

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

NOW here is a tale which it would be simply cold-blooded to laugh at, but I'm going to tell it because many of you know the persons concerned.

They were a bride and bridegroom who were married a few weeks ago, and immediately started east on their wedding tour. Everybody on the train knew them for what they were, and suspended other operations to gaze at them. They stopped at a little way-side station to spend a few hours with the bride's aunt, and there, too, they furnished interest and amusement to all observers.

The aunt lived six miles from the station, and when it was within an hour or two of train time she had the delicacy to allow the newly married pair to drive there alone in charge of her coachman. The coachman deposited them at the station, touched his hat, accepted his tip and drove off. From this point the tragedy moves on swiftly.

While waiting for the train the bride and bridegroom walked slowly up and down the platform.

He—I don't know what this joking and guying has been to you, but it's death on me. I never put in such a day.

She—It's perfectly dreadful. I shall be so glad when we get away from everybody we know.

He—They're actually impertinent; why, the very natives—

And at just this unpropitious moment the wheezy old station-master walked up to them.

"Be you goin' to take this train?" he asked.

"It's none of your business." And the bridegroom towed the bride up the track, where they consoled with each other over the impertinence of the natives.

Through the darkness came the train, its headlight shining from afar. Nearer, at full speed. It whizzed past and was gone!

"Why in thunder didn't that train stop?" yelled the bridegroom.

"Cos you sed 'twarn't none o' my bizness; I was to signal if you wanted to go." And the old man softly stroked his beard with satisfaction.

No other train till morning. No inn. No houses. Only a few cabins a mile away. The old man lived in the combined store and post office.

"You kin stay in my place all night if you wanten," he said.

They stayed—and they registered a solemn vow that the public should never hear of this incident. But the bride couldn't keep it.

A large assortment of Christmas cards from the various makers are now being shown by Hibben & Co.

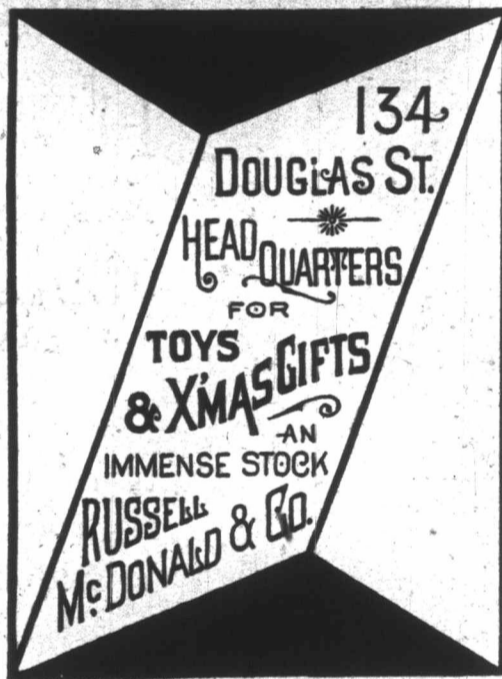
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