

The Municipal Employees.

Hours of Work.

On the 1st August 1927, the city of Vienna had 19,602 employees and 6,427 teachers in its service. There were also 9,783 pensioners. The employees of the municipal enterprises are not included in these figures, and they number about as many.

To solve the problem of handling such a large number of variously organised employees a proper staff department was created. Immediately after its entry into office the Socialist administration passed a resolution that vacancies caused by death and retirements should not be filled.

In view of the great increase of work involved by the creation of a new fiscal system, the extension of welfare activity, the establishment of a housing department, and the raising of Vienna to the status of a province, it did not appear that any grounds existed for a compulsory reduction of staff.

Such a reduction was indeed at one time resolved upon, but it did not prove necessary to enforce the resolution, as a sufficient number of voluntary resignations served the same purpose. Since the 1st January 1924, seven hours instead of six have been worked each day in the administrative service, whilst an eight-hour day is operative in the business concerns. The reform of the continuous shift system effected in 1927 in the Gas and Electricity Works is of considerable social significance. Here for the first time in Austrian industry the 52 to 56-hours shift was successfully replaced by the purely 48-hours shift. It was thus possible to confer upon all classes of workers the benefit of the eight-hours day and to provide constant work for a considerable number of the unemployed.

Service Conditions.

The administrative employees, who were formerly divided into manifold categories, are now organised in nine groups. The rights and duties of employees are embodied in a comprehensive General Service Regulation. This Regulation may not be modified except in agreement with the Staff Committee. The latter consists of delegates from the Municipal Council, selected on the basis of proportional representation, and representatives of the staff, and is so constituted that the municipal representatives have only a majority of one. This means that in the event of co-operation between the staff representatives and the representatives of the Opposition in the Council, the Majority representatives will be placed in a minority. This is a self-imposed weakness of the administration, which is obliged always to apply the principle which it announced at the beginning: not to dictate any line of conduct with regard to staff questions but to settle everything in agreement with the appropriate organisations. Among other things, the Staff Committee is called upon to consider all proposals affecting the staff which have to go before the Aldermen or the

Municipal Council; further to discuss all matters respecting which the Service Regulation prescribes agreement between the representatives of the Municipality and of the employees; and to decide disputes arising from the interpretation of the Service Regulation. These staff representatives have far-reaching rights.

The democratisation of the conditions of service involved the granting to employees of full liberty of combination. Section 71 of the Service Regulation declares that any interference with this freedom by a senior officer or an employee is a service offence and designates the employee's association as his legitimate representative. The municipal authorities conduct negotiations upon staff matters only with the organisation which represents the majority of the employees concerned. The representatives of the majority organisations themselves decide whether a minority organisation should be admitted to the discussions.

In questions of discipline the co-operation of the employees is everywhere provided for. In the case of the servants of the administration it goes so far as to leave the decision in the hands of a committee composed of an equal number of representatives of the Municipality and of the employees. Above this committee there is a court of appeal constituted in the same way. In the case of equal voting, the chairman has a casting vote in the lower tribunal, but no decision is taken in the higher tribunal.

The Service Regulation of the municipal employees applies, with slight modifications, to the employees of the municipal enterprises. The teachers have their own service regulation. The old Christian Social administration kept the teachers under strict control. Although even to-day the majority of the teachers are politically hostile to the Socialist administration, it was decided to grant them entirely modern conditions of service with a wide measure of freedom. The secret qualification was abolished. Every teacher may inspect his service qualification and has a right of complaint. In questions of discipline the teacher is judged by his peers. The teacher is obliged to give 30 hours service weekly in the elementary schools and 25 to 28 hours in secondary schools.

The tramwaymen have their own service regulation. Here too the co-operation of the employees in disciplinary matters goes very far. The disciplinary committee is composed of an equal number of representatives from both sides, the chairman being appointed by the Mayor. As the chairman may not vote and as the delinquent is acquitted when voting is equal, the decision always rests with the staff representatives. Service regulations have not yet been compiled for the other enterprises of the Municipality.

While the municipal employees proper, from the officers to the road sweepers, are governed by a service regulation, which prescribes a minimum of five years as the period of qualification for a permanent position, the working conditions of the employees in the municipal enterprises are governed by wage agreements,

which are concluded with the appropriate trade unions. These agreements are based on the following principles laid down by the Council.

An agreement may only be made with a trade union which is designated by the majority of the employees in the enterprise concerned. The workers themselves decide whether the trade union of the minority should take part in the negotiations. Wages are regulated by reference to the general agreements which exist at the time in the occupations concerned. Thus the metal workers' agreement applies to the employees in the City electricity works, the chemical workers' agreement applies to the Gas Works employees, and so on. The workers are divided into temporary, permanent, and established classes. Permanent workers are those engaged as such who have spent a year in the municipal service. After five years of continuous service, after the age of 18, the permanent servant becomes an established servant. Established servants may only be dismissed for an offence against discipline, or for an absence from work of longer than 72 hours without valid reasons, one of which is expressly declared to be a strike resolution of the appropriate trade union. If a servant is ill for more than a year he may be re-engaged, in which case his previous term of service may be taken into account.

