

## THE NEW SPECIAL AGENT FORCE.

In my last annual report I called attention to the fact that this department was obliged to call upon the Treasury Department for detective service and had, in fact, no permanent executive force directly under its orders. Through the prohibition of its further use of the secret service force, contained in the sundry civil appropriation act, approved May 27, 1908, it became necessary for the department to organize a small force of special agents of its own. Although such action was involuntary on the part of this department, the consequences of the innovation have been, on the whole, moderately satisfactory. The special agents, placed as they are under the direct orders of the chief examiner, who receives from them daily reports and summarizes these for submission each day to the Attorney-General, are directly controlled by this department, and the Attorney-General knows, or ought to know, at all times what they are doing and at what cost. Under these circumstances he may be justly held responsible for the efficiency and economy of the service rendered. The experience of the past six months has shown clearly that such a force is, under modern conditions, absolutely indispensable to the proper discharge of the duties of this department, and it is hoped that its merits will be augmented and its attendant expense reduced by further experience.