

Even the domestic consumer who pays the highest rate, 25c. per thousand, is getting the equivalent of coal at \$6.00 per ton, with the additional advantage of the elimination of all work in connection with its use. The industrial concern and the large user were only paying 11 to 15 cents per thousand, or the equivalent of coal at \$2.64 to \$3.60 per ton, surely an absurd price in these times, and one that will never compel rigid economy. There does not seem to be any reason, compatible with the idea of enforcing the utmost economy, why large users should have any advantage over small consumers beyond possibly a small discount. In this respect the interests of both the gas companies, who are anxious to sell their product before a rival can get it, and the large users are identical, but it is inimical to intelligent conservation. If any use at all is allowed for industrial purposes, the same rate should be paid, and there seems to be no reason why this should be less than 40c. per thousand, or the equivalent of coal at \$9.60 per ton, with no expense for labor attached. Those who can purchase anthracite coal at this price are fortunate indeed. Compared with prices paid for artificial gas the difference is striking. The cheapest artificial gas sold anywhere in Ontario is in Toronto, where the price is 80c. per thousand for a gas having a heating efficiency of 570 as compared with over 1,000 efficiency for the Kent gas, or to buy on the same basis as the Toronto householder the consumer in Kent should pay \$1.10 per thousand, and *vice versa* the Toronto user in order to be on as favorable a footing as the dweller in Kent county paying 40c. per thousand should be able to get his gas at 23 cents instead of 80.

#### Long Life of the Gas Field with Higher Rates Advantageous to the Domestic Consumers—not the Gas Companies

The benefit to be derived from the increase in rates is the enforcement of the utmost economy in the use of gas. With 20,000 or so meters in commission, representing as many users, no regulations unless backed by an army of inspectors could enforce economy. This of course is both undesirable and impracticable. The benefit that would accrue to the public by an increase of the rates is a prolongation of the life of the field due to the extra care that would result in the use of gas. This benefit would not go to the gas companies, as can easily be seen by a simple calculation. Assume for a moment that the smallest amount calculated above as gas in reserve, viz., 65,000 million cu. ft., is correct. For the last few years the industrial consumption has been 70 per cent. of the total and the domestic 30 per cent., and the rate of consumption is now 15,000 million per year, or four years' supply. Apart altogether from the inevitable breakdown of the system, which would increase in seriousness every spell of cold weather and result in the loss of a great deal of gas as against the system of careful nursing of the wells possible under domestic consumption only, we can compare the results of the two systems as far as the gas companies are concerned. In the first place, imagine the present system continued and even admit, what is probably impossible, that all of the gas can be marketed under those conditions; then we have as follows:—

|  |         |               |
|--|---------|---------------|
| 30% of 65,000 or 19,500 Mill             | at 25c. | = \$3,997,500 |
| 70%           "       "   45,500       " | 13c.    | = 5,915,000   |
| Total.....                               |         | \$9,912,500   |

As this 65,000 million feet is equal to 2,700,000 tons of coal, this means that it would be sold at the average rate of \$3.67 per ton. No economy can be enforced under these conditions.