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ABNER DANIEL

By WILL N. HARBEN, Author of "Westerfelt."

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CHAPTER XVIII.

WHEN Miller reached his office about 10 o'clock the next morning and opened the door, he noticed that Craig's bank on the corner across the street was still closed. It was an unusual occurrence at that hour, and it riveted Miller's attention. Few people were on the street, and none of them seemed to have noticed it. A bell was ringing for the prayer meeting which was being conducted by a traveling evangelist in the church in the next block, and Miller saw the merchants and lawyers hurrying by on their way to worship. Miller stood in his front door and bowed to them as they passed. Trabue hustled out of his office, pulling the door to with a jerk.

"Prayer meeting?" he asked, glancing at Miller.

"No, not today," answered Miller; "got some writing to do."

"That preacher's a hummer," said the old lawyer. "I've never seen his equal. He'd 'a' made a bang up crim-



"I see you uns is watchin' Craig's door," he said.

inal lawyer. Why, they say old Joe Murphy's converted—got out of his bed at midnight and went to Tim Stocum's house to get 'im to pray for 'im. He's denied that was a God all his life till now. I say a preacher's worth two hundred to a town if it can do that sort of work."

"He's certainly worth it to Stocum," said Miller, with a smile. "If I'd been denying there was a God so long as he has, I'd pay more than that to get rid of the habit. Stocum's able, and I'll be ought to foot that preacher's bill."

"You are a tough customer, Miller," said Trabue, with a knowing laugh. "You'd better look out—he's got an eye on you. He'll call out yore name some of these days 'an' ask us to pray fer you."

"I was just wondering if there's anything wrong with Craig," said Miller. "I see his door's not open."

"Oh, I reckon not," said the old lawyer. "He's been taking part in the meeting. He may have overslept."

There was a grocery store near Miller's office, and the proprietor came out on the sidewalk and joined the two men. His name was Barnett. He was a powerful man, who stood six feet five in his boots. He wore no coat, and his suspenders were soiled and knotted.

"I see you uns is watchin' Craig's door," he said. "I've had my eye on it ever since breakfast. I hardly know what to make of it. I went thar to buy some New York exchange to pay for a bill of flour, but he wouldn't let me in. I know he's thar, for I see 'im go in about an hour ago. I mighty nigh shook the door off'n the hinges. His clerk, that western fellow, Winship, has gone off to visit his folks, 'an' I reckon maybe Craig's got all the bookkeepin' to do."

"Well, he oughtn't to keep his doors closed at this time of day," remarked Miller. "A man who has other people's money in his charge can't be too careful."

"He's got some of mine," said the grocer. "and Mary Ann Tarpley, my wife's sister, put \$200 thar day before yesterday. Oh, I reckon nothin' wrong, though I do remember I heard somebody say Craig bought cotton futures 'an' sometimes got skeered up a little about meetin' his obligations."

"I've never heard that," said Rayburn Miller, raising his brows.

"Well, I have, 'an' I've heard the same of Winship," said the grocer. "but I never let it go no further. I ain't no hand to circulate ill reports agin a good member of the church."

Miller bit his lip, and an unpleasant thrill passed over him as Trabue walked on. "Twenty-five thousand," he thought, is no small amount. It would tempt five men out of ten if they were inclined to go wrong and were in a tight."

"Suspicious, heigh? Now, jest a little, wasn't you?" The grocer now spoke with undisguised uneasiness.

"Not at all," replied the lawyer. "I was doing some business for the other bank and felt that I ought to favor them by my cash deposits."

"You don't think thar's anything the matter, do you?" asked the grocer, his face still hardening.

"I think Craig is acting queerly—very queerly for a banker," was Miller's slow reply. "He has always been most particular to open up early and—"

"Hello!" cried out a cheery voice, that of the middle aged proprietor of the Darley Flouring mills, emerging from Barnett's store. "I see you fellows have your eye on Craig's front. If he was a drinking man, we might suspect he'd been on a tear last night, wouldn't we?"

"It looks shaky to me," retorted the grocer, growing more excited. "I'm goin' over there 'an' try that door again. A man 'at has my money can't attract the attention Craig has 'an' me say nothin'."

The Miller pulled his little turf of gray beard and winked at Rayburn. "You've been scarin' Barnett," he said, with a tentative inflection. "He's easily rattled. By the way, now that I think of it, it does seem to me I heard some of the Methodists talkin' about reprovin' Craig 'an' Winship for speculatin' in grain 'an' cotton. I know they've been dabblin' in it, for Craig always got my market reports. He's been dealin' with a bucket shop in Atlanta."

