

The Spotlight

SIR HENRY THORNTON.

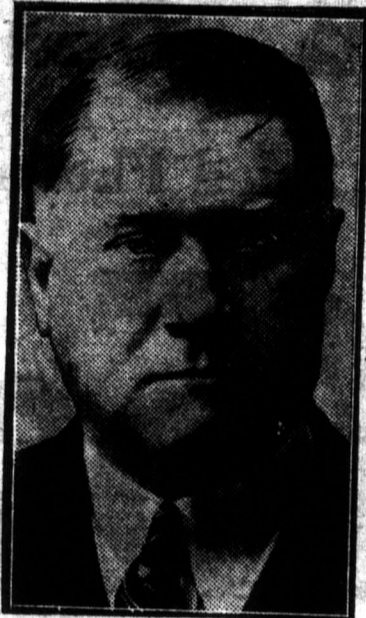
FIFTEEN thousand a year more than the thirty-five thousand Hanna has been getting, and the same amount that Kelly was understood to have received from the Grand Trunk—that's the market value of the services of the new head of the to-be-consolidated railways which we all own, and the deficits on which have been regarded as westerners are fabled to regard fifty below zero—you don't feel it. In inches, anyway, Sir Henry is a bigger man than D. B.—as six feet four is to six feet one and a half when D. B. stands on his dignity. Maybe he will turn out to be a bigger executive, though it will be years before he can know the road which Hanna knows the way a mother knows her baby. At least, it can't be said of the new man, as extra-particular critics have said of Mr. Hanna, that he is one of the Mackenzie-Mann crowd, and therefore to be distrusted. As anybody who knows him knows, there never was any substance to the yarn that though Sir William Mackenzie was off the board he was on the job of telling an obedient Hanna what to do.

Gerard Ruel is one of the new directors—and he was an understudy of Z. A. Lash, and a right hand to Judge Phippen while those two were drafting agreements, avoiding snags, and getting their principals out of holes. Of him, respectful things may be said another day. He is on the board entirely because of his present value and not because of his past affiliations. His present value couldn't be what it is if it were not for his past affiliations, and, anyway, there's no more reason, at this date, for refusing to allow an able man to serve the National Railways because he was once an aide to the two quiet knights of Victoria street, than there is for refusing to allow a mogul to pull a freight train because it once enjoyed a kindred distinction.

IS the new boss an Englishman nowadays, or is he a Yankee who has been at the court of King George? Certain of his former fellow countrymen mourn because he became a British subject. They think it's all right for incoming persons of European nationality not only to swear by their Uncle Samuel, but to forswear everything to which they were politically native, but the idea of an American citizen finding a patriotic home in the land of his forefathers—ugh. Still, it hath been observed that when

ter the size of Nova Scotia. Lord C. brother of the Duke of Abercorn, and therefore one of the "hungry Hamiltons," was as tactless as some other members of his family. All he meant was that, to make the changes necessary to a speedy readjustment to modern conditions of the busiest passenger service into London, somebody who was not tied down to use and wont was needed. Portions of the peerage had been rejuvenated by American importations, so why not the cult of railway management.

M R. THORNTON had the wit not to insist on the superiority with which everything that runs on steel rails is done on the Atlantic's western side. He knew very well that no large city in this continent has as many and as frequent steam passenger trains running into it as British cities of corresponding size have. He knew that



traffic managers like George Shaw of the old Canadian Northern had to go to England before they could believe—that train running in England is on a basis of punctuality with which North America is sadly unfamiliar. He knew, also, that though you might laugh at the dinky little engines with their screeaming whistle, and the tiny little goods trucks that nobody would dignify with the name of freight cars, the dinky little engines made wonderful

speed, and the tiny little trucks were not inappropriate in a country where it is impossible to get eighty miles from a tidal port. So he kept down a tendency to talk about how much better they did things on the Pennsylvania, and confined himself to suggesting improvements that would be beneficent for English purposes and carried out in what seems a perfectly natural, perfectly English way.

It wasn't easy, and when the war broke out, a few months after his arrival at Liverpool street, and he wasn't put on the committee of railway managers which co-ordinated steam transportation for the government, he said nothing, but co-operated heartily—and he was soon called in; and on both sides of the channel became the railway conductor for the empire. Lots of things that were not done in France till 1918 would have been done years before if Thornton had been in the saddle, and the War Office had been in the mood. To many the marvel of the war was not that the

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