

York than it does to govern Chicago, Philadelphia or Boston, which cities spend more money every year than do any other American cities aside from New York.

And now, with these disquieting facts staring them in the face, the tax-payers of New York are informed

that the assessed value of property in the city is to be increased by \$300,000,000, in order that the bonded indebtedness of the city may be increased \$30,000,000.

In view of this enormous outlay of money, the cost of the maintenance and government of the city of Montreal is moderation itself.

(From the New York Herald.)

COSTS MORE TO GOVERN NEW YORK THAN ANY OTHER CITY IN THE WORLD.

Our rulers spend more in the aggregate and more per capita, receive larger salaries, require more money for policing and cleaning the streets, and find other opportunities for using millions of dollars annually more than is required for any other municipality at home or abroad.

City.	Population.	Annual Cost of Govern.	Cost Per Capital.	Mayor's Salary.	POLICE DEPARTMENT.		MUNICIPAL LEGISLATURE.		Department of Education	Street Cleaning.
					No. of Men.	Annual Expense.	Members.	Compensation.		
		\$	\$	\$		\$		\$	\$	\$
New York...	3,389,753	138,000,000	47.10	15,000	5,100	11,000,000	88	132,000	11,000,000	3,950,000
Paris	2,511,629	72,700,000	28.94	No salary.	8,100	5,600,000	80	64,000	5,000,000	1,700,000
London	6,291,697	65,000,000	10.33	\$50,000 for expenses.	16,000	8,000,000	138	No salaries.	17,000,000	—
Berlin	1,726,098	21,450,000	12.42	7,500	4,500	785,000	126	No salaries.	3,500,000	550,000
Vienna	1,423,000	11,850,000	8.32	—	2,800	—	138	No salaries.	—	570,000
Chicago	1,098,576	32,400,000	20.39	10,000	3,385	3,225,000	—	—	5,600,000	690,000
Philadelphia	1,044,894	23,000,000	22.01	12,000	2,600	2,50,000	—	—	3,500,000	845,000
Boston,	446,507	10,640,000	23.82	10,000	1,123	1,360,000	—	—	2,260,000	780,000

For purposes of comparison THE CHRONICLE appends the approximate cost of governing the city of Montreal.

Montreal. . .	300,000	2,921,925	9.66	2,000	350	268,500	—	—	320,000	233,000
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THE 1898 FIRE LOSS.

The New York "Journal of Commerce" publishes the following classification of, and comments upon fire losses during the past year:—

The fire loss of the United States and Canada for the month of December, as compiled from our daily records, aggregates \$12,712,100. The total for the year 1898 is \$119,650,500. The following table shows the losses by months during the years 1896, 1897 and 1898:—

	1896.	1897.	1898.
January	\$11,040,000	\$12,049,700	\$ 9,472,500
February	9,730,100	8,676,750	12,629,300
March	14,839,600	10,502,959	7,645,200
April	12,010,600	10,833,000	8,211,000
May	10,618,000	10,193,600	11,072,200
June	5,721,250	5,684,450	9,206,900
July	9,033,250	6,626,950	8,929,750
August	8,895,250	6,454,950	7,793,500
September	8,200,650	9,392,000	14,203,650
October	8,993,000	11,387,500	7,534,400
November	5,211,700	7,189,800	10,245,000
December	11,362,000	11,328,650	12,712,100
Totals	\$115,655,500	\$110,319,650	\$119,650,500

During December there were 216 fires of a greater destructiveness than \$10,000 each. They may be classified as below:—

\$10,000 to \$20,000	88
20,000 to 30,000	36
30,000 to 50,000	36
50,000 to 75,000	18
75,000 to 100,000	15
100,000 to 200,000	17
200,000 to 1,116,600	6
Totals	216

A detailed list of these fires appears on the insurance page, this issue. The principal losses during December were these:—

New York city, clothing store and office building	\$720,000
Los Angeles, Cal., oil works	225,000
Terre Haute, Ind., dry goods house and other	875,000
Montreal, Que., dry goods house and other	1,116,600
Burlington, Vt., lumber yards and mill	250,000
Minneapolis, Minn., grain elevator	200,000
Shreveport, La., dry goods house and other	195,000

During the entire year of 1898 there were 2,023 fires of a destructiveness exceeding \$10,000 each, the largest loss being at New Westminster, B.C., amounting to \$2,500,000.

Taken altogether, the year has been an expensive one for the fire insurance companies; but the gain in security values will probably offset the increase in loss ratio. The principal handicap under which underwriters now suffer is the lowness of rates. There have been so many reductions during the past two years that it seems as though current rates taken as a whole are unprofitable.

ANOTHER GREAT FIRE IN NOVA SCOTIA.

The destruction of the business part of Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, by fire, this morning, will be another severe blow to the interested companies, and is a bad beginning for the new year's business. Particulars are not yet obtainable, owing to the burning of the telegraph office, but if, as reported, the buildings on both sides of the main street have been destroyed, the calamity is great indeed.

Bridgewater is a town of some 3,500 inhabitants, and is situated on the La Have River (in Lunenburg County), about fourteen miles from the sea. It is reached by the N. S. Central Railway, and by steamer from the city of Halifax. The distance from the city by water is 70 miles, and by rail 110. It is a great resort for tourists and sportsmen, and contains about six churches, a high school, a large number of stores, four hotels, a foundry, a tannery, saw mills and two banks, both of the last named being situated with the telegraph and telephone offices on the street said to be burned. Reliable information of the insurance loss will not be obtainable for several days, but a partial list places the insurance at about \$100,000, while the loss is roughly estimated at \$300,000. The latest news says:—