A servant may be dismissed on the closing down of a department only if he refuses work of a suitable nature that is offered him elsewhere in the municipal service, without reduction of salary. A servant who refuses suitable employment, the nature of which is decided in agreement with the Works Council, loses his right to superannuation.

Remuneration.

Municipal servants are paid according to their term of service. Automatic promotion has been introduced to a certain extent, but the higher rates of salary may only be obtained by specific appointment. The disadvantages of rigid automatic progression are avoided by granting promotions and higher rates of salary out of turn. In the case of employees of the municipal enterprises, to be without the requisite qualification is a bar to promotion. The municipal servants of Vienna are paid higher wages than the employees of the State or of the other provinces and towns of Austria receive. The wages of the employees of the municipal enterprises, which are governed by collective agreements, approximate to the wages paid in related branches of industry. In many cases, however, they are considerably higher, apart from the greater security that is enjoyed.

Men and women receive equal pay for equal service.

In the following table the wages paid in various departments are compared with pre-war remuneration. The amounts are monthly salaries.

	1914 Goldkronen	July 1928	
		In pounds sterling	Percentage of pre-war wages
HIGHER DIVISION OFFICIALS.			
Commencing at	100	8.—	188.9
After 15 years	583	16.—	64.8
Maximum	733	26.—	83.3
ELEMENTARY TEACHERS.			
Commencing at	100	7.—	164.6
After 15 years	325	12.—	87.0
Maximum	458	18.—	92.3
MESSENGERS.			
Commencing at	120	6.3	120.9
After 15 years	167	8.—	113.1
Maximum	233	11.—	111.7
ROAD SWEEPERS.			
Commencing at	86	5.12	153.4
After 15 years	100	7.—	164.6
Maximum	103	9.12	219.6

WEEKLY WAGES WHERE APPLICABLE.

	1914 Goldkronen	January 1928	
		In pounds sterling	Percentage of pre-war wages
SKILLED WORKERS IN ELECTRICITY WORKS.			
Commencing at	18.5	2.—	253.7
After 15 years	24.9	2.6 —2.10	222.4—242.0
Maximum	32.1	2.12—2.19	193.5—212.2
SKILLED WORKERS IN GAS WORKS.			
Starting at	22.2	2.—	211.6
After 15 years	30	2.6 —2.10	184.2—200.8
Maximum	38.6	2.12—2.19	160.9—176.5
SKILLED TRAMWAY WORKERS.			
Commencing at	25.6	2.—	183.4
After 15 years	42.2	2.6 —2.10	130.9—142.2
Maximum	48.2	2.12—2.16	128.9—138.9
UNSKILLED WORKERS IN ELECTRICITY WORKS.			
Commencing at	17.8	1.14	223.1
After 15 years	20.5	2.0 —2.4	232.5—253.7
Maximum	23.5	2.5 —2.10	225.9—248.6
UNSKILLED WORKERS IN GAS WORKS.			
Commencing at	18.9	1.14	210.3
After 15 years	23.5	2.0 —2.4	202.9—221.3
Maximum	26.5	2.5 —2.10	200.3—220.4

	1914 Goldkronen	January 1928	
		In pounds sterling	Percentage of pre-war wages
UNSKILLED TRAMWAY WORKERS.			
Commencing at . . .	20.3	1.14	195.7
After 15 years . . .	35.5	2.0 —2.5	134.3—141.9
Maximum	41.3	2.5 —2.12	128.6—135.4

TRAMCAR CONDUCTORS.

Commencing at . . .	23.7	1.18	186.1
After 15 years . . .	34.92	2.4	148.7
Maximum	42.54	2.10	138.4

The wages in the lowest classes of all categories are above the pre-war level, as the commencing wages were then extraordinarily low, and the cost of living, measured in gold, has also risen above the pre-war level.

The following additional advantages are enjoyed.

All employees subject to the Service Regulation pay half fares on the trams. Some employees are entitled to an allowance for uniform which amounts to about 5s. 3d per month. All workers employed in the municipal enterprises are entitled to working clothes and to one week's wages as a Christmas bonus. Their income tax is paid by the Municipality. The employees of the Gas and Electricity Works are entitled to cheap fuel, which represents a saving of ls. 0d to ls. 3d weekly. Tramway workers may ride on the trams free of charge.

Pensions.

Most generous provision is made for pensions. Municipal officers are entitled to 90 per cent. of their permanent salaries, whilst officials employed in the municipal enterprises are entitled to about 72 per cent.; they receive higher salaries on account of working eight hours daily. Workers in the municipal enterprises are entitled on the average to 85 per cent of their full wages. The term of service which entitles an employee to receive a pension varies between 30 and 35 years. Pension contributions are therefore fixed at 3.2, 3 and 2.8 per cent. of the superannuation assessment. The same periods of service apply to workers in the municipal enterprises, which are determined by the danger and severity of the work. In this case the contribution is 7 per cent. Half the full pension is paid after 10 years of service in the case of employees subject to the General Service Regulation, and half the full pension is paid to the widows of these employees, irrespective of their terms of service. 40 per cent. of the full pension is paid to workers in the municipal enterprises after 10 years of service, while their widows receive half of the full pension.

