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Howe, so Lecorbeau concluded that she was Howe's child. As for the people with whom she had been visiting in the hapless village of Kenneticook, they were evidently old servants of her father's family.

"I was staying at nurse's," she used to say. "Uncle Willie sent me there, because my mamma was sick." Of this Uncle Willie she talked so much and so often that Pierre used to say he was jealous.

While several years rolled by, bringing no great event to the cabin in the willows at the foot of Beauséjour, a cloud was slowly gathering over the fortified hill. The relations between France and England in Acadie were growing more and more strained. It was plain that a rupture must soon come. In the cabin, by the light of fire or candle, after the day's work was done, Pierre and his father, with sometimes the old sergeant from the fort, used to talk over the condition of affairs. To Pierre and the sergeant it was obvious that France must win back Acadie, and that soon; and they paid little heed to Lecorbeau's sagacious comparisons between the French and English methods of conducting the government. Lecorbeau, naturally, did not feel like arguing his points with much determination; but across the well-scrubbed deal table he uttered several predictions which Pierre recalled when he saw them brought to pass.

"Here's about how it stands," remarked the sergeant, one night, shaking the ashes of his pipe into the hollow of his hand, "there's hundreds upon hundreds now of your Acadians shifting round loose, waiting for a chance to get back to their old farms. They don't dare go back while the English hold possession, for fear of his Reverence yonder;"—signifying, of course, Le Loutre,— "so they're all ready to fight just as soon as France gives the word. They don't care much for France, maybe,—not much more than for the English,—but they do just hanker after their old farms. When the government thinks it's the right time, and sends us some troops from Quebec and Louisbourg, all the Acadians out of Acadie will walk in to take possession, and the Acadians in Acadie will bid good-day to King George and help us kick the English out of Halifax. It's bound to come, sure as fate; and pretty soon, I'm thinking."

"I believe you're right!" assented Pierre, enthusiastically.

"What would you think, now," said Lecorbeau, suggestively, "if the English should take it into their slow heads not to wait for all this to happen? What would you do up there in the fort if some ships were to sail up to-morrow and land a little English army under Beauséjour? You've got a priest and a greedy old woman (begging Monsieur Vergor's pardon) to lead you. How long would