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CLOSE DOWN THE BAND.

With Mr. MOTHERWELL, Minister of Agriculture, we are inclined to deprecate criticism of the new board which is to manage the Canadian National Railways until that board with its eminent president has had an opportunity to function for a reasonable period. Particularly is such criticism undesirable at election gatherings. If the Canadian National Railways are to be operated successfully, it is imperative that they be kept out of politics as much as possible, and to attack the personnel of a board that has scarcely had time to do more than organize itself can serve no good purpose.

As Mr. MOTHERWELL says, the appointment of Sir HENRY THORNTON to the presidency of the board was hailed with approval almost unanimously by the newspapers of the country. And it is to Sir HENRY THORNTON, and not to his board of advisers, that the country looks for leadership out of the morass into which the railways under public control had drifted.

But THE JOURNAL feels like repeating its suggestion that Sir HENRY THORNTON should be advised that Canada is now looking for action rather than words. It was to be hoped that when Sir HENRY was through eating dinners in England, organized to give his friends an opportunity of saying what a fine fellow he is, and had satisfied the earlier demands of enterprising newspaper correspondents for interviews, he would settle down to a period of real work. It is to be regretted, therefore, that there threatens to be a new outbreak of the dinner business and newspaper interviewing on Sir HENRY's arrival in Canada. Despatches tell us that at the banquet to be given him by the Montreal Board of Trade, Sir HENRY will not discuss the location of the head office of the National Railways because he does not desire to, or because somebody thinks he should not, express an opinion until after he has given the matter mature thought following a thorough investigation. That is common sense and applies equally to a lot of important matters that come within his purview. But the consequence is that at these banquets in Montreal, Ottawa, and other places, and to these interviewers here, there and everywhere, Sir HENRY THORNTON will be compelled to fall back on the utterance of a lot of platitudes and commonplace principles which we have all "taken as read." From some of the wise sayings already attributed to Sir HENRY, one would imagine that Canadians were quite new to the railway business and to the elementary principles that should govern their operation.

It is important that Sir HENRY THORNTON should retain the confidence of the Canadian public; he has their confidence now because of his reputation for tackling big jobs successfully; he will lose it surely if he does not soon stop talking and get down to business. The festive period is ended, so far as Sir HENRY THORNTON is concerned, until he has carved a new niche in the ladder of fame, and he would do well to withdraw from the public gaze forthwith so that he may concentrate upon and intensively study the enormous problems that have been handed over to him to solve.

The Government might now order the brass bands to quarters to practise a new tune.

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