"I'm going over there," said Miller abruptly, and he hurried across in the wake of the big grocer. The Miller followed him. On the other side of the street several people were curiously watching the bank door, and when Barnett went to it and grasped the handle and began to shake it vigorously they crossed over to him.

"What's wrong?" said a dealer in fruits, a short, thickset man with a florid face, but Barnett's only reply was another furious shaking of the door.

"Why, man, what's got into you?" protested the fruit dealer in a rising tone of astonishment. "Do you intend to break that door down?"

"I will if that skunk don't open it 'an' give me my money," said Barnett, who was now red in the face and almost foaming at the mouth. "He's back in thar, 'an' he knows it's past openin' time. By gum, I know more'n I'm goin' to tell right now!"

This was followed by another rattling of the door, and the grocer's enormous weight, like a battering ram, was thrown against the heavy walnut shutter.

"Open up, I say—open up la thar!" yelled the grocer in a voice hoarse with passion and suspense.

A dozen men were now grouped around the doorway. Barnett released the handle and stood facing them.

"Somebody's rotten in Denmark," he panted. "Believe me or not, fellows, I know a thing or two. This bank's in a bad fix."

A thrill of horror shot through Miller. The words had the ring of conviction. Alan Bishop's money was in bad hands if it was there at all. Suddenly he saw a white, trembling hand fumbling with the lower part of the close drawn window shade as if some one were about to raise it, but the shade remained down, the interior still obscured. It struck Miller as being a sudden impulse, defeated by fear of violence. There was a pause. Then the storm broke again. About fifty men had assembled, all wild to know what was wrong. Miller elbowed his way to the door and stood on the step, slightly raised above the others, Barnett by his side. "Let me speak to him," he said peacefully. Barnett yielded doggedly, and Rayburn put his lips to the crack between the two folding doors.

"Mr. Craig!" he called out. "Mr. Craig—"

There was no reply, but Rayburn heard the rustling of paper on the inside near the crack against which his ear was pressed, and then the edge of a sheet of writing paper was slowly shoved through. Rayburn grasped it, lifting it above a dozen outstretched hands.

"Hold on!" he cried authoritatively. "I'll read it."

The silence of the grave fell on the crowd as the young man began to read.

"Friends and citizens," the note ran, "Winship has absconded with every dollar in the vaults except about \$200 in my small safe. He has been gone two days. I thought on a visit to his loss. I have just discovered the loss. I'm completely ruined and am now trying to make out a report of my condition. Have mercy on an old man."

Rayburn's face was as white as that of a corpse. The paper dropped from his hand and he stepped down into the crowd. He was himself no loser, but the Bishops had lost their all. How could he break the news to them? Presently he began to hope faintly that old Bishop might within the last week have drawn out at least part of the money, but that hope was soon discarded, for he remembered that the greater part of the deposit in some Shoal Creek cotton mill stock which had been promised him in a few weeks. No; the hope was groundless. Alan, his father, Mrs. Bishop and Adele.

Miller's head sunk down into his very ooze of despair. All that he had done for Adele's people and which had



They gained on the fleeing banker.

roused her deepest, tenderest gratitude was swept away. What would she think now?

His train of thought was rudely broken by an oath from Barnett, who with the rage of a madman suddenly threw his shoulder against the door. There was a crash, a groan of bursting timber and breaking bolts, and the door flew open. For one instant Miller saw the ghastly face and covering form of the old banker behind the wire grating, and then, with a scream of terror, Craig ran into a room in the rear and thence made his escape at a door opening on the side street. The mob filled the bank and did not discover Craig's escape for a minute; then, with a howl of rage, it surged back into the street. Craig was ahead of them, running toward the church, where prayer meeting was being held, the tails of his long frock coat flying behind him, his worn silk hat in his convulsive grasp.

"Thar he goes!" yelled Barnett. And he led the mob after him, all running at the top of their speed without realizing why they were doing so. They gained on the fleeing banker, and Barnett could almost touch him when they reached the church. With a cry of fear, like that of a wild animal brought to bay, Craig sprang up the steps and ran into the church, crying and groaning for help.

A dozen men and women and children were kneeling at the altar to get the benefit of the prayers of the ministers and the congregation, but they stood up in alarm, some of them with wet faces.

