

**HEALTH & STRENGTH**  
**IRON BITTERS**

# THE ALAMANCE GLEANER

GRAHAM, N.C., WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 10 1879 NO. 40

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## OVERWHELMING A PARSON.

"I'm real glad you're here, Miss Purdy," exclaimed Miss Betsy Marvin, opening the door to the village dressmaker. "I've been expecting you for three weeks. My father is getting so rusty I'm ashamed to wear it. When'd you get home?"

"Last night," answered the little woman, shaking out the folds of the large figured delaine before her.

"Then you haven't heard the news, maybe—about Parson Noble's leaving us, hey?" asked Miss Betsy, with an air of mysterious importance.

"Not a word except what I saw in the newspapers. You see I've been over to Florence, saying for three months; Cousin Maria's youngest daughter was married last Tuesday. How will you have your dress cut, Miss Marvin?"

"You don't say! Well I never! What luck she does he marrying off her girls! Out just behind—its a broad sin to waste it like so, I think. Well, I'm glad you can hear it from a woman like you—she has such a habit of coloring things so. Now I always tell a straight-forward story, and let the truth up to suit themselves. How did you like Parson Noble, what you've heard of him, Miss Purdy?"

"He always put me in mind of those men that St. Paul tells about of whom the world is not worthy," answered the dressmaker, measuring Miss Marvin's dress with her tape measure.

"Oh well! I suppose most people was pleased with him at first; maybe you'll change your mind when you hear about the donation. I can't say but what he has a pleasing way with him, but I always thought he was a little loose in his doctrine. I mistrusted him from the first like as not he wouldn't stay long. Somehow his preaching wasn't strong enough—there wasn't theology enough about it."

"Possibly not," remarked Miss Purdy, cutting up the lining, but it seemed to have reached the gospel and that was good enough for me."

"Do you think he was very spiritual?" asked Miss Betsy, waving the contested point. "He's been seen more'n a dozen times sliding down Dragon hill with the boys on their double nippers, they call them. What do you think of that?"

"I think most likely he enjoyed it, and I'm sure the boys did. I never say a man has such a faculty for making everybody happy around him—it was really wonderful."

"Miss Marvin laughed a low laugh which had in it neither mirth nor merriment."

"I suppose they have to have food and clothes, Miss Marvin, in fact, I had an idea that ministers were human."

"I begin to think so myself, Miss Purdy, a'red'ly human," sighed Miss Betsy. "Well, as I was saying they went to him—the committee did—and kindly asked him if he would take six hundred this year, they say he was so generous and what of them he did?"

"I haven't the slightest idea, unless he said he would preach for nothing."

"No, indeed; he said he couldn't but just live on \$700, and thought he ought to be making some provision for the future now, if ever. Mrs. Chapin said she thought that was disagreeing providence, and she'd be the way to look. Hasn't he Lord promised to provide? Didn't he send Elijah and the children of Israel? I calculate if ministers is faithful the Lord will take care of 'em when they're too old to preach."

"Well, what did the committee do then?"

"I don't know, but I can tell you; some was fur letting the parson go; but Deacon Simmons got real riled up; he said he 'didn't blame the minister one minter, he thought they ought to raise his salary instead of lowering it, and he'd be willing to give \$500. The deacon meant well, but he's a dreadful unreasonable man when he gets his tender up; but Squire Lyman let him down at once; he said it was a poor plan to let ministers hev their way, and if they should give Parson Noble seven hundred this year, they'd be asking for eight hundred next year. Then the deacon got up and says he'd be willing to give \$500, but that was a real tender point, and the deacon knew it, for Squire Lyman told around

that her father gave her five hundred, a year-fur clothes and to leave with, and they kept two girls and a man to take care of the horses, but the 'Squire' only paid ten dollars minister's tax last year—but then 'woudn't do to get Squire Lyman mad, for he's worth more'n that; a half dozen like Deacon Simmons. So the minister made a motion to give six hundred dollars and give the minister a donation to make up the other hundred. "That kinder puffed all round, and they agreed to meet at the vestry the next Thursday evening and give the minister and his wife a roasting donation and surprise party. They took pains to invite everybody, old and young, and when Thursday evening came there was a big crowd I can tell you. Squire Lyman gave the word to start, and just as we got to the door, well, commenced to sing; "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

"The minister and his wife both came to the door, and they did look surprised enough, but somehow they didn't look so cheerful as you would expect. They were dreadfully surprised to see the crowd, and they didn't know what to do. They waited for an invitation, but kept crowding in, and the minister and his wife kept backing back until the house was full up stairs and down. Squire Lyman's wife and me and some others went into the kitchen to look after the victuals and other things that was donated; and such a sight as it was."

