

took Anne's hand and kissed it in the old pretty fashion, she looked anxiously into his face, a very sad face in these days. Urbain's philosophy had been hardly tried of late. And his wife was not mistaken in fancying that something new had happened that day to deepen the hollows round his eyes, the lines on his rugged brow. She would not, even dared not ask, for reasons of her own. It might well be that his grief and her joy should run on the same lines. Anne had been praying for something; she was half afraid, though she fully expected, to hear that her prayer was granted.

Urbain sat down by the fire, and stretched out his feet and hands to the blaze.

"Where are the children?" he said.

Anne smiled very sweetly. "Out somewhere in the moonlight. Ange thinks there is nothing for *Hélène* like fresh air."

"From her looks, he is right."

"It is not only the fresh air —" Anne broke off, then went on again. "Well, my friend, you went to *Sonnay* — you took the child to the convent?"

"Yes — she will be very safe there for a time — the reverend mothers received her excellently. I do not care for convents, as you know, but I am not sure that *Henriette*, even at this early age, has not found her vocation. Till to-day, I do not think I had seen the child smile since —"