

A Few Tales of the Rail

Ever fascinating is the subject of free transportation, and the corporation's lawyer told a new one.

"When I was a young man," said he, "I was a printer, which means that I was a traveler. I had come up to Rockford from a town in the central part of the State-state to collect a bill from a man who had moved from my town to Rockford. When I reached the latter place, I found my man alrightall right, but he was broke. My journey to Rockford had broken me also, and with nothing but promises from my debtor, I was at the end of my string. The man who owed me said he had heard the Dubuque Herald wanted printers, and if I would go there, I might get a job. I was of the same opinion, but how was I to get to Dubuque?"

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"An idea struck me. I would make a bold move. I boarded the evening train for Dubuque without ticket or money, but with a nice collection of lies. When the conductor came along, I told him I was a typesetter on the Dubuque Herald; that I had come to Rockford on business, and while there was robbed of my railroad ticket and all my money, and that if he would carry me to Dubuque, I was sure the paper would fix things up.

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"'Is that so?' said the conductor politely, after listening to my story. 'The editor of the Dubuque Herald is on this train in the next car. Come back with me, and if he says is-it is all right, I'll carry you.'

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"My heart sank, for I knew it was all up with me. The editor would quickly unmask me, and I would be put off the train. But I was in for it, and, assuming a pleased air, I accompanied him to the other car. I knew the ordeal would not last long, and I was anxious to have it over.

“This gentleman says he is an employee of your paper, has lost his ticket, and wants to get to Dubuque,” said the conductor to the editor.

“Oh, yes, he is one of our men. It’s all right,” replied the man, whom I had never seen before. My mind became confused. I was trying to cipher out whether the man had suddenly become insane or was a mind reader and had delved into my situation.

“The editor invited me to share his seat. After the conductor departed, we ~~drifter~~ drifted in conversation. We talked of the weather, the crops, of politics, of everything but the Dubuque Herald.

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“Just before we got to Dubuque, my curiosity over the motive for my rescuer’s strange actions got the better of me. ‘While I fully appreciate your kindness in helping me out in this matter,’ I said to him, ‘I would like to know what prompted you to recognize in me, a man you had never seen, an ~~empoyee~~ employee of your paper. Why, I’m not a printer on the Dubuque Herald.’

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“Well, I’m not the editor of the Dubuque Herald,” replied my benefactor, with a grin and a nudge. ‘I am riding on the editor’s pass.’”

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