

Personally I do not think that the Hydro-Electric System is going to seriously affect the steam plants, but I do think that there are certain conditions under which the Hydro-Electric can give a man cheaper power than he can develop it. I went into this matter very thoroughly and know what I am talking about. I make an evaporative test every eight hours. I know how many pounds of coal I am burning, how much water I am evaporating, in fact, I know just what my plant will do, but the Hydro-Electric can supply me current cheaper than I can generate it, and there are many other plants in the city to-day to which the Hydro-Electric, or the Toronto Electric Light can supply current cheaper than they can generate it.

Engineers must wake up and study their plants if they are to make them efficient. They should try and educate themselves, and thus be better men, and show the manufacturers what they can do. Engineers in the past have not been alive to the situation, but now that they have such competition they must see that they make themselves more efficient.

While engineers have been educating themselves, they have neglected the one essential thing, to my mind, and that is to educate the manufacturer to appreciate their services more than they have been doing.

I have been suffering from a cold, in consequence of which I am rather hoarse, and do not feel able to say any more.

Mr. Wilson,—

There are many things which enter into the cost of producing cheap power other than the cost of fuel, machinery, etc. Consideration has to be given to the floor space, rent that is charged up, and the interest on the money that is invested, also, the amount that is written off each year, usually 10 per cent. of first cost.

All these things make it very hard for a man with a small plant, say, 150 to 200 h.p. to compete with the rate given by central stations.

The Toronto Electric Light Co. does not seem to me to have any fixed price at all. They will promise anything in order to get your house or business place to become a customer of theirs. They will come in and ask you how much coal you burn, and will then offer to supply you with power for the amount of your coal bill. It is very hard to cut down this coal bill enough to counteract the extra charge of floor rent, interest on the money invested, and, in most cases, the wages of one or two extra men, it is almost impossible to meet competition of this kind.