

salary for the position should not be less than that necessary to maintain an average family in respectability. It is a serious social condition when a man with wife and children is paid so low a salary that he is unable to maintain himself and family in conditions of reasonable decency and comfort. It is equally serious if young people are prevented from establishing homes of their own because their salaries do not permit it.

The following extract from the Monthly Labor Review (January, 1919, page 9), gives data concerning the cost of living in the City of Washington:

"In 1916 the typical white family, consisting of father, mother, and three children below the age of 15, was not able to make both ends meet with an income of less than \$1,150 per annum. This would indicate that a minimum-of-comfort budget, according to the practices and standards of domestic economy prevailing in Washington in 1916, must be about \$1,200. Since 1916 the cost of the necessities of decent living, weighed according to importance in the family budget, has advanced approximately 50 per cent. This indicates that an identical standard of decency can not be purchased for less than \$1,800 today."

Recent studies of the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that the above amount should be increased to somewhat over \$2,200. An examination of Table 1 shows that the average compensation paid in Grade 4 of the questionnaire, comprising 20 per cent of the positions reported, is practically identical with the amount now found by the Bureau of Labor Statistics as the minimum family budget; while for Grades 5, 6 and 7, comprising 65 per cent of the positions reported, the average compensation is far below that amount. The proportion of salaries that are less than a living wage would doubtless be found much greater in non-technical positions than in technical. While the Government is thus paying thousands of its highly trained clerical and technical force less than a living wage and, except for the temporary bonus of \$240 a year for positions paying salaries of \$2,500 or less, has ignored the constantly diminishing purchasing power of the salaries paid to this class of employees; it has, on the contrary, given full recognition to increased living costs in fixing wages in positions involving the organized labor crafts. A "shipfitter" in the Navy Yard, for example, receives \$1,750 a year, more than the average of Grade 5 in the questionnaire, while he is learning how to do his work. After three months of apprenticeship, he gets \$2,000. If he is made a "straw boss" in charge of 12 or more men, he gets \$2,450, and if a "sub-foreman" in charge of 30 or more men, he gets \$2,900, nearly as much as the average of Grade 3. A blacksmith (heavy fire) gets \$2,400. A "hammer and machine forger" (heavy) gets \$3,700, only \$100 less than the average of Grade 2 of the questionnaire.

In general, wages in industry have more than kept step with increases in the cost of living. The National Industrial Conference Board in its report on "Wartime Changes in Industry" found that in eight leading industries during the period from September, 1914, to March, 1919, weekly earnings had increased from 62 per cent to 110 per cent, while average hourly earnings had increased from 74 per cent to 112 per cent. During approximately the same period the salaries of engineering positions in the 16 engineering bureaus in civil establishments increased on the average from 3 per cent to 19 per cent. Moreover, the fact should not be overlooked that not only was the percentage increase in industrial employment many times greater than in Federal service, but also that in many instances the amount paid for skilled labor is greater than the amount paid to the trained Government engineer. Over 40 of the labor crafts were awarded a rate of wage of \$2,000 and more by the Labor Adjustment Board. This amount is greater than the average paid for Grades 5, 6 and 7 in the questionnaire, comprising 65 per cent of the positions reported, as shown in Table 1. The skilled laborer is not required to know how to read or write, and he may receive full pay after an experience varying from two weeks to six months; the Government engineering employee, on the other hand, to get an equivalent amount, must have had from two to eight years' experience if he is not a technical graduate, and in many instances will not be admitted at all without a technical degree and then only with from two to four years' practical experience. (Fig. 1, page 4.)

That the salaries now paid are entirely inadequate for the purpose of recruiting for, and retaining in, the Government service the class of employees necessary to maintain the service on an efficient basis is evidenced by the rapidly increasing rate of turnover in the last few years. This is found no less in the higher paid