

This is no Lie.

We have a little story that we hope all those people who are eternally harping on the wickedness of drummers will read and reflect on. We have met hundreds of people, who, if you tell them a certain man—say a stranger—is a drummer, will hold up their hands in their horror and declare that there can be nothing good about him. In other words, no matter how much of a gentleman he may be, the mere fact of his being a drummer d—ns him forever.

A little fact has come under our observation that shows what infernal foolishness it is to judge a man by his looks.

The other day we were on the Chicago and Eastern Illinois road, starting on a shooting trip. Just in front of us were two women—we won't call them ladies, for they were of the stripe of women who are regular fanatics and always know more than anybody else, especially about other people's business. With them was a poor, hen-pecked looking man, who was probably the husband of one of them. At a station there got on the car a nice looking man with a large flat valise in each hand. He was well dressed, wore a duster, and had a good, honest face. He had a sandy beard and light hair, and his face was florid, as is always the case with men of his style. He nodded his head in our direction, and sat quietly down in one of the front seats, and commenced reading the paper.

Then the women commenced. 'Did you see that nasty drummer git on?' said number one. 'Yes,' said number two, 'I just despise them. They go around like a pack of wolves and they do anything that's mean and low; I wouldn't trust one of 'em a minute.'

'How do you know he is a drummer?' meekly interposed the hen-pecked husband.

'Know? How do I know?' said number one. 'Why I can tell 'em as far as I can see 'em. Them things they call grip sacks give 'em away. This fellow has got two. I guess he's got a lot of samples in one and a big whisky bottle, and a pack of cards, and a whole lot of nasty pictures of women, and a whole lot of letters from girls all over the country in the other one. Oh, I pity his poor wife.'

'How do you know he's married?' ventured the husband.

'Know! Why them fellows have got wives all over the country. They just bewitch these innocent girls and marry 'em, and then go off on trips and leaves 'em, but they generally have one poor wife and a lot of children off East somewhere, and the poor thing has to support 'em all, while the drummer is gaddin' round the country playin' cards.'

'Yes,' said number two. 'You're just right; they oughter all be in the penitentiary. They're a deoraved set. Now, just look at that fellow's face. See how red it is? I'll bet he drinks a quart of whiskey every day. I never seen anything so red in my life. Now, I just know he's got a big flask in each of them sample cases. And do you see the cheek he had to bow to us when he came in, and here we never saw him before, the cheeky wretch.'

Now, we happened to know the gentleman, and new his business, and we thought it a good chance to put in our oar, especially as it was to us he nodded and probably never noticed the virtuous females at all, so putting on a sweet smile, we leaned forward and said:

'Ladies, I see you know something of the world. Drummers are a hard set, aren't they?'

They looked at us a moment, and then said: 'Yes, sir, I hope you don't associate with them.'

'Oh, no, madam, not for the world. I live down in Evansville, and down there the people won't walk on the same side of the street with them at all.' (How was this for gall from a fellow that went on the road when only seventeen, and drummed ten years?)

'Well, I'm glad they treat 'em as they deserve down in Evansville. Do you know that whiskey faced feller up in front?'

'Never saw him before,' said we with a truthful air; 'but I'd just like to play a trick on him and make him show those whiskey bottles he's got in his valises.'

'Oh, wouldn't that be nice,' said one; 'how could you do it?'

'You just leave it to me,' we went on. 'I'll rope him back here, and tell him that two ladies are very much interested in him, and it will be just like his cheek to come back and open his valises and show you a lot of letters from girls just to show you what a masher he is.'

'Oh, how nice,' they cried, clapping their hands with glee. 'You get him back.'

We went forward and simply said to the alleged drummer; 'Henson, there are two nice Christian ladies back there who want to look at your samples. I think they can help you along.'

Henson threw down his paper and grabbed his valises, and came back. He threw back a seat and while opening the valises said:

'Ladies, I thank you for sending for me. I am a Milford, and of course I don't get much salary, and during my summer vacation I try to make a little money for my wife and babies by working on commission for the American Bible Society; now, do you see any of these that you like?' and he threw open both valises completely filled with copies of the Bible, from the cheapest up to the nicely bound ones that are usually kept on centre tables.

What the women said we don't know; we lit out for another car; we don't want to be snatched bald headed, but we had a kind of a sweet feeling that we had shown those vinegar-faced females that you can't 'wote always tell.'

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