the naval service, growing out of the universal use and great expense of steam machinery. The money necessary for these repairs should be provided at once, that they may be completed without further unnecessary delay and expense. When this is done all the strength that there is in the navy will be developed and made useful to its full capacity, and all will be powerful for the purpose of defense, and also for offensive action should necessity for that arise within a reasonable distance from our shores, and the fact that our navy is not more modern and powerful than it is has been made a cause of complaint against the Secretary of the Navy by persons who, at the same time, criticise and complain of his endeavors to bring the navy that we have to its best and most efficient condition. But the good sense of the country will understand that it is owing to his practical action that we have at this time any effective navy force at command.

THE REPORT OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL

shows the excess of expenditures, excluding expenditures on account of previous years—over the receipts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1876, to be $4,151,988.66. The estimated expenditures for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1876 are $36,723,432.43 estimated revenue for the same period is $30,645,165, leaving an estimated excess of expenditures to be appropriated of $6,078,267.43.

The Postmaster General, like his predecessor, is convinced that a change of the basis of adjusting the

SALARIES OF POSTMASTERS

of the fourth class is necessary for the good of the service as well as for the interest of the Government, and urgently recommends that the compensation of this class of Postmasters above mentioned be based upon the business of their respective offices, as ascertained from the sworn returns to the Auditor of stamps cancelled.

A few Postmasters in the Southern States have expressed great apprehension of their personal safety on account of their connection with the Postal Service, and specially requested that their reports of the apprehended danger should not be made public lest it should result in the loss of their lives; but no positive testimony or interference has been submitted except in the case of a mail messenger at Spartansburg, in South Carolina, who reported that he had been violently driven away, while in charge of the mails, on account of his political affiliations.

An assistant superintendent of the railway mail service investigated this case and reported that the messenger had disappeared from his post, leaving his work to be performed by a substitute.

The Postmrster General thinks this case is sufficiently suggestive to justify him in recommending that a more severe punishment should be provided for the offense of assaulting any person in charge of mails, or of retarding or otherwise obstructing him by threats of personal injury.

A very gratifying result is presented in the fact that the deficiency of this department during the last fiscal year was reduced to $4,981,790.18, as against $6,169,938.88 of the preceding year.

THE DIFFERENCE

can be traced to the large increase in its ordinary receipts, which greatly exceed the estimates therefor, and a slight decrease in its expenditures.—The ordinary receipts of the Post Office Department for the past seven fiscal years have increased at the average rate of over 8 per cent. per annum, while the increase of expenditures for the same period has been about 5½ per cent. per annum, and the decrease of deficiency in the revenue has been ot the rate of only two per cent. per annum.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE,

accompanying this message, will be found one of great interest, marking as it does the great progress of the last century in the variety of produce of the soil; the increased knowledge and skill of labor in producing, saving, and manipulating the same for the use of man; in the improvement of machinery to aid the agriculturist in his labor, and in a knowledge of the scientific subjects necessary to a thorough system in economy in agricultural productions, namely: Chemistry, Botany Entomology, etc. A study of this report by those interested in agriculture and deriving their support from it, will find it of value in pointing out those articles which are raised in greater quantity than the needs of the world requires, and must sell, therefore, for less than the cost of production, and those which command a profit over the cost of production because there is not an over production. I call special attention to the need of that department for a new gallery for the reception of the exhibits returned from the Centennial exhibition, including the exhibits donated by very many foreign nations, and the recommendations of the Commissioner of Agriculture generally.

THE REPORTS OF THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS AND THE BOARD OF HEALTH

are just now received, too late to read them and to make recommendations thereon, and they are herewith submitted.

THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

held in Philadelphia this year, in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of American Independence, has proven a great success, and will no doubt be of enduring advantage to the country. It has shown the great progress in the arts, sciences and mechanical skill made in a single century and demonstrated that we are but little behind the older nations in any one branch, while in some we scarcely have a rival. It has served, too, not only to bring people and products of skill and labor from all parts of the world together, but in bringing people together from all sections of our country, which must prove a great benefit in the information imparted and in the pride of country engendered. It has been suggested by scientists interested in and connected with the Smithsonian Institution in a communication herewith, that the Government exhibit be removed to the Capitol, and a suitable building be erected or purchased for its accommodation as a permanent exhibit. I earnestly recommend this, and believing that Congress would second this view, I directed that all Government exhibits at the Centennial Exhibition should remain where they are, except such as might be injured by remaining in a building not intended as a protection in inclement weather, or such as may be wanted by the department furnishing them, until the question of permanent exhibition is acted on. Although the moneys appropriated by Congress to enable the participation of the several Executive Departments in the International Exhibition of 1876 were not sufficient to carry out the undertaking to the full extent at first contemplated, it gives me pleasure to refer to the very efficient and creditable manner in which the Board appointed from these several departments to provide an exhibition on the part of the Government have discharged their duties with the funds placed at their command without a precedent to guide them in the preparation of such a display. The success of their labors was amply attested by the sustained attention which the contents of the Government building attracted during the period of exhibition from both foreign and native people. I am strongly impressed with the value of the collection made by the Government for the purposes of the exhibition, illustrating as it does the general resources of the country the statistical and practical evidences of our growth as a nation, and the uses of the mechanical arts and the applications of applied science in the administration of the affairs of the Government. Many nations have voluntarily contributed their exhibits to the United States to increase the interest in any permanent exhibition Congress may provide for.