"Deacon Bates brought a bushel of potatoes, and Squire Lyman a peck of onions. Levi Norse brought a hunk of pork to be sure Parson Noble or his wife eat some, and the deacon showed Mr. Norse's good will. Then Mrs. Prentis brought them a chrome of a bare-headed girl picking flowers. You see Mr. Noble preached a sermon one Sunday about folks making home attractive for the children—said they ought to have books and pictures and all such things. I suppose Mrs. Prentis thought 'twould please him, and I think she was very thoughtful about you? Somebody brought a nice little Bible, you know, are always appropriate to give a minister."

"A whole lot of vittles was the last thing that was donated, and it interrupted Miss Purdy. Miss Betsy did not notice the interruption, but continued:

"Then there was a peck of apples and some soft soap, four loaves of bread, a pan of doughnuts, two loaves of cake, a couple of mince-pies, and a loaf of gingerbread. I don't know what the victuals, of course, was for refreshment for everybody expects something to eat at a donation party. But there was one thing, it did seem to me, everybody had agreed upon, and I should think that everybody that came must have brought some links of sausages—such a pile of them was just as down and I laughed; "I couldn't help it when we saw them."

"Of course we helped ourselves to tea and sugar and 'tween little things—we knew Mrs. Noble would be glad to furnish 'em; then nobody thought to bring any preserves. So we called Mrs. Noble out and asked her what we should do about it. She said she had a jar of quince sauce we might have. Mrs. Pierce didn't let it out, and she said it wouldn't be half round, she asked me if she'd better get two of mince-cakes open; but I told her it would make more trouble, and she'd no pattern if the children didn't get any, so we made it go as far it would, but it did look kinder queer."

"Well, I never heard of anything equal to that! I saw Mrs. Purdy, shaming away at the cloth before her as if she had a grudge against it."

"Bless my soul! what are you doing?" exclaimed Miss Betsy. You've spoiled that sauce, and it didn't get but nine yards; 'twould do to waste any. Well, as I was saying, we 'posed everybody had had something when Mrs. Lyman came out and said there hadn't been a thing passed in the library. So we hunted around and found a loaf of bread, a couple of loaves of coconut cake, and some pies that Mrs. Noble had baked up for company. You see she's expecting a minister to stay over Sunday."

"I was real unfortunate, for she might not have had anything in the house but for that; and she had all the next day to bake in, so we thought it wouldn't do no hurt to take it. Mrs. Jones said that she loaned a pan of good cakes afterwards that Mrs. Noble had hid away. We didn't work up about it, children think so much of good cakes you know, and Mrs. Jones said that she thought it looked pretty small when we was 'giving' 'em such a donation. But maybe 'twas just as well, for some of the boys threw cake at each other, and it got trod into the carpet at times, and I don't believe in having things wasted. Up up the pieces if you can, Miss Purdy, and

leave the third piece for each child. There was one thing I was surprised to hear, the children got 'footing' up stairs and knocked over a picture and broke it, 'twas a pity for it belonged to that brother Mrs. Noble had given her when she was married and was painted by hand. And Mrs. Adams said when Mrs. Noble heard of it, she looked real mad. Such an example to set before children and a minister's wife, Miss Purdy, will be children, you know Miss Purdy, if you don't mind."

"The minister for children is at home evenings, I think," said the dressmaker sharply.

"Well I don't know as it was any worse than Mr. Lunt did he was leaning on the fire-stove and the glass broke in a minute. But then, accidents will happen, and 'twas different being a donation party."

"Of course," acquiesced the little dressmaker.

"Then it was real funny," continued Miss Betsy, the way they worked it. You see the minister folks go home real early—being certain 'tween they thought we would follow their example, but they shan't do that; why before we go through with eating the things and—"

"Then you had all the dishes to wash in Mrs. Purdy."

"That you're not if we had attempted to wash the dishes I know of it, but she would have stopped us, and besides it would have taken us half the night, and of course she didn't expect it. But as it was past midnight before they all got away."

"Well, the next Sunday we all thought the parson would have an extra sermon and make some acknowledgment of the donation besides, and of course everybody went to meet 'em. I started early, and stopped for Melland Jones on my way. When we got most there, Melland stopped sudden and says what on earth is the matter? Why? says I—I'm better thinking and he'd noticed anything about you, says he, says she, that every body stops suddenly at the parsonage, as if something was the matter?"

"Surely, says he, it must be, there is a crane on the road, and we've hurried along and what do you think we've stepped on the tail length of the parson's glasses in the sun? What, indeed, but says he—'Lunk on lunk!'"

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