The following table gives some typical cases of monthly pensions:

Higher Division Officials.

Pounds sterling	Pounds Sterling
Minimum Pension . 6.8	Minimum Pension for Widow . 6.8
Maximum Pension . 23.6	Maximum Pension for Widow . 11.12

Elementary School Teachers.

Minimum Pension . 4.15	Minimum Pension for Widow . 4.15
Maximum Pension . 16.2	Maximum Pension for Widow . 8.—

Messengers.

Minimum Pension . 3.5	Minimum Pension for Widow . 3.5
Maximum Pension . 9.18	Maximum Pension for Widow . 5.—

Road Sweepers.

Minimum Pension . 2.18	Minimum Pension for Widow . 2.18
Maximum Pension . 8.12	Maximum Pension for Widow . 4.6

Skilled Workers in Gas Works, Electricity Works and on Tramways.

Minimum Pension . 3.—	Minimum Pension for Widow . 2.10
Maximum Pension . 9.—	Maximum Pension for Widow . 4.10

Unskilled Workers in Municipal Enterprises.

Minimum Pension . 2.12	Minimum Pension for Widow . 2.2
Maximum Pension . 7.14	Maximum Pension for Widow . 3.5

Tramway Conductors.

Minimum Pension . 2.18	Minimum Pension for Widow . 2.4
Maximum Pension . 8.10	Maximum Pension for Widow . 4.4

The whole of the 54,000 municipal employees are covered by an insurance fund against sickness, to which the employees pay 1.3 per cent. and the Municipality pays 1.4 per cent. of the standing wages as a contribution. The contribution of the Municipality is 0.1 per cent. higher because employees have to pay certain fees when requiring the services of the Institution. The Fund is administered by an equal number of representatives of both parties. Members have free choice of doctors, the right to dental treatment, and the use of convalescent homes etc. The Municipality takes responsibility for any accidents that may happen to its employees.

Up till July 1927 there existed a special loan bank for the purpose of granting loans to the municipal employees. As owing to the unfavourable conditions of the money market this Institution was not in a position to maintain a low rate of interest on the loans, the municipal administration placed the granting of loans to its employees upon a new basis and created a special office in the municipal department to which the execution of this branch of welfare work has been transferred. The municipal administration has set aside a sum of £146,000 to be expended upon loans to employees. These loans are made to employees at the fixed interest of 6 per cent., while the Municipality is liable for any losses and bears the cost of conducting this business. The loans granted generally amount to three times the amount of an employee's monthly salary and run for a period of two years, without incidental fees or deposit of collateral security.

This method of treating the staff, most of whom were at first hostile or indifferent towards the new administration, has gained the goodwill of the employees and rendered possible a series of reforms in the internal administrative service. Whole departments have been abolished, while others have been amalgamated. The whole system of accountancy has been reorganised from top to bottom and double-entry bookkeeping has been introduced into a number of branches of the administration. The staff has proved adequate to the heavy demands made upon it. It is noteworthy that apart from an eight-day tramway strike not a single dispute during the ten years of socialist administration has led to a stoppage of work worth mentioning.

In this connection it should be mentioned that the Vienna Police Force is not controlled by the Municipality, but is a State authority. Its rights are regulated and salaries paid by the federal government.

The total expenditure of the Municipality upon salaries and wages (excluding the municipal enterprises) is estimated for 1928 at £3,780,000 in respect of active employees and £1,200,000 in respect of pensions. The total expenditure upon staff, which amounted to 26 per cent. of the pre-war budget, now comprises 35 per cent. of the total expenditure.

Social Welfare Work.

When the Socialists assumed control of administration, they found in existence certain welfare institutions which prior to the war had proved inadequate and during the war had fallen into neglect. Moreover, the spirit in which this welfare work had been carried on was bad. It was the almsgiving spirit of the haughty rich. The terrible misery of the post-war period made welfare work more urgently necessary than ever before. Mortality had increased by 60 per cent. in comparison with pre-war times, and child mortality by as much as 100 per cent. Even now the Municipality cannot perform all the duties that devolve upon it in this sphere, but it has recognised its obligations and strives to discharge them.

Child Welfare.

Welfare work begins with the unborn child. Every needy woman is entitled to apply at the Child Welfare Department not later than the fourth month of pregnancy. There are 34 pre-natal clinics where blood tests may be taken, to combat hereditary syphilis at the earliest possible moment. Women who apply for advice at the proper time and are not entitled to aid from a sick fund receive an allowance of about 6s. Od. per week for the four weeks following confinement. They are afforded legal advice and given any other aid that the family circumstances may render necessary.