

As good fortune would have it, the first man he saw when the train stopped at the station nearest the camp was Private Chadwick. Little Billy spoke to his friend with as much cheerfulness as he could command.

“I’m mighty glad to see you, old man,” said Chadwick. “I knowed in reason that you was certain to come back, — and, sure enough, here you are. You’ve had trouble, too. Well, trouble has got a long arm and a hard hand, and I ain’t never saw the livin’ human bein’ that could git away from it when it begins to feel around for ’em.”

“Yes,” replied little Billy simply; “I’ll never have any more trouble like that I’ve had.”

“It’s mighty hard at first, always,” remarked Private Chadwick, with a sigh, “but it’s mighty seasonin’. The man that ain’t the better for it in the long run ain’t much of a man. That’s the way I put it down.”

“Am I a deserter, sure enough?” asked little Billy, suddenly remembering his position.

“Well, it’s a mixed case,” answered the private. “You’ve gone and broke the rules and articles of war, — I reckon that’s what