

18,000, found it absolutely necessary to buy out the private companies selling gas and electricity—with happy results.

In Ottawa and Hamilton incandescent lighting is being supplied at 7½ cents per kilowatt hour; in Toronto domestic lights cost 8 cents and commercial lighting 12 cents; in Montreal the price is 14.25 cents net. In Ottawa, the rate is fixed by civic lighting; Hamilton has probably the cheapest electricity in the world, generated at Decew Falls; in Toronto, the low rate is mainly due to low-priced gas, as until recently the electricity was steam-produced; in Montreal, there is dear gas and a lighting monopoly, hence a high rate. The price of electricity and gas must vary according to local conditions. Where a town or city has a water-power close at hand, hydro-electric energy is likely to be cheap; where it is brought long distances or produced by steam-power, electricity may be costly.

The larger the city, the higher the cost of electric lighting. Too often this fact is overlooked. The butter which costs the farmer ten cents to produce is worth fifteen to the village grocer, is worth twenty to the city commission merchant and is worth twenty-five when the city grocery offers it for sale. A telephone connection with 200 friends may be worth \$25 a year; while telephonic possibilities with 15,000 people may cost and be worth \$60 to \$75. The labourer or the mechanic who walks to his work twice a day is able to work for a lower wage than the man who must spend \$50 a year on car-tickets for himself and family. In the small town, electricity is distributed by overhead wires strung on ugly but inexpensive wooden poles; in a large city, especially in central portions, the wires must be placed in water-tight conduits underground. These and other considerations explain why the rates in Orillia and Gravenhurst cannot be compared with those in Detroit, Toronto or Montreal.

Whether the future light is to be gas or electricity remains to be seen. Whatever it is, the people are entitled to get at the lowest possible rates so that the poor shall have no cause for complaint against the rich.

A LARGE number of journals and newspapers have taken up the cry for a higher rate of interest. The Montreal "Witness" points out that some time ago, Canada could borrow at three per cent. but must now pay four; consequently the Government should increase the rate of interest on deposits in savings banks from three to three and a half per cent. **THE RATE OF INTEREST** The "Witness" adds: "The same applies to the chartered banks. . . . Such an increase should be a matter of good policy as well as simple justice."

The Halifax "Herald" says: "The People of Canada are entitled to as much consideration as the Banks of Canada," and therefore consideration for the profits of bankers should not make Mr. Fielding hesitate in the matter of the Post Office Savings Banks. Mr. Rodolphe Forget, M.P., has made an appeal to Mr. Fielding in the matter, and the question is no doubt under Government consideration. Mr. Fielding professes to be anxious to prevent any retrogression in business; if he is in earnest in this, and we believe that he is, he will lend a willing ear to the cry for a method of temporary relief which came in October in Great Britain when many of the banks increased the rate paid on deposits.

THE two-hundredth anniversary of Charles Wesley's birth was marked by many discourses on hymnology of which the most vigorous was that delivered by Rev. George Jackson, of Sherbourne Street Methodist Church, Toronto, who asked the pertinent question:

FLABBY HYMNS

"What kind of Christian do we expect to rear to-day on the water skim-milk of some of our modern revival hymn-books?" Whereupon, Mr. Jackson paid his respects to the "Glory Song," that bit of religious ragtime which made Toronto nights hideous about two years ago. By his frank criticism of that trashy composition, Mr. Jackson proved himself bolder than the writers for the Toronto press who, for excellent reasons, let the "Glory Song" go uncondemned. The reverend critic characterised as rhyming doggerel that lyric, "Have Courage My Boy to Say No," and as "syrupy sentimentalism" that touching interrogation, "Shall We Gather at the River?" The reason that church services have included such deadly rubbish as this may be found in the nature of certain modern revivalists who would not know either good prose or elevating poetry if they read it and who give the people trash because these professional revival gentlemen have no appreciation of anything higher. The Wesleys were men of broad sympathies and deep culture. Their names were

not placarded through the land but their words appealed to the best in the most submerged, because they spoke from the riches of head and heart. From a shallow evangelist we must expect flabby hymns and cheap sentimentalism. When a genuine man appears with a true message he will be listened to. One of the poorest apologies for the repulsive slang of "Sam" Jones and the slushy songs of Messrs. Torrey and Alexander is the plea that the "people" can be reached by such addresses and melodies as they cannot by correct English and good music. Mr. Jackson answers this by a timely question: "For whom do you suppose Wesley's hymns were written? They were not composed for trained choirs and cultured congregations, but for vast crowds in the open air, for the pitmen of Durham, the colliers of Kingswood, the miners of Cornwall, men often coarse, brutal, ignorant beyond anything we know to-day." The truth of the matter is that the "crowd" and the children will show surprisingly good taste if they are given a chance to exercise it. The pulpit occasionally indulges in criticism of the contents of the newspaper and it is only fair that hymn-books and sermons should sometimes come in for a share of comment. There is too much of doggerel and drivel in the modern revivalist's "collection" and Sherbourne Street Church is to be congratulated on having a pastor who possesses both the ability and courage to point out the defects of these modern ditties, miscalled "sacred."

THIS is the season of municipal congratulation and condolence.

Throughout the land there will be many aching hands belonging to successful candidates and many aching hearts pertaining unto those who also ran. The "cheerful-loser" test is not the least severe for a man or a nation and the Canadian can usually grin at the list in which his name does not come first. An old-timer was recently describing the elections of long ago when, during both Parlia-

THE DEFEATED CANDIDATE

mentary and municipal contests, personalities and even fisticuffs were of a much more strenuous nature than modern laws and customs allow. They were good old days, mused the man with a long memory, when bricks and epithets were the mere commonplaces of debate. This is truly a dull and commercial age in which the defeated candidate is expected to preserve a placid expression and greet his small world with unruffled serenity in the chill dawn of the morning after. Occasionally an unconventional episode stirs the dullness and calls for a libel suit. But even a legal conflict is a poor thing in comparison with the joyous days of the O'Malleys and the Burkes when the "Man for Galway" had to prove his political doctrines by blows and knocks. The compensations of civilisation ought to be vast, indeed, to make up for the colour and clamour which have gone with the elections of the olden time.

FOR THE NEW YEAR

Is there any reason why Canada should not make as much progress in 1908 as in 1907 or any other year?

Is not the soil of Canada just as fertile as ever it was, our mines as rich, our natural resources as unlimited, our possibilities as great?

What about the 800,000,000 bushels of wheat which Professor Saunders said we could produce each year? The land is still there; the weather is milder this year than last; the prospects are even better than they were in January, 1907.

Let us wear cheerful faces; let us be optimistic; let us continue to develop and expand.

Don't be a "Calamity Howler."