

## APPEAL BOARD.

The Appeal Board met in May last year. Nineteen appeals were considered, of which nine were reported against by the Board. Of the remaining ten the Minister was advised by the Crown Law Officer that two of the appeals could not legally be given effect to; one case recommended by the Board for reconsideration has been settled by the promotion of the officer concerned to the first suitable vacancy; two claims from officers engaged in money-order and savings-bank work for higher pay were deferred; one case had been met by the action of the department in ordinary course; another, involving a question of precedence, was placed beyond dispute by the promotion of the two officers principally concerned to vacancies which were offering; and one appeal against a payment for house-rent and for payment of a small sum for performing Customs work was met by carrying out the Board's recommendation to enforce payment of rent, and to pay for the additional duties performed. The question as to the salary and status of a mail-clerk in charge of a staff was deferred until general action could be taken to place all officers holding similar positions on the same footing. This, it is hoped, may be done this year. The remaining case was adjusted in the manner recommended by the Board.

The term of office of the elective members of the Board—Messrs. W. McNickle and F. M. Scully—having expired by effluxion of time, an election was held on the 25th February last, when Mr. J. H. Stevens was returned for the postal branch, and Mr. H. G. Greatbatch for the telegraph branch. Mr. McNickle had held office since 1895, having served for three terms. Mr. Stevens, the newly elected postal member, held office for the biennium 1897-99. The new Board met in May last.

## EXPRESS DELIVERY AND SPECIAL-MESSENGER SERVICES.

Express delivery and special-messenger services were introduced on the 1st January last, but so far the public has been slow to take advantage of either service. It is difficult to assign a reason for this; but no doubt the very large proportion of telephone-exchange connections with private houses, the great number of private boxes let at the principal post-offices, the existing facilities for telegraphing, and the conveniences for bureau communications, combine to render an express service of less value than would otherwise be the case. The special-messenger service, which was established principally for the benefit of telephone-exchange subscribers, is being more freely made use of, but not to the extent expected.

## INSPECTION.

1,022 offices were visited and inspected, the distance travelled being 18,475 miles.

## OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

The Post-office duties connected with the old-age pensions have been satisfactorily overtaken. The consideration shown pensioners by the paying-officers and others has been most commendable, and has done much to minimise inconveniences which up to the present would appear to have been unavoidable in carrying on the system.

The total number and value of transactions during the year ended 31st March last showed an increase of 25 per cent. on the previous year's work, as indicated by the following return:—

COMPARATIVE RETURN showing Number and Amount of Old-age Pension Payments made each Month, for the Two Years ended 31st March, 1901.

Month.	1899-1900.			1900-1.				
	Number of Payments.	Amount.			Number of Payments.	Amount.		
		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
April ... ..	5,846	8,360	10	0	10,899	15,601	4	5
May ... ..	7,341	10,454	0	0	11,094	15,877	4	7
June ... ..	8,220	11,709	6	8	11,242	16,095	13	8
July ... ..	8,743	12,447	13	4	11,314	16,216	11	4
August ... ..	9,172	13,061	15	0	11,366	16,270	13	2
September ... ..	9,532	13,575	8	4	11,434	16,375	8	9
October ... ..	9,761	13,892	15	8	11,561	16,552	8	5
November ... ..	10,093	14,382	5	9	11,566	16,554	6	3
December ... ..	10,235	14,555	13	1	11,745	16,819	19	7
January ... ..	10,383	14,771	4	3	11,913	17,035	11	4
February ... ..	10,426	14,867	16	7	12,028	17,212	1	10
March ... ..	10,697	15,255	9	10	11,982	17,116	7	3
Totals ... ..	110,449	£157,333	18	6	138,144	£197,727	10	7