

Electric Railway Employees' Wages, Working Conditions, Etc.

The British Columbia Electric Ry. has granted its conductors and motormen an increase of wages of 4c an hour from Apl. 1, as follows:—

	City lines.	Interurban lines.
First 6 months	49c	49c
Second 6 months	54c	55c
Third 6 months	57c	59c
Thereafter	60c	62c

Pro rata increases have been made in all other lines represented in the Amalgamated Association of City and Electric Railway Employees. The new wage scale was the result of negotiations between the company and the men, in which the company's offer was accepted. The existing agreement was not opened up, but a supplementary agreement was entered into.

The Dominion Power & Transmission Co., Hamilton, Ont., has made a new agreement with the conductors and linemen on its interurban lines only until April 1, 1921. The following table shows the rates paid heretofore, the rates asked by the men and the rates agreed on per hour:—

	Old.	Asked.	New.
1st 6 months	30c	52c	35c
2nd 6 months	35c	55c	40c
2nd year	39c	58c	45c
3rd year	45c	60c	52c

Time and a half for overtime. Ten hours constitute a days work, to be completed in 11 consecutive hours. Nothing extra for Sundays or holidays. Uniforms supplied free to all trainman after two years service, company pays half cost of uniforms for first and second year men.

A Hamilton press report of April 27 says a board of conciliation has been appointed to investigate a wage dispute between the Hamilton St. Ry. and its employees. G. C. Kerr, K.C., represents the company, and F. Bancroft the men.

Edmonton Radial Ry.—A new wage schedule is reported to have been agreed on between the Edmonton, Alta., City Commissioners and the Street Railway Men's Union, for Edmonton Radial Ry. employees. Following are the rate reported for conductors and motormen per hour:—

	One man cars.	Two man cars.
1st 6 months	57½c	52½c
2nd 6 months	62½c	57½c
3rd 6 months	67½c	62½c
4th 6 months	72½c

A 9 hour day is to be worked, time and a half will be paid after 9¼ hours have been worked, and time and a half will be paid for all statutory holidays.

London & Port Stanley Ry.—A board of conciliation has been authorized by the Minister of Labor to deal with the differences as to wages between the London & Port Stanley Ry. and its employees. B. W. Bennett, Sarnia, Ont., is the railway's representative, and J. W. Campbell, Kingston, Ont., is the men's representative. It was stated, April 22, that the chairman would be appointed a few days thereafter. The men ask a maximum rate of 65c an hour, and were offered 52c an hour.

London St. Ry.—London, Ont., press dispatch April 25.—At a mass meeting of London St. Ry. employees last night it was unanimously voted to strike on May 1 unless the company shall have by that time met their demand for an increase in wages of from 44 to 65c an hour. The company having repeated its declaration that on the present rate of fares it is unable to grant the increase, the men vot-

ed against asking for a conciliation board, as it was declared that, under the circumstances, the board could do nothing to avoid the strike. If the city council does not intervene and raise the fares, the strike appears an absolute certainty. No negotiations have taken place with the company.

Montreal Tramways Co.'s employees are negotiating for increased wages, and improved working conditions. The scale asked by conductors and motormen as compared with the present scale is as follows per hour:—

	Present.	Asked.
First year	37c
First 3 months	70c
Next 9 months	73c
Second year	40c	75c
Third year	44c
After third year	48c

The demands of the men, it is reported, would involve, if granted, an addition of about \$3,000,000 a year to the pay roll.

Nova Scotia Tramways & Power Co. A press report states that an agreement has been arrived at between the company and its outside employees, under which an advance of wages has been given, the minimum rate for conductors and motormen being 52c an hour. The report adds that the increase is contingent upon the passing of an act by the Nova Scotia Legislature allowing the company to increase fares on its electric lines.

Ottawa Electric Ry.—Negotiations are reported to have been in progress for some time respecting a new wage agreement between the Ottawa Electric Ry. Co. and its employees. The men are said to be asking for a maximum rate of 65c an hour, the existing rate being 45c.