The mob checked itself at the door, but the greater part of it crowded into the two aisles, a motley human mass, many of them without coats or hats. The traveling evangelist seemed shocked out of expression, but the pastor, Mr. Lapsley, who was an old Confederate soldier and used to scenes of violence, stood calmly facing them.

"What's all this mean?" he asked.

"I came here for protection," whined Craig. "To my own church and people. This mob wants to kill me—tear me limb from limb."

"But what's wrong?" asked the preacher.

"Winship," panted Craig, his white head hanging down as he stood touching the altar railing—"Winship's absconded with all the money in my vault. These people want me to give up what I haven't got. Oh, God knows I would refund every cent if I had it!"

"You shall have our protection," said the minister calmly. "They won't violate the sacredness of the house of God by raising a row. You are safe here, Brother Craig. I'm sure all reasonable people will not blame you for the fault of another."

"I believe he's got my money," cried out Barnett in a coarse, sullen voice, "and the money of some of my women folks that's helpless, and he's got to turn it over! Oh, he's got money hid some'r's, I'll bet on that!"

"The law is your only recourse, Mr. Barnett," said the preacher calmly. "Even now you are laying yourself liable to serious prosecution for threatening a man with bodily injury when you can't prove he's wilfully harmed you."

The words told on the mob, many of them being only small depositors, and Barnett found himself without open support. He was silent. Rayburn Miller, who had come up behind the mob and was now in the church, went to Craig's side. Many thought he was proffering his legal services.

"One word, Mr. Craig," he said, touching the quivering arm of the banker.

"Oh, you're no loser," said Craig, turning on him. "There was nothing to your credit."

"I know that," whispered Miller, "but as attorney for the Bishops I have a right to ask if their money is safe."

The eyes of the banker went to the ground.

"It's gone—every cent of it," he said. "It was their money that tempted Winship. He'd never seen such a large pile at once."

"You don't mean"—But Miller felt the utter utility of the question on his tongue and turned away. Outside he met Jeff Dukes, one of the town marshals, who had been running and was very red in the face and out of breath.

"Is that mob in thar?" he asked.

"Yes, and quiet now," said Miller. "Let them alone. The important thing is to put the police on Winship's track. Come back downtown."

"I'll have to get the particulars from Craig fast," said Dukes. "Are you loser?"

"No, but some of my clients are, and I'm ready to stand any expense to catch the thief."

"Well, I'll see you in a minute, and we'll heat all the wires out of town. I'll see you in a minute."

Farther down the street Miller met Dolly Barclay. She had come straight from her home, in an opposite direction from the bank, and had evidently not heard the news.

"I'm on my way to prayer meeting," she smiled. "I'm getting good to please the old folks, but"—She noticed his pale face. "What is the matter? Has anything?"

"Craig's bank has failed," Rayburn told her briefly. "He says Winship has absconded with all the cash in the vaults."

Dolly stared aghast. "And you—"

"I had no money there," broke in Miller. "I was fortunate enough to escape."

"But Alan—Mr. Bishop?" She was studying his face and pondering his unwonted excitement. "Had they money there?"

Miller did not answer, but she would not be put aside.

"Tell me," she urged; "tell me that." "If I do, it's in absolute confidence," he said, with professional firmness. "No one must know—not a soul—that they were depositors, for much depended on it. If Wilson knew they were hard up, he might drive them to the wall. They were not only depositors, but they lose every cent they have—\$25,000 in a lump."

He saw her catch her breath, and her lips moved mutedly, as if repeating the words he had just spoken. "Poor Alan!" he heard her say. "This is too, too much after all he has gone through!"

Miller touched his hat and started on, but she joined him, keeping by his side like a patient, pleading child. He marveled over her strength and wonder of her poise. "I am taking you out of your way, Miss Dolly," he said gently, more gently than he had ever spoken to her before.

"I only want to know if Alan has heard. Do—do tell me that."

"No; he's at home. I shall ride out as soon as I get the matter in the hands of the police."

She put out her slender, shapely hand and touched his arm.

"Tell him," she said in a low, uncertain voice. "That it has broken my heart. Tell him I love him more than I ever did and that I shall stick to him always."

Miller turned and took off his hat, giving her his hand.

"And I believe you will do it," he said. "He's a lucky dog, even if he has just struck the ceiling. I know him, and your message will soften the blow. But it's awful—simply awful! I can't now see how they can possibly get from under it."

"Well, tell him," said Dolly, with a little, soundless sob in her throat, "tell him what I told you."

TO BE CONTINUED.

