

THE ALAMANCE GLEANER.

VOL. XLII

GRAHAM, N. C., THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1916

NO. 36

GRAHAM CHURCH DIRECTORY.

Baptist—N. Main St.—Jas. W. Rose, Pastor.
Preaching services every first and third Sundays at 11.00 a. m. and 7.30 p. m.
Sunday School every Sunday at 9.15 a. m.—C. B. Irwin, Superintendent.

Graham Christian Church—N. Main Street—Rev. J. F. Truitt.
Preaching services every Second and Fourth Sundays, at 11.00 a. m.
Sunday School every Sunday at 10.00 a. m.—E. L. Henderson, Superintendent.

New Providence Christian Church—North Main Street, near Depot—Rev. J. G. Truitt, Pastor.
Preaching every Second and Fourth Sundays, at 11.00 a. m. and 7.30 p. m.
Sunday School every Sunday at 9.15 a. m.—J. A. Bayliff, Superintendent.

Friends—North of Graham Public School—J. Robert Parker, Pastor.
Preaching every Sunday at 11 a. m. and at 7.30 p. m.
Sunday School every Sunday at 10.00 a. m.—James Crisco, Superintendent.

Methodist Episcopal, South—Cor. Main and Maple Sts., H. E. Myers, Pastor.
Preaching every Sunday at 11.00 a. m. and at 7.30 p. m.
Sunday School every Sunday at 9.15 a. m.—W. B. Green, Supt.

M. P. Church—N. Main Street, Rev. O. B. Williams, Pastor.
Preaching first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. and 8 p. m.
Sunday School every Sunday at 9.15 a. m.—J. L. Amick, Supt.

Presbyterian—Wat Elm Street—Rev. T. M. McConnell, pastor.
Sunday School every Sunday at 9.15 a. m.—Lynn B. Williamson, Superintendent.

Presbyterian (Travosa Chapel)—J. W. Clegg, pastor.
Preaching every Second and Fourth Sundays at 11.00 a. m. and 7.30 p. m.
Sunday School every Sunday at 9.15 a. m.—J. Harvey White, Superintendent.

Oneda—Sunday School every Sunday at 2.30 p. m.—J. V. Pomeroy, Superintendent.

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Sheridan's attempt to make a business man of his son Bibbs by starting him in the machine shop ends in Bibbs going to a sanitarium, a nervous breakdown.

CHAPTER II—On his return Bibbs is met at the station by his sister Mary.

CHAPTER III—He finds himself in an inconsiderable and unconsidered figure in the "New House" of the Sheridans. He sees Mary Vertrees looking at him from a summer house next door.

CHAPTER IV—The Vertrees, old town family and impoverished, are the Sheridans, newly-rich, and afterward discomfited. Mary puts into words her parents' unspoken wish that she marry one of the Sheridans.

CHAPTER V—At the Sheridan home, during the banquet, Sheridan greets his wife, Mary, and Bibbs. Bibbs is the center of attention, and Bibbs hears he is to be sent back to the machine shop.

CHAPTER VI—Mary tells her mother about the banquet and shows her mother by talking of Jim as a matrimonial possibility.

CHAPTER VII—Jim tells Mary Bibbs is not a lunatic. "Just queer," he proposes to Mary, who half accepts him.

CHAPTER VIII—Sheridan tells Bibbs he must go back to the machine shop as soon as he is strong enough. In spite of Bibbs' plea to be allowed to write.

CHAPTER IX—Edith and Sibyl, Roscoe Sheridan's wife, quarrel over Bibbs' return. Sibyl goes to Mary for help to keep Lamhorn from marrying Edith, and Mary leaves her in the room alone.

CHAPTER X—Bibbs has to break to his father the news of Jim's sudden death.

CHAPTER XI—All the rest of the family helps in the grief. Bibbs becomes the family master of the house. At the funeral he meets Mary and rides home with her.

CHAPTER XII—Mary, Sheridan pleads with Bibbs to return to the machine shop for his father's sake and his health.

CHAPTER XIII—Bibbs purposely interrupts a telephone call to Edith and Lamhorn. He tells Edith that he overheard Lamhorn making love to Roscoe's wife.

CHAPTER XIV—Mutual love of music causes an intimate friendship between Bibbs and Mary.

CHAPTER XV—Mary sells her piano to help out the finances of the Vertrees family.

CHAPTER XVI—Roscoe and his wife quarrel over Lamhorn's return.

CHAPTER XVII—Sheridan finds Roscoe in an intoxicated condition during office hours and takes him home.

CHAPTER XVIII—Friendship between Bibbs and Mary ripens into a more intimate relation. Under Mary's influence Bibbs decides to return to the machine shop.