For this act of generosity they should receive the

THANKS OF THE PEOPLE,

and I respectfully suggest that a resolution of Congress to that effect be adopted.

The attention of Congress cannot be too earnestly called to the necessity of throwing some greater safeguard over the method of choosing and declaring the

ELECTION OF A PRESIDENT.

Under the present system there seems to be no provided remedy for contesting the election in any one State. The remedy is partially, no doubt, in the enlightenment of electors.

The compulsory support of free schools, and the disfranchisement of all who cannot read and write the English language, after a fixed probation would meet my hearty approval. I would not make this apply, however, to those who are already voters, but I would to all becoming so, after the expiration of a probation fixed upon.

Foreigners coming to this country to become citizens who are educated in their own language would acquire the requisite knowledge of ours during the necessary residence to obtain naturalization.

IF THEY DID NOT

take enough interest in our language to acquire a sufficient knowledge of it to enable them to study the institutions and laws of the country intelligently I would not confer upon them the right to enact laws, nor to sit with those who do.

I append to this message for convenient reference a synopsis of administrative events, and of all recommendations to Congress made by me during the last seven years. Time may show some of these recommendations not to have been wisely conceived, but I believe the larger part

WILL BE NO DISCREDIT

to the administration. One of these recommendations met with the united opposition of one political party in the Senate, and with a strong opposition from the other, namely, the treaty for the annexation of

SAN DOMINGO

to the United States, to which I shall specially refer, maintaining as I do, if my views had been concurred in, the country would be in a more prosperous condition to-day, both politically and financially. San Domingo is fertile, and upon its soil may be grown just those tropical productions which the United States use so much, and which are produced or prepared for market now by slave labor,—namely, sugar, coffee, dyewoods, mahogony, tropical fruits, tobacco, etc. About 75 per cent. of the exports of Cuba are consumed in the United States. A large per centage of the exports of Brazil also find the same market.—These are paid for almost exclusively in coin, legislation particulary in Cuba being unfavorable to a mutual exchange of the products of each country. Flour shipped from the Mississippi River to Havana can pass by the very entrance to the city on its way to a port in Spain, there pays a duty fixed upon articles to be re-exported, transferred to a Spanish vessel, and brought back almost to the point of starting, paying a second duty and still leave a profit over what would be received by direct shipment. All that is produced in Cuba could be produced in San Domingo, which being part of the United States, commerce between the island and the main land would be free, there would be no export duties on her shipments, nor import duties on those coming here. There would be no import duties upon the supplies, machinery, etc., going from the States. The effect that would have been produced upon Cuban commerce with these advantages to a rival is observable at a glance. The Cuban question would have been settled long ago in favor of Free Cuba. Hundreds of American vessels would now be advantageously used in transporting the valuable woods and other products of the soil of the island to a market, and in carrying supplies and emigrants to it. The island is but sparsely settled, while it has an area sufficient for the profitable employment of several millions of people. The soil would have soon fallen into the hands of the United States capitalists. The products are so valuable in commerce that emigration there would have been encouraged. The emancipated race of the South, would have found there a congenial home where their civil rights would not be disputed, and where their labor would be much sought after, and the poorest among them could have found the means to go there in cases of great oppression and cruelty, such as has been practiced in many places within the last eleven years. Whole communities would have sought refuge in San Domingo. I do not suppose the whole race would have gone, nor is it desirable that they should go. Their labor is desirable, indispensable almost, where they now are; but the possession of the territory would have left the negro master of the situation by enabling him to demand his rights at home on pain of sending them elsewhere. I do not present these views now as a recommendation of the renewal of the subject of annexation, but I refer to it to vindicate my previous action in regard to it.

With the present Congress

MY OFFICIAL LIFE TERMINATES.

It is not probable that public affairs will ever again receive attention from me farther than as a citizen of the Republic, always taking a deep interest in the honor and integrity and prosperity of the whole land.

[Signed,] U. S. GRANT,
Executive Mansion, Dec. 5, 1876.