

humorist in his way, and a rough one, as the raw conscripts found out to their cost. A heartless jest rose to his lips, but something in little Billy's face — an expression of loneliness, perhaps — stayed it. In another moment Private Chadwick's hand fell on little Billy's shoulder, and it was a friendly hand.

"Where from?" he asked.

"Close about Hillsborough," little Billy answered.

"I reckon you know the Tripps and the Littles?"

"Mighty well," said little Billy.

"What name?"

"Cochran."

"How old?"

"Twenty, last April gone."

"You don't look like you're fitten to do much soldierin'," suggested Private Chadwick.

"Oh, I'm tough," said little Billy, laughing, though he had a big lump in his throat.

"Come with me, buddy," remarked the old soldier, smiling. "If I'm ever to keep a tavern, I reckon I might as well begin with you as a boarder."

And so, for the time at least, little Billy