

eyes, a marvel of clerkly skill, for in those days the ability to read and write was by no means a universal possession among the soldiers of France.

One evening in the first of the autumn, where here and there on the dark Minudie hills could be seen the scarlet gleam of an early turning maple, just as the bay had become a sheet of glowing copper under the sunset, a rosy sail appeared on the horizon. The pacing sentry on the brow of Beauséjour stopped to watch it. Presently another rose into view, and another, and another; and then Beauséjour knew that the English fleet had returned. Before the light faded out the watchers had counted seventeen ships,—and when the next morning broke the whole squadron was lying at anchor about three miles from the shore.

With the first of day-

light Pierre and his father hastened up the hill, to find out what was to be done. To their astonishment they learned that the troops on Beauséjour would do just nothing, unless the English should attempt to land on the French side of the Missaguash. They had received from Quebec a caution not to openly transgress any treaty obligations.

To Antoine Lecorbeau this news seemed not unwelcome. He was for quiet, generally. But Pierre shewed in his face, and, indeed, proclaimed aloud, his disappointment. The old sergeant laughed at his eager pupil, and remarked:

"Oh, my young fire-eater, *you* shall have a chance at the beef-eaters if you like! His Reverence the Abbé arrived in Beauséjour last night about midnight, and *he's* going to fight, if we can't. Treaties don't bother *him* much. He's got all his Micmacs with him, I guess. There they go now,—the other side of the stream.

In a bit you'll see them at work strengthening the line of the dyke. They're going to give it to the beef-eaters pretty hot when they try to come ashore. There's your chance now for a brush. His Reverence will take you, fast enough."

"Pierre shall do nothing of the sort, whether he wants to or not," interrupted Lecorbeau, with sharp emphasis.

"I wouldn't fight under *him*!" ejaculated the boy, with a ring of scorn in his voice.

The old sergeant shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, he. 'I'm way of

very well," said of the same thinking myself. But *all* your people are not so particular. Look now, over at the dyke. Did you ever see an Indian that could handle the shovel like those fellows are doing. I tell you, half those Indians are just your folks dressed up, and painted

red and black, and with feathers stuck in their hair. The Abbé ropes a lot of you in to this business, and you're lucky, Antoine Lecorbeau, that he hasn't called on you or Pierre yet."

At this suggestion Lecorbeau looked

grim, but troubled. As

for Pierre, however, with a boy's confidence, he exclaimed:

"Just let him call. I think I see him getting us!"

Yet, for all his bitterness against Le Loutre, Pierre felt the fever of battle stir within him as he watched the preparations behind the long, red Missaguash dyke. His father, seeing the excitement in his flashing eyes and flushed countenance, exacted from him then and there a promise that he would take no part in the approaching conflict.

On that September day the tide was



"The pacing sentry stopped to watch it."