File No. 3539. CORRESPONDENCE.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS,
SUB-DEPARTMENT OF CITY ENGINEER.

Baltimore, September 23, 1905.

Hon. W. Cabell Bruce,
City Solicitor.

Dear Sir:-

2879 I understand that an ordinance is to be introduced in the Council raising the pay of the laborers in my Department from ten to twelve dollars per week. In my judgment, this increase is all wrong.

Our men now get more than laborers employed by any firm or corporation in the City. If the City Council passes such an ordinance, and I am required to make the increase, I must increase my expenses not less than $30,000 a year, and the City will receive absolutely no benefit from the increase. We will spend $30,000 without getting one cent's worth of additional work for the expenditure.

As I read the Charter, the Council has no right to fix the compensation of men in this Department. I would be much obliged if you would look into the case and advise me, as I am unalterably opposed to raising the compensation of the laborers in the Department, from their present rate of $1.66 per day to $2.00 per day.

In addition to increasing the rate of wages, the ordinance also provides that the men shall be paid for rainy days, whether they work or not. All that they are required to do is to report for duty. If the weather is such that they cannot work, then they are to receive full compensation.

The whole scheme appears to me to be most vicious. It is another one of those ordinances whose sole object is the squandering of public money.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) B. T. Fendall,
City Engineer.