

**BILL ARP, SO CALLED. A
SIDE SHOW
OF THE SOUTHERN
SIDE OF THE WAR**

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Bill Arp, so called. A side show of the southern side of the war by Bill Arp & M. A. Sullivan

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BILL ARP & M. A. SULLIVAN

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Smith's
B I L L A R P ,

SO CALLED.

A SIDE SHOW

OF THE

SOUTHERN SIDE OF THE WAR.

"I'm a good Union man, so-called; but I'll bet on Dixie as long as I've got a dollar."

ILLUSTRATED BY M. A. SULLIVAN.

NEW YORK:
METROPOLITAN RECORD OFFICE.

1866.

ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1866, by

JOHN MULLEN,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York.

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TO THE PUBLISHER.

YOURS, requesting copies of my humorous letters for publication, is before me. I have thought that they were hardly worthy of being placed before the public in book form. At the time they were written they were appreciated, because the minds of the people needed relaxation from the momentous and absorbing interests of the war. The fountain of thought was tired, and these were its rest. The humor that is in them was entertaining then, for it was pertinent to the occasion that provoked it, and very impertinent to those it held up before the public eye.

I do not think that such humor will bear the wasting severity of time. It was once considered sparkling and exhilarating, but like good wine it has become stale from having been too long uncorked.

Nevertheless, these letters may be worthy of preservation, as illustrative of a part of the war—as a

side-show to the Southern side of it—an index to our feelings and sentiments, and for this reason only I place them at your disposal. I must request, however, that in compiling them, you will thoroughly revise and reconstruct the orthography. When I began writing under the signature of Bill Arp, I was honestly idealizing the language and humor of an unlettered countryman who bears that name. I tried to write as he would, could he have written at all. His earnest, honest wit attracted my attention, and he declares to this day that I have faithfully expressed his sentiments. Those who know him can see more of him in my letters than they can of me, and in this view of my labors I may be suspected of playing Boswell to an uneducated and humorous man, whose name is not Johnson, but Arp.

Reflection has, however, convinced me that while good taste would not condemn one or two letters for murdering her Majesty's English, yet a frequent repetition of the offence can hardly be justified. It is demoralizing to language. The truth is, no wit is good wit that will not bear to be correctly written, and I therefore direct a reconstruction of the orthography, even at the peril of Mr. Arp's reputation.

For the sentiments that pervade these letters, I have no apology to make. At the time they appeared in the press of the South, these sentiments were the

silent echoes of our people's thoughts, and this accounts in the main for the popularity with which they were received. Of course they contain exaggerations, and prophecies which were never fulfilled; but both sections were playing "brag" as well as "battle," and though we could not compete with our opponents in the former, yet some of us did try to hold our own. At both games we were whipped by overwhelming forces, and we have given it up. Conquered, but not convinced, we have accepted the situation, and have pledged ourselves to abide by it. We have sworn to do so. We have declared it most solemnly in convention. We have asserted it in every act and deed; and Southern honor, which our enemies cannot appreciate, but which is untarnished and imperishable, is the seal of our good faith. Whoever testifies to the existence among us of an association designing a renewal of the rebellion, is either the victim of his own cowardice, or else the author of a selfish and heartless lie. I say this with feeling and indignation, for we see in such testimony a willingness, nay, a desire on the part of our military rulers, to retain over us their power and their tyranny for malicious or avaricious ends. We have long felt, and we still are feeling, their insults, their black mail, their robberies. Ours is the stranded ship, and the Federal officers among us are the wreckers; ours the carcass, and they the vul-