EDISON'S NEW SCHEME.

Talking Machine That Does the Work of Many Women.

Thomas A. Edison has just perfected a new phonograph which he believes will simplify the recording and reproduction of testimony and dictation of an Orange, N. J., dispatch. Two of the machines have been turned out and operated successfully. One operator can do the work of eight under the new system. Although no larger than ordinary phonographs, the new device is different in many particulars. The record is about nine inches long and about one-half an inch thick and is capable of taking from eight to nine letters of ordinary length. It can be shaved 175 times, making its cost no more than the cheapest paper.

The machine is operated by electricity. After the work, the typewriter operator takes the record and transfers it to a phonograph at his desk. When he touches a stud or button with his foot the machine immediately begins to reproduce. It is not difficult to operate the machine. After a sentence or phrase is completed release of the pressure stops the apparatus, and when the words are written pressure is applied for another instalment as much as the operator can easily remember. Should it become necessary to repeat parts of the letter, when not used for the purpose, acts as a lift for the reproduction, runs the record backward, so it will repeat practically a word at a time after the manner of similar mechanism on the typewriter.

FAMILY JUSTICE IN CHINA.—The following story, says a correspondent of the Washington Star, of the deliberate strangling of a son by his mother, is taken from a letter from the city of Wusueh, published in a Shanghai paper.

"It has really seemed for the last few weeks that the writer has seen nothing but the dark side of life in China. Horror after horror has come under one's observation. Perhaps the most terrible is a case that has occurred in this Hsien. A widow has had a great deal of trouble with her son. Come to years of discretion he has proved nothing but a bad lot. Charges of burglary and other serious crimes have been laid against him. His clan felt the disgrace of the situation keenly, and a meeting was convened, and two alternatives were put before him. He must either agree to be banished from the neighborhood or die. He declined to agree to the former, so he was bound hand and foot and his mother placed a noose around his neck and strangled him. According to Chinese law, so far as I understand it, this method of dealing with a bad son cannot be used when the offender is the only child, as his death would mean that there is none to carry on in the ancestral worship. But, as in this case, the mother was the executioner, there is not likely to be any inquiry.

Miscellaneous Reading.

RISE IN COTTON JUSTIFIED.

Gen. M. C. Butler's Sharp Reply to Secretary Wilson.

General M. C. Butler, for a number of years United States senator from South Carolina and a major-general during the Spanish war by appointment of President McKinley, is at the Waldorf-Astoria and will be in the city for several days. He goes from here to Newport on the invitation of his cousin, Perry Belmont.

General Butler has been engaged in cotton planting ever since he came of age and has owned his plantations for thirty years. Since his retirement from the United States senate he has devoted particular attention to the subject of cotton growing and is regarded as one of the most progressive and best informed men in the south regarding cotton.

A reporter asked General Butler yesterday if he had seen a statement from Secretary Wilson of the agricultural department concerning the advance in the price of cotton and containing some severe strictures upon the men who were now depositors, for much depended on it. If Wilson knew they were hard up, he might drive them to the wall. They were not only depositors, but they lose every cent they have—\$25,000 in a lump."

"Yes, I have seen what was said to have been the expression of opinion of Secretary Wilson," said General Butler. "and I must think that he spoke without correct information. Indeed I am bound to say that he seemed not to know what he was talking about. The gentlemen to whom he refers as gamblers, Messrs. Brown and Hayne, are not only among the most reputable business men in the country, but are gentlemen of the highest character. One of them, Mr. Hayne, is from my own state, and I think he will stand fair comparison, as will Mr. Brown, from Mississippi, with Secretary Wilson or anybody in official or business life. I must say I was surprised at what appeared to me to be a very reckless charge, one which was not justified by the facts."

"The fact is that Messrs. Brown and Hayne have done more for the producers of cotton, the farmers, in a few months, than the department of agriculture has done in ten years. I was somewhat surprised at Secretary Wilson, for he did not appear to get into a frenzy of indignation when certain other gentlemen in the west were making a corner on wheat and corn, which enhanced the value of these two commodities, and from which the farmers got the benefit."

"The secretary seems to be particularly concerned about the operators and the cotton mills; that the cotton mills have had to shut down and put out of employment a large number of employees, and that therefore it's a great wrong upon the cotton mills. Now in regard to that, Messrs. Brown and Hayne simply bought cotton from the bears in the cotton market and required them to deliver the cotton, and of course, the price went up."