CHAPTER XIX—Bibbs, under the inspiration of Mary's friendship, makes good in the machine shop. Sheridan is injured while attempting to show the boy how to do his work.

CHAPTER XX—Bibbs, intensely jealous over Lamhorn's attentions to Edith, makes a scene in the Sheridan home, and Lamhorn is ordered out of the house by Sheridan.

CHAPTER XXI—Bibbs finds great happiness in his work and his growing love for Mary.

CHAPTER XXII—Edith leaves for New York. Bibbs, in a moment of weakness, tells his father that he is going to quit the business and go away with his wife.

CHAPTER XXIII—Sheridan announces that he is going to take Bibbs into the office with him and make a business man of him.

"Now, mamma, hold your horses! I wanted him to look Bibbs over before anything of the matter. You don't suppose I'm going to take any chances with Bibbs, do you? Well, afterwards, I shut the door, and I and an old Gurney had a talk. He's a mighty disagreeable man, he rubbed it in on me what he said about Bibbs having brains if he ever woke up. Then I thought he must want to get something out of me, he got so flustering—for a minute! Bibbs couldn't help having business brains, he says, 'bless your son. Don't be surprised at his making a success.' What a success! He couldn't get over his heredity; he couldn't help being a business success—once you get him into it. It's in his blood. Yes, sir, he says, 'It doesn't need much brains, he says, 'an only third-rate brains, at that.' He says, 'but it does need a special kind of brains,' he says, 'to be a millionaire. I mean, he says, 'when a man's given a start. If nobody gives him a start, why, course he's got to have luck and the right kind of brains. The only miracle about Bibbs,' he says, 'is where he got the other kind of brains—the brains you made him quit using and throw away.'"

"But what'd he say about his health?" Mrs. Sheridan demanded, impatiently, as George placed a cup of coffee before her husband. Sheridan helped himself to cream and sugar, and began to sip the coffee.

"I'm coming to that," he returned, placidly. "See how easy I manage this cup with my left hand, mamma? 'You been doin' that all winter. What did—"

"It's wonderful," he interrupted, admiringly. "What a fellow can do with his left hand. I can sign my name with my right. It came a little hard at first, but now, honest, I believe I can sign with my left. That's all rather sign with my right, anyway—just the signature, Roger's all dictating." He blew across the top of the cup untroubled. "Good coffee, mamma! Well, about Bibbs. Ole Gurney says he believes if Bibbs could somehow get back to the state of mind he was in about the machine shop—that is, if he could come way back to feelin' about business the way he felt about the shop—not the poetry and writin' part, but—"

He paused, supplementing his remarks with a motion of his head

toward the old house next door. "He says Bibbs is older and harder'n what he was when he broke down that time, and, besides, he ain't the kind of dreamy way he was then—and I should say he ain't! I'd like 'em to show me anybody his age that's any wider awake! But he says Bibbs' health'll never need bother us again if we'll only let him be!"

Mrs. Sheridan shook her head. "I don't see any help that way. You know yourself she wouldn't have Jim. 'Who's talkin' about her havin' anybody? But my Lord! she might let him look at her! She needn't a' got so mad, just because he asked her, that she won't let him come in the house any more. He's a mighty funny boy, and some ways I reckon he's pretty near as hard to understand as the Bible, but Gurney kind of got me in the way of thinkin' that if she'd let him come back and set around with her an evening or two sometimes—not regular, I don't mean—why— Well, I just thought I'd see what you'd think of it. There ain't any way to talk about it to Bibbs himself—I don't suppose he'd let you, anyhow—but I thought maybe you could kind of slip over there some day, and kind of hint around till you see how the land lays, and ask her—"

"Me?" Mrs. Sheridan looked both surprised and frightened. "No," she shook her head decidedly. "It wouldn't do any good."

"You won't try it?"

"I won't risk her turnin' me out of the house. Some way, that's what I believe she did to Sibyl, from what Roscoe said once. No, I can't—and, what's more, I'd only make things worse. If people find out you're runnin' after 'em they think you're cheap, and then they won't do as much for you as if you let 'em alone. I don't believe it's any use, and I couldn't do it if I was."

He sighed with resignation. "All right, mamma. That's all." Then, in a livelier tone, he said: "Ole Gurney took the bandages off my hand this morning. All healed up. Says I don't need 'em any more."

"Why, that's splendid, papa!" she cried, beaming. "I was afraid—Let's see."

