

Plenty of good water is a necessity, but there must be a large leakage and waste when the consumption rises so high per capita as in Montreal.

To prevent waste appears well nigh impossible, but regulation by meter would make those who cause the waste pay the bill.

THE RAILWAY EARNINGS.

The railway earnings for the past month and past year show a decided improvement over similar periods a year ago. Every road reports an increase in business and profits. A splendid barometer of the business in the world of affairs is the railway earnings.

As might be expected, the number of idle cars is growing rapidly less, and shortly we may hear the call for more cars.

UNION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES.

At the concluding day's session of the Union of Canadian Municipalities held in Calgary, Alta., the principal business was the election of officers which resulted as follows:—Hon. Past President, J. J. Ward, Toronto, Alderman Lavelle, Montreal; Hon. Past Vice-Presidents, Mayor Stevely, London; Mayor Keny, New Westminster; President, R. C. Cochrane, Reeve of Blanchard, Man.; First Vice-President, W. Sanford Evans, Winnipeg; Second Vice-President, Mayor Chisholm, Halifax; Third Vice-President, Alderman McGee, Toronto; Hon. Secretary-Treasurer, W. D. Lighthall, Westmount, Que. The union will meet next year in Toronto.

AGES AND TERMS OF SERVICE IN MUNICIPAL LABOR FORCE.

In their investigation of the Boston Water Department, Metcalf & Eddy, of Boston, consulting civil engineers to the Finance Commission, made a searching analysis of the records of ages and terms of service of municipal employees. From their exhaustive report, which has just been published, the following is quoted:—

"The average in April, 1907, of the labor force in the Distribution and Income Divisions of the Water Department was forty-nine years, and the average length of service about thirteen years; and, what is not apparent from this simple statement of fact, the average age at time of appointment is much greater now than it was some years ago, so that if the present policy of appointing men upwards of forty or even fifty years ago to do the work properly belonging to young and vigorous men is persisted in, the efficiency of the labor force is bound to be more and more seriously affected. This becomes clearly evident when we consider that most of the employees to-day are drawn from the ranks of city-bred men, whereas twenty years ago the labor was drawn mostly from the country, and moreover from a class accustomed to hard manual labor.

The average ages at time of appointment of the men in the labor force are shown in the following tabulation:—

Ages at Time of Appointment of Men Now in Labor Force.

Age when appointed.	Distribution Division,		Income Division,	
	Per Cent. of Force.	No. of Men.	Per Cent. of Force.	No. of Men.
Under 20	4.0	19	4.6	3
20-25	9.1	43	7.6	5
25-30	18.4	87	12.2	8
30-35	16.5	78	16.7	11
35-40	16.3	77	19.8	13
40-45	12.8	60	16.7	11
45-50	14.4	68	12.1	8
Over 50	8.5	40	10.3	7
Total	100.0	472	100.0	66

A study of the relation of length of service to ages of employees indicates clearly that the average term of service does not keep pace with the increased age of employees.

From our study of this department, we have concluded that, provided the general policy be adopted of appointing young and vigorous men under forty, or better, under fifty-five years of age, in filling the vacancies, there will be found sufficient positions involving comparatively easy work to care for the superannuated or incapacitated men without prejudice to any city's interests, and without the adoption of a pension system, with its attendant cost and serious danger of abuse, if a proper system of promotion or gradation of work be followed. It must be admitted, however, that with existing conditions, the department is overloaded with superannuated men, many of whom had already passed their years of active service or usefulness at the time of their appointment to the city's service, and the city is now, in effect, virtually pensioning these men at full pay, a rate at least double that contemplated by the ordinary pension system, and far in excess of any pension rate of which we know; a rank injustice to the men who have grown old in the service of the city, and an influence demoralizing in its effect upon the efficiency of the department."

A NUMBER OF LETTERS LIKE THE FOLLOWING ARE BEING RECEIVED DAILY.

To the Business Manager,
Canadian Engineer,
Church St., Toronto.

Dear Sir:

I enclose cheque value \$4.00 being two years' subscription for Canadian Engineer for the years 1910-1911.

Receipt in due course will oblige.

Yours truly,
(sgd.) W. S. Brooke.

I must congratulate the Editor and all connected with him, in the great strides the paper has made the last 12 months. Your efforts ought to be greatly appreciated by the profession. Your paper is invaluable.

E. A. James, Esq.
Managing Editor,
The Canadian Engineer,
Church and Court Sts.
Toronto, Ontario.

Dear Sir:

I enjoy the Canadian Engineer very much. It has improved to a marked degree in the last year or two and I must congratulate you on having brought your paper to its present high standard as a technical journal.

Believe me,
Yours very truly,
(sgd.) H. B. R. Craig,
City Engineer.

Red cross rules for the prevention of railroad accidents have been printed very attractively by the Monetary Times Printing Company, Toronto, Ont. They will be distributed free of charge to railroads or traction companies desiring to use them as placards or as counter literature. Seven simple rules, easily remembered, would save many lives, and the railroads much money, if widely distributed. The following note of caution is added:—"Prevention of accidents and injuries by all legitimate means is a personal duty which everyone owes not to himself alone, but also to his family." All orders for the cards will be promptly filled without charge.

MR. H. C. SIDDELEY, London manager of the Lancashire Dynamo & Motor Company, of Trafford Park, Manchester, was in Toronto this week on his way through after having visited extensive contracts in India, Africa, China and Japan. The Lancashire Dynamo & Motor Company has just put in three 1,000 k.w. sets for the Imperial Japanese Government.