Quebec Ry., Light & Power Co.—A new schedule of wages on an increased scale is reported to have been arranged between the company and its Montmorency Division employees.

St. Thomas, Ont., Municipal Ry. conductors and motormen have been granted an all round increase of 5c an hour, making the wages as follows per hour:—1st month 43c, after 1st month 45c. Working hours 10.

Toronto Civic Ry.—Employees of the Toronto Civic Ry. are reported to have accepted April 12 the new wage scale offered by the city council, which gives rates running from 60c to 65c an hour.

Toronto Ry.—The question of increased wages for employees is expected to be discussed, and a new schedule drawn up, at a meeting of the employees union on May 1.

Winnipeg Electric Ry.—A new schedule is reported to have been presented to the management by the men on April 1, in which increases ranging from 25c to 35c an hour are asked. A. W. McLimont, Vice President and General Manager, is reported to have replied to the local union, which is not now affiliated with the international one, that the demands were so extreme that it was impossible for the company even to consider them as a basis of negotiation.

The Quebec Ry., Light & Power Co. is reported to have received 4 new cars for its city lines. Two have been placed on the Champlain line, two on the Palace Hill line, and one on the Crown St. line. They are reported to have cost \$18,200 each, against \$7,500 each for cars of the same type in 1914.

Electric Railway Situation in Detroit.

The street railway situation in Detroit, Mich., entered upon another phase April 6, when ratepayers voted on the Couzens plan under which the city will go extensively into street railway business. Of approximately 300,000 persons in the city entitled to vote, it is reported that only about 140,000 voted, and that 89,134, or 63.564% of these voted in favor of the proposal. The affirmative vote was therefore less than one-third of the possible vote. The proposal endorsed by the ratepayers provides for the issue of \$15,000,000 of bonds to finance and equip 101 miles of new tracks, and take over 55 miles of line now operated by the Detroit United Rys. The lines to be built and taken over are reported to include two into the heart of the city—one on Fort St. and one on Woodward Ave.—with north, south and cross town tracks.

We are advised that the plan, as it appeared in full on the ballot, cannot be read by itself to obtain the real intention or the operation requirements. While not so officially stated, the announcement was made repeatedly during the campaign,—and that is the intention—to take over parts of the Woodward and Fort lines on which franchises are claimed to have expired; also some of the other lines operated on a day to day basis; and the construction of additional lines. The estimate of cost made by the mayor of the price to be paid the company for the lines to be taken over is \$40,000 a mile, greatly under their depreciated value.

Following the vote the city council granted authority for the immediate issue of \$100,000 of public utility bonds, and work was reported to have been started April 7 on the Mack-Myrtle belt line. The franchises on the Ford and Woodward Ave. lines are reported to have expired, and it is stated that the present traffic arrangements will not be disturbed until the city is ready to provide cars and other equipment necessary to operate the lines.

Detroit's street railway situation has been under discussion since 1913, when the city was given authority to appoint a commission with power to acquire a railway. In 1915 a plan to purchase the Detroit United Ry.'s city properties at a price to be fixed by the Wayne County Circuit Judges was defeated, and in 1919 a plan to purchase the company's lines at a price agreed upon between the commission and the company was defeated on the ground that the price named was in excess of the value of the system. A service at cost plan was subsequently considered, but was not approved by Mayor Couzens. The present plan of building a city system, and the taking over of the lines operated by the D.U.R. on the day to day agreement, was then developed with the result stated above.

The Detroit United Ry. is reported to have stopped all construction work on its lines, and to have taken action to contest the constitutionality of the city ordinance. This, it is stated, will put a stop to any progress being made by the city until a decision is given by the U.S. courts, which a press report says will probably be some three years hence.

G. E. Waller, General Superintendent of Railways, Dominion Power & Transmission Co., is reported to have expressed the opinion that it would be impracticable for the company to operate cars in Hamilton.