She came toward him, but he rose, still keeping his hand in his pocket. "Wait a minute," he said, smiling. "Now it may give you just a little teeny bit of a shock, but the fact is—well, you remember that Sunday when Sibyl came over here and made all that fuss about codlin'—it was the day after I got tired of that statue when Edith's telegram came—"

"Let me see your hand!" she cried. "Now wait!" he said, laughing and pushing her away with his left hand. "The truth is, mamma, that I kind of slipped out on you that morning, when you came out to the open air he told me ole Gurney's office—he'd told me to you see—and, well, it doesn't amount to anything." And he held out, for her inspection, the mutilated hand. "You see, these days when it's all dictatin', anyhow, nobody'd mind just a thing."

He had to jump for her—she went over backward. For the second time in her life Mrs. Sheridan had fainted.

CHAPTER XXXII.

It was a full hour later when he left her lying upon a couch in her own room, still lamenting that the "fuss" which she was making irked him far more than his physical loss. He permitted her to think that he meant to return directly to his office, but when he came out to the open air he told the chauffeur in attendance to await him in front of Mr. Vertrees' house, whither he himself proceeded on foot.

Mr. Vertrees had taken the sale of half of his worthless stock as manna in the wilderness; it came from heaven—by what agency he did not particularly question. The broker informed him that "parties were interested in getting hold of the stock," and that there might be a possible increase in the value of the large amount retained by his client. It might go "quite a ways up" within a year or so, he said, and he advised "sitting tight" with it. Mr. Vertrees went home and prayed.

He rose from his knees feeling that he was surely coming into his own again. It was more than a mere spasm of temporary relief with him, and his wife shared his optimism; but Mary would not let him buy back her piano, and as for furniture—spring was on the way, she said. But they paid the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker, and hired a cook once more. It was this servitress who opened the door for Sheridan, and presently assured him that Miss Vertrees would "be down."

He was not the man to conceal admiration when he felt it, and he flushed and beamed as Mary made her appearance, almost upon the heels of the cook. She had a look of apprehension for the first fraction of a second, but it vanished at the sight of him, and its place, while color rushed in her cheeks.

"Don't be surprised," he said. "Truth is, in a way it's sort of on business I looked in here. I'll only take a minute, I expect."

"I'm sorry," said Mary. "I hoped you'd come because we're neighbors."

He chuckled. "Neighbors! Sometimes people don't see so much of their

neighbors as they used to. That is, I hear so lately."

"You'll stay long enough to sit down, won't you?"

"I guess I could manage that much." And they sat down, facing each other and not far apart.

"Of course, it couldn't be called business, exactly," he said, more gravely. "Not at all, I expect. But there's something of yours it seemed to me I ought to give you, and I just thought it was better to bring it myself and explain how I happened to have it. It's this—this letter you wrote my boy."

He extended the letter to her solemnly, in his left hand, and she took it gently from him. "It was in his mail, after he was hurt. You knew he never got it, I expect."

"Yes," she said, in a low voice.

He sighed. "I'm glad he didn't. Not," he added, quickly—"not but what you did right to send it. You did. You couldn't act any other way when it came right down to it. There ain't any blame comin' to you—you were aboveboard all through."

Mary said, "Thank you," almost in a whisper, and with her head bowed low.

"You'll have to excuse me for readin' it. I had to take charge of all his mail and everything; I didn't know

by and by, ole Doc Gurney had to take kind of radical measures with me. He's a right good doctor, too. Don't you think so, Miss Vertrees?"

"Yes."

"Yes, he is so!" Sheridan now had the air of a rambling talker and gossip with all day on his hands. "Take him on Bibbs' case. I was talkin' about Bibbs' case with him this morning. Well, you'd laugh to hear the way ole Gurney talks about that! 'Course he is just as much a friend as he is a doctor—and he takes as much interest in Bibbs as if he was in the family. He thinks Bibbs isn't any ways bad off yet; and he thinks he could stand the pace and get fat on it if—well, this is what'd make you laugh if you'd been there, Miss Vertrees—honest it would! He paused to chuckle, and stole a glance at her. She was gazing straight before her at the wall; her lips were parted, and—visibly—she was breathing heavily and quickly. He feared that she was growing furiously angry; but he had led to what he wanted to say, and he went on, determined now to say it all. He leaned forward and altered his voice to one of confidential friendliness, though in it he still maintained a tone which indicated that ole Doc Gurney's opinion was only a joke he shared with her. "Yes, sir, you certainly ought to be laughin'! Why, that ole man thinks you got something to do with it. You'll have to blame it on him, young lady, if it makes you feel like startin' out to whup somebody! He's actually got this theory: he says Bibbs got to gettin' better while he worked over there at the shoe shop because he kept him cheer'd up and feelin' good. And he says if you could manage to just stand him hangin' round a little—maybe not much, but just sometimes—again, he believed it'd do Bibbs a mighty lot of good. 'Course that's only what the doctor said. Me, I don't know anythin' about that; but I can say this much—never saw any such a mortal improvement in anybody in my life as I have lately in Bibbs. I expect you'd find him a good deal more entertaining than what he used to be—and I know it's a kind of embarrassing thing to suggest after he's been plied in your ears here the day to ask you to stand up before the preacher with him, but according to ole Doc Gurney, he's got you on his brain so bad—"

Mary jumped. "Mr. Sheridan!" she exclaimed.

