

COMPARATIVE WAGES PAID BY MUNICIPALITIES AND PRIVATE PARTIES.

The city of Boston has employed common labor for many years, and has at frequent intervals increased the rate per hour paid for such service. The result of these increases is shown in the accompanying table from the report of Metcalf & Eddy, consulting civil engineers to the Boston Finance Commission:—

Nominal Time Worked and Wages Paid.

Period.	Hours per week.	Nominal rate of wages. Per day.	Per hour.
1878-1883	60	\$1 75	\$0 17½
1883-1891	60	2 00	20
1891-1897	54	2 00	22½
1897-1900	50	2 00	24
1900-1907	44	2 00	27¼
1907 to date.....	44	2 25	30¾

From this table it appears that the nominal rate of pay per day for common labor has increased from \$1.75 in 1878 to \$2.25 at the present time; while during the same period the nominal length of day has been reduced from ten hours to eight hours. The present rate of pay per day, based upon an eight-hour day (28.1 cents per hour) does not indicate the actual net cost to the city of labor. In 1891 the city's labor force Saturday half holidays with pay, which custom has prevailed up to the present time. Making allowance for the Saturday half holiday, the rate of pay per hour at the present time becomes 30¾ cents.

It has been customary to allow full pay for legal holidays, and in numerous cases pay has been continued when employees are away on account of sickness. A consideration of all allowances show them to amount to 10.86 per cent. of the total 313 possible working days of the year. Calculating the rate of pay on this basis, the consulting engineers show that instead of a nominal wage of \$2.25, the city is paying \$2.52 per day, or 31½ cents per hour. The following table shows the rates of wages paid to common laborers by various contractors, and in most cases the length of the working day:—

Length of Day and Rate of Wages of Common Laborers Employed by Local Contractors, 1907 and 1908.

Contractor.	Number of laborers (approximate).	Length of working day (hours).	Rate of pay per hour (cents).
1			25
2			25
3	75	8	22
4	40 to 50	9 to 8 ²	17½ to 20 ¹
5	50	10 to 9	20
6			20 ¹
7		9	22 2-9 ¹
8	12	9 to 8	22 2-9 to 25
9	10	9 to 8	25 to 30
10		8	20 to 25 ¹
11			20 to 25
12	200	10 ³	20
13	15 to 20	9 to 8	22 2-9 to 30 ⁴
14	60 to 70	10 to 9	17½ to 19.4
15	100	9	19.4
16		10	15 to 16
17		10	16
18			\$1.75 to \$2.00 ⁷
19	40 to 45	8	22
20	20 to 150	9 to 8	20 to 28
21	75	9	19.4
22		8	25
23	6 to 50	10 to 8	25
24	91	8	20 to 25
25		8	30
26	25		30 ⁴
27		9	25
28			30 ⁵
29	25	8	30 ⁶

30		8	30
31	20	8	30 ⁶
32		8	30 ⁶
33	25 to 75	9	19.4
34	25	9	19.4
35	100	9 to 8	20 to 25
36	50 to 500	8	22½

- ¹ Italian labor.
- ² When nine hours from choice of men.
- ³ Unless prohibited in contract.
- ⁴ Others than Italian.
- ⁵ Union labor only.
- ⁶ Same labor as employed for hod carriers.
- ⁷ Per day.

In the case of 32 cities in or near New England, inquiry showed the length of day in the Sewer Department to be 8 hours in twenty-two cases, 8½ hours in two cases, and 9 hours in the balance. The nominal rate of pay ranged from 17 cents per hour to 28¾ cents per hour, and the actual rate from 17.2 cents per hour to 28.7 cents per hour. Varying conditions were found with regard to pay for holidays and allowances for sick leave. In about one-third of the cities the laborers are permitted to have half-holidays on Saturday, although in about one-half of these cases the half holidays are restricted to the summer months. In several of the cities where half-holidays are granted the length of day is so arranged that the laborers work 48 hours during the week. From this study it appears that the rate of pay of laborers in the city of Boston is at least 32 cents per hour actually worked, while that of laborers employed by local contractors and corporations does not appear to exceed 30 cents per hour, and that the prevailing customary rate is at most 25 cents per hour, practically the same as that paid by other cities throughout New England.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STATIONARY ENGINEERS.

The twentieth annual meeting of the Canadian Association of Stationary Engineers opened at London, Ont., July 27th, with a large attendance of engineers from all parts of the Dominion. The report of Secretary Crockett of Hamilton, presented at this afternoon's session, contains the following important recommendations:

- (1) The advisability of getting the Government to grant or endorse a graded certificate, this to be optional with the engineer.
- (2) The advisability of making an allowance for the executive President to visit localities where his efforts can be used to organize new lodges.
- (3) To make an allowance for visiting every lodge at least once a year.
- (4) The advisability of adopting or endorsing a resolution adopted by the London Board of Trade re boiler inspection.
- (5) The adoption of a set of questions to be used by all subordinate lodges for the examination of candidates. In the report Mr. Crockett said:

"It is being more fully realized to-day than ever before the duty which devolves upon every engineer in the Dominion, also the urgent necessity for all to aid and assist to their fullest extent, in getting laws enacted which will tend to raise themselves to a higher plane in the engineering profession."

During the year three new lodges, Belleville, North Bay and Brampton, have been added. In speaking of the recommendation regarding the graded certificate, Secretary Crockett said it was one of the most important that have been proposed. "The idea," he said, "is not to make the certificate compulsory, but to give every engineer who desires it a chance to show his employer exactly how much he has learned and as he progresses his employer can keep track of it."