"As a rule the managers of the cotton mills all over the country are bears and sympathize with the bear operators. Very naturally, their interest is to lower the price of the raw material, and they headed the representations made by the bear operators, exaggerated the last crop of cotton and failed to provide themselves with the raw material to keep their mills going. That is all there is in that."

"Can you say anything with reference to the profits in manufacturing cotton cloth from raw cotton?"

"Well, only in a very general way. A friend of mine who is largely interested in the manufacture of cotton in the south gave me some statistics at one time of the profits from say a pound of raw cotton converted into the finished product, and I am told that in many instances that profit has been anywhere from ten per cent to seventy per cent, which of course is very gratifying to me, for I didn't want to see the cotton mills of the north, or the south either, crippled in any way. But they have not paid a fair price for cotton in the last ten years, and if the law of supply and demand is to cut any figure now raw cotton ought to be worth fifteen cents a pound."

And if, as I understand, the mills state they cannot manufacture cotton at the present price and make any money out of it, the simple remedy for that is to buy the cotton at the ruling prices and put up the price of the manufactured goods, for I think we may safely expect that we will in a very few months find a famine of manufactured cotton goods in this country."

"What is the visible supply of raw cotton in the market, and about how long would it last?"

"My information, and I think it is pretty accurate, is that the visible supply of cotton today is about 580,000 bales, which would be about three weeks' supply for the cotton mills. That is my information."

"And how long before the new crop will begin to come into the market?"

"Well, they are picking cotton now in the extreme south, but as a rule cotton ought to be rushed in in October or November, and then of course the mills can buy what cotton they want. And I think I ought to make another statement, which I believe to be correct, that we are now having the greatest cotton famine in this country since the civil war. I want to repeat that cotton should be selling today for fifteen cents a pound, if the rule of supply and demand is to cut any figure."

"What is your information as to the number of bales of cotton in the last crop?"

"Well, I understand the bears sent circulars all over this country and Europe representing that the crop would be 11,500,000 bales or thereabouts, whereas, if I am correctly informed, it was only about 10,250,000 bales, and if the cotton factories

were better informed they would have laid in a supply to keep their factories in operation."

"In other words, Messrs. Brown and Hayne had better information as to the actual crop than the manufacturers of cotton?"

"Unquestionably."

"And they took advantage of this?"

"They simply took advantage of it and acted upon it, and they required the bears to deliver the cotton they bought, and that is all there is in it."

"Secretary Wilson takes an alarming view of the foreign competition in the growing of cotton, referring to the possible increase of the cotton area in Egypt after the completion of the Nile dam."

"The German, the English, the French and the Russian governments have for years been trying to find a locality suitable for the production of cotton and so far they do not seem to have made much progress. Ten or twelve years ago—perhaps longer than that—the Russian government employed a very intelligent young cotton planter in my state and sent him into Central Asia with a view to developing the cotton growing in that country, but my information is that it was a failure, and I am inclined to think that Mr. John C. Calhoun was right when he said that cotton, to be successfully grown in any country, must have frost."

"In view of the increasing world demand for cotton, do you think that we in this country have any cause to fear foreign competition?"

"Not the slightest. On the contrary, I think we will go on increasing the crop. The demand is increasing every year. The enormous increase of cotton factories in the South is absorbing a great deal of the crop made in that section, and it's going to continue, for these cotton mills, wherever properly managed, have made enormous profits. That is one of the reasons why it was so important for the cotton planters of the south to have what they call an open door in China, and this is going to be one of the principal markets for manufactured cotton goods in the south."

"And I want to say in that connection that this country, particularly the southern part of it, is greatly indebted to Mr. Secretary Hay of the state department for his able, firm and distinguished conduct in dealing with that question of the open door, and if he is sustained in that attitude I do not think that the cotton manufacturers of this country have anything to fear."

"What is your opinion, general, as to the outlook of the present cotton crop?"

"My manager on my plantation writes me that the crop is about three weeks late, but at present is doing well. However, it is unsafe to form any opinion about the cotton crop until after Sept. 20. The crucial period in a cotton crop is from about Aug. 20 to Sept. 20."

"Then what do you make out of Secretary Wilson's statements?"

"Well, summarized briefly, I should say that they amounted to an unwarranted, and it seems to me, rather wanton characterization of reputable business men, doing business in a legitimate and honorable way, as common gamblers. That, and a number of boogies, apparently the emanation of Secretary Wilson's rather vast lack of information on what he was talking about, seem to me about all his pronouncements comes to."