He sighed profoundly. "There! I noted you were gettin' mad. I didn't."

"No, no, no!" she cried. "But I don't understand—and I think you don't. What is it you want me to do?"

He sighed again, but this time with relief. "Well, well!" he said. "You're right. I'll be easier to talk plain. I ought to know I could with you, at the time. I just hoped you'd let that boy come and see you sometimes, once more. Could you?"

"You don't understand." She clasped her hands together in a sorrowful gesture. "Yes, we must talk plain. Bibbs heard that I'd tried to make your oldest son care for me because I was poor, so Bibbs came and asked me to marry him—because he was sorry for me. And I can't see him any more," she cried in distress. "I can't!"

Sheridan cleared his throat uncomfortably. "You mean because he thought that about you?"

"No, no! What he thought was true!"

"Well—you mean he was so much in—"

"You mean he thought so much of you—"

"The words were inconceivably awkward upon Sheridan's tongue; he seemed to be in doubt even about pronouncing them, but after a ghastly pause he bravely repeated them. "You mean he thought so much of you that you just couldn't stand him around?"

"No! He was sorry for me. He cared for me; he was fond of me; and he'd respected me—too much! In the

handwritten, and I read it all—once I got started."

"I'm glad you did."

"Well—I leaned forward as if to rise—I guess that's about all I just thought you ought to have it."

"Thank you for bringing it."

He looked at her hopefully, as if he thought and wished that she might have something more to say. But she seemed not to be aware of this glance, and she went on, her eyes fixed sorrowfully upon the floor.

"Well, I expect I better be gettin' back to the office," he said, rising decidedly. "I told—I told my partner I'd be back at two o'clock, and I guess he'll think I'm a poor business man if he catches me behind time. I got to walk the chalk a mighty straight line these days—with that fellow keepin' tabs on me—"

Mary rose with him. "I've always heard you were the hard driver."

"He's a good driver," she said. "I'm not!" to that partner of mine. You couldn't guess he save your life how he keeps after me to hold up my end of the job. I shouldn't be surprised he'd give me the grand bounce some day, and run the whole circus himself. You know how he is—once he goes at a thing!"

"No," she smiled. "I didn't know you had a partner. I always heard—"

He laughed, looking away from her. "It's just my way of speakin' o' that boy o' mine, Bibbs."

He stood then, expectant, staring out into the hall with an air of careless joviality. He felt that she certainly must say at least, "How is Bibbs?" but she said nothing at all, though he waited until the silence became embarrassing.

"Well, I guess I better be gettin' down there," he said, at last. "He might worry."

"Goodbye—and thank you," said Mary. "For the letter."

"Oh," he said, blankly. "You're welcome. Goodbye."

Mary put out her hand. "Goodbye."

"You'll have to excuse my left hand," he said. "I had a little accident to the other one."

She gave a plying cry as she saw. "Oh, poor Mr. Sheridan!"

"Nothin' at all! Dictate everything nowadays, anyhow." He laughed again. "If anybody tell you how it happened?"

"I heard you hurt your hand, but no—not just now."

"It was this way," he began, and both, as if unconsciously, sat down again. "You may not know it, but I used to worry a good deal about the youngest of my boys—the one that used to come to see you sometimes, after Jim—that is, I mean Bibbs. He's the one I spoke of as my partner; and the truth is that's what it's just about goin' to amount to, one of these days—if his health holds out. Well, you remember, I expect, I had him on a machine over at a plant o' mine; and sometimes I'd kind of sneak in there and see how he was gettin' along. Take a doctor with me sometimes, because Bibbs never was so robust, you might say. Ole Doc Gurney—I guess maybe you know him? Tall, thin man; acts sleepy—"

"Yes."

"Well, one day I and ole Doc Gurney, we were in there, and I undertook to show Bibbs how to run his machine. He told me to look out, but I wouldn't listen, and I didn't look out—and that's how I got my hand hurt, tryin' to show Bibbs to do something he knew how to do and I didn't. Made me so mad I just wouldn't even admit to myself it was hurt—and so,

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"Yes."

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