THE SOUTHERN'S HARD LUCK.

A Railroad Man Suggests One Probable Cause.

Talking to an old railroad conductor one night not long since, the question naturally turned to the Southern Railway's bad luck.

"Can you tell me," asked the reporter, "the cause of the many and disastrous wrecks?"

"I can tell you one cause," replied the old ticket puncher. "Several years ago, when the Southern began hiring Negroes for firemen in the place of white men, I told some of my fellow-trainmen that it was only a matter of time until there would be trouble. Several years ago the Norfolk and Western and the Chesapeake and Ohio had a scourge of wrecks that almost bankrupted those roads."

"What had the hiring of Negro firemen to do with the wrecks?"

"A blamed sight," said the knight of the punch. "You see, it is this way: When they quit employing white men for firemen, they cut off about the only practical source for some die-hard engineers. Engineers get killed, some die of disease, a few resign; at any rate, new men are constantly wanted, and as there are no young men to promote from the shovel to the throttle, the only recourse is to go to other roads for men to run the engines. They come to the road and take a run, with only a limited knowledge of the grades and dangerous places. The result? Why, everybody knows what it is."

"When it comes to running a train of heavy cars over a hilly country, the new man may be skilled, but to be a safe man to meet at a passing point he must know the road perfectly. When you let a man fire a few years, he knows just what force or precaution is necessary at certain places. It comes by intuition. He knows who the man runs, and all about him."

"Then you think that the Southern has had all this trouble for the want of foresight?" asked the reporter.

"I did not say 'all this trouble,' but what I have mentioned plays an important part, and shows how vitally it is to have knowing and trusted men when so many trains go and come."

"Then you think the Southern, like the Chesapeake and Ohio and Norfolk and Western, will get itself straight again?" ventured the reporter.

"Yes, but it comes high. Lots of good men go to their death along with the incompetent ones, but those left learn after a while that things go wrong again."—Charlotte Observer.

BILL ARP IS DEAD.

Distinguished Georgian Passed Away Last Tuesday.

Major Chas. W. Smith, better known as "Bill Arp," passed away at his home at Cartersville, Ga. His death was brought about by the infirmities incident to old age.

At the time of his death Major Smith was 77 years old, having been born in Gwinnett county, Georgia, in 1826. The father of Major Smith was a Massachusetts man and his mother a South Carolinian.

The father of Major Smith settled in Savannah when he first moved to Georgia. He taught school, afterwards marrying one of his pupils. The father never returned to the north.

Charles, as he tells us, "grew up as bad as other town boys, went to school some and worked some." He entered Franklin college at Athens, but did not graduate. Later he studied law.

Major Smith married Miss Mary Octavia Hutchins of Lawrenceville. They have ten children.

Major Smith was a merchant at one time. When the war commenced he began to write rebellious letters in a humorous way which attracted attention. This was due not so much to the humor contained in them, but from the fact that all that he said was so good naturally said, and so much to the point that every southerner felt that "Bill Arp" echoed his own thoughts and feelings. From the time that he asked "Mister Linkhorn for a little more time" to the present day, all have looked to him to express what they feel. At first these letters were written in the Josh Billings style of spelling, but this was afterwards laid aside.

The non de plume "Bill Arp" was adopted in this way: "When President Lincoln called for volunteers at the outbreak of the war, Mr. Smith, who was living at Rome, Ga., wrote a ludicrous criticism on the call. He read the article to a group of friends on a street corner, and after a hearty laugh they begged him to publish it, but he said he was not willing to have his name signed. In the crowd attracted by the reading was a country wag named Bill Arp, who suggested that his name be put to it. At once the signature became popular."

The Courier-Journal said of his letters to Artemus Ward in 1865, that "it was the first chirp of any bird after the surrender, and gave relief and hope to thousands of drooping hearts." Another paper said: "His writings are a delightful mixture of humor and philosophy. There is no cynicism in his nature, and he always pictures the brightest side of domestic life, and encourages his readers to live up to it and enjoy it."

Bill Arp told much about himself and about his family in his letters, which he sent out for thirty years. They were "talking letters," as Coleridge would call them.

He bought a farm at Cartersville, Ga., in 1878 and there he lived and wrote until within the last few years, when he moved to town. His late home, "The Shadows," is situated on Erwin street, and has a large sloping lawn studded with giant oaks. His description of the conditions of a home without the mother showed how helpless he felt without "Mrs. Arp." He said: "The clock run down